

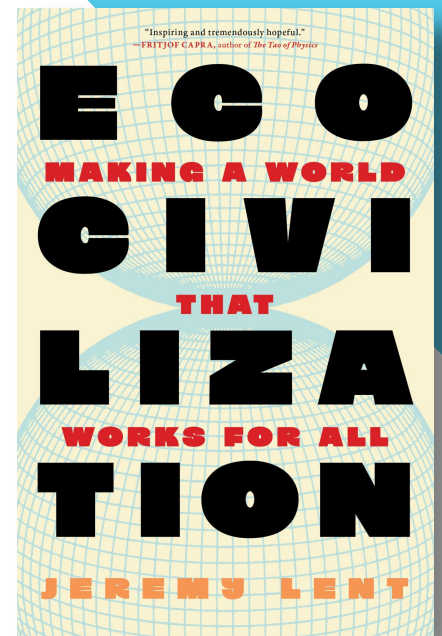
# ECOCIVILIZATION

Making a World that Works for All

Jeremy Lent

Hardcover 9781685892333

eBook 97816858923409781685891558



“We need to think big—the crisis we’re in demands nothing less. And this book does just that, understanding the climate crisis as both a symptom of a degraded system, and a possible entry into building something fresh and new. It will fire your imagination.” — **Bill McKibben, author of *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future***

“Lent’s *Ecocivilization* is a magnificent undertaking, a brilliantly informed guide through the past and into radically different futures. He shows that humanity is indeed at a turning point in its story, and he summons us to a great project. A must-read.” — **James Gustave Speth, co-founder, Natural Resources Defense Council**

## INTRODUCTION

“One of the greatest thinkers of our age” (*The Guardian*) presents a new way of living—one modeled on nature’s design instead of capitalism’s—for fans of *Guns, Germs, and Steel* and *Doughnut Economics*...

In *Ecocivilization*, leading thinker Jeremy Lent offers that reimagination, grounded in proven design principles of ecosystems and in humankind’s evolved inclination toward justice, mutuality, and dignity.

What unfolds is a robust framework incorporating Lent’s own expertise, and the lived experiences of those on the ground already putting ecological civilization’s core tenets into practice—justice, mutuality, diversity, and symbiosis.

From the global economy to universal housing and income, from infrastructure to agriculture, every major aspect of our society could be redesigned to work together as a coherent whole, setting the conditions for all people to flourish. *Ecocivilization* shows how this future on a regenerated Earth is not only desirable, but entirely feasible.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The book opens with the acronym TINA — “There Is No Alternative” — and promises to dethrone it. Before reading, how fully did you accept TINA? Has the book changed your sense of what is actually possible?
2. The author proposes three core principles of an ecocivilization: mutually beneficial symbiosis, fractal flourishing, and the human evolutionary niche. In your own words, what does each of these mean — and which resonates most with you personally?
3. The book argues that our civilization’s crises are not accidental bugs but structural features — designed into the system from the outset. Did this framing shift anything in how you understand news stories, economic debates, or political choices?

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4. Ecocivilization is described not as a blueprint but as a framework — a set of core principles with an invitation for co-creation. What would you add to it? What feels incomplete or underdeveloped?
5. The book draws on eudaimonia — Aristotle's concept of flourishing through living according to one's highest nature — as distinct from hedonic pleasure or consumerism. What does eudaimonia look like in your own life? What conditions in our current society make it harder to achieve?
6. The Doughnut model asks us to imagine an economy that ensures everyone's basic needs are met while remaining within planetary limits. Do you find this a more compelling goal than GDP growth? What would need to change to make it politically mainstream?
7. Costa Rica is cited as one of the closest real-world examples of living within the Doughnut — high wellbeing with a relatively small ecological footprint. What can we actually learn from Costa Rica? What are the limits of that example?
8. Where do you see "islands of coherence" — in your own community, profession, or life — that feel like living hints of an ecocivilization?
9. Glenn Albrecht coined "solastalgia" for the grief of watching one's home environment destroyed, and "Symbiocene" for the era of mutual flourishing that could replace the Anthropocene. How do these words affect you? Is there something powerful about naming what we have lost — and what we are working toward?
10. The book weaves together critiques of the present with concrete visions of alternatives. Did you find the critical sections energizing or overwhelming? How did you hold both?



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Jeremy Lent** described by *Guardian* journalist George Monbiot as “one of the greatest thinkers of our age,” is a speaker and author of the award-winning *The Patterning Instinct* and *The Web of Meaning*. He is the founder of the Deep Transformation Network and the nonprofit Liology Institute. He lives with his partner in Berkeley, California. Explore more about *Ecocivilization* at [jeremylent.com](http://jeremylent.com).

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