

SUSTAINABLE LIVING IN DRYLANDS

NEWSLETTER OF ARID LANDS PERMACULTURE

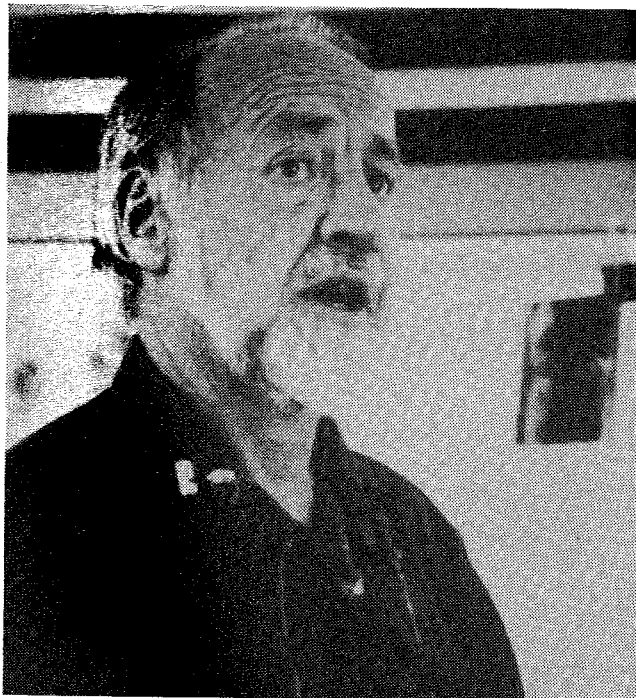
ISSUE NO. 7

SUMMER 1989

\$2.50

Environment and Economics: From an Interview with Bill Mollison

By Jean Eisenhower



Australian Bill Mollison, creator of the term Permaculture and environmental consultant to governments and businesses worldwide, at the end of a six-month tour through Africa and the southwestern US.

Growth has nothing to do with the satisfaction and security of the average person in Tucson. Growth threatens that, because as you grow, you must expand public services, bridges, roads, and so on. It may be easy to extend freeways with a 40- or 60-year life, but when you're coming up to that 40 years, there's usually no provision in the economy for replacement. Instead, according to Mollison, we can create a sustainable economy based on maintaining what we already have.

Tucson's tourism depends on its environment, and

tourism is a large percentage of your total economy. On the other hand, only a small percentage of your income is brought in by mining and grazing, both of which have major environmental destructive influences. If you want to encourage the economy, you protect the environment.

How can we change the existing economy and create industries which are energy- and resource-efficient?

If what you want to do is free up capital within Tucson, then the first thing you do is lend money to anybody who wants to retrofit housing for energy-efficiency.

Almost every home in the southwest could use some design modifications to help it become more energy efficient. Energy-saving landscaping, greenhouses, shadehouses, appropriate energy systems, and water-harvesting devices could all be booming industries that would provide meaningful employment while helping people toward a more environmentally aware lifestyle and money savings.

Second thing you do is lend money to any group or person who wants to produce clean food for Tucson. Food production and local organic markets could be the biggest industry of tomorrow. Everybody is concerned about the quality of their food, but most people feel they can't afford it. Meanwhile, our backyards are barren or ornamental and we mourn our lost connection to the earth. Old-fashioned backyard gardens could be providing people healthy food, quality family recreation, and extra income. The surplus food would put life back into neighborhood markets, creating more local jobs, and bringing back the neighborliness and interdependence that many of us have only heard about.

...also to anyone who wants to store rain water.

continued page 4

INSIDE

Letters.....	2-3
Community: LETS/Economics..	4
Community: Global Relief.....	5
How To:	
Organize without Pain.....	6-7
Build a Solar Still.....	8
Start Recycling.....	9
Observations:	
at the Gathering.....	10
Notices and Ads.....	11
Calendar of Events.....	12
Publishing Info.....	2

Mollison Interview *continued*

An entire industry could be created to counteract the surface runoff situation we've created that gives the west our droughts and floods. In natural areas, we need to revegetate. In urban and rural residential areas, we need rain gutters, water tanks and cisterns, trees replanted, parking lots and other water-shedding surfaces swaled for better infiltration, and on and on.

It's stupid to pay rates for people to cart away garbage and put it in landfills.

Recycling should be a major industry in every urban area. We could immediately begin recycling papers, cardboard, metals, glass containers, wood, and more.

Wood can be sorted for resale of large pieces, spin-off industries making quality toys out of small pieces, and chipping and composting the scrap and rotten pieces. Even more energy-efficient than recycling, glass can be sterilized and reused like we use to do with pop bottles.

[The excerpts used in this article were drawn from a 1-1/2 hour interview with Bill Mollison which is being published in a 12-page newsletter format. If you would like to receive a copy, please write to Sonoran Permaculture Services, Inc. / P. O. Box 27371 / Tucson, AZ 85726-7371. Cost is \$2.50 postpaid. Mailing is scheduled for August.]