C: Sustainability – a matter of cultural transformation

We live in permanent turbo-mode. Everything has to be faster, higher, further. But speed isn't progress if it catapults us in the wrong direction. In the climate crisis we need a new mindset: deeper, more conscious, more sustainable.

The old faith in progress

Since industrialization, the mantra has been growth: more output, lower costs, higher profits. The formula is as simple as it is fatal: technology boosts efficiency → boosts productivity → lowers prices → boosts consumption → destroys the climate.

And because everything must remain "internationally competitive," wages are squeezed, resources strip-mined, and sustainability dismissed as a "nice to have." Climate protection? Sure – but only when it's comfortable.

Will technology save us? Unfortunately not.

We place our hopes on miracle machines that will vacuum CO_2 out of the sky while we keep jetting to Mallorca and Phuket. But carbon-capture technologies are far from compensating for our damage. And hydrogen has yet to prove it's made of the stuff dreams are made of.

The belief in technological salvation is the new religion of the 21st century – and it's dangerous. We're lying to ourselves if we think real sustainable progress will magically show up "sometime." Postponed means cancelled.

Cultural shift instead of climate cosmetics

Sustainability isn’t a department in a ministry – it’s a lifestyle. At best, it belongs among the core values of a modern society. We need the courage to change – even against bar-stool cynicism and manager-mantras.

A real culture shift means:
– no longer treating the **climate crisis** as a side effect of profit addiction,
– **slowing down globalization**,
– anchoring **production locally** again,
– linking **social justice** and ecology as one.

Prosperity must stop meaning having more – and start meaning living better.

Redefining progress

Progress is when we pause. When growth stops being sacred and starts being meaningful. When we don’t lose “having,” but become free from it.

An economy that takes sustainability seriously measures success not by speed, but by impact – for people, society, and the climate.

Your TEC Learnings:

- The progress creed “faster, higher, further” is outdated and must be replaced by “deeper, more conscious, more sustainable.”
- New technologies don’t replace behavioral change.
- Sustainability requires de-globalization and new values instead of old growth reflexes.

© **The Economics Coach 2026** (Header image: Lightsource/Deposit)