

Funding the Future

Article URL

Published: January 12, 2026, 6:19 pm

In July 2008, before the crash of Lehman Brothers, I and a group of other thinkers published The Green New Deal.

In the forward to [that document](#) we said:

Drawing our inspiration from Franklin D. Roosevelt's courageous programme launched in the wake of the Great Crash of 1929, we believe that a positive course of action can pull the world back from economic and environmental meltdown. The Green New Deal that we are proposing consists of two main strands.

First, it outlines a structural transformation of the regulation of national and international financial systems, and major changes to taxation systems. And, second, it calls for a sustained programme to invest in and deploy energy conservation and renewable energies, coupled with effective demand management.

In this way we believe we can begin to stabilise the current triple-crunch crisis. We can also lay the foundations for the emergence of a set of resilient low carbon economies, rich in jobs and based on independent sources of energy supply. This will create a more stable economic environment in which there is a lot more local production and distribution, and enhanced national security.

In other words, before the main crisis began we were calling for a green economic recovery.

Today [the Guardian reports](#) that:

The leaders of the International Monetary Fund, the [World Bank](#) and the World Trade Organisation on Friday issued a warning about the economic and social risks of austerity programmes in a "call to action" designed to boost growth and fight protectionism.

Expressing concern about the weakness of economic activity and rising [unemployment](#), the [IMF](#)'s Christine Lagarde, the World Bank's Robert Zoellick and the WTO's Pascal Lamy joined the heads of eight other multilateral and regional institutions in calling for policies to create jobs, tackle inequality and green the [global economy](#).

If only they'd taken heed of what we had to say in 2008. We anticipated all those issues and offered clear, workable prescriptions to tackle these issues at the time. And what we were very clear about was the fact that programmes of austerity could not work: programmes of rebuilding the economy were essential. Instead of those programmes we've had a wasted 2 years and more dedicated to austerity based on the mad logic that we'd 'maxed out the credit card', which was not true. And that's why we're in the mess we're in and that's why the IMF has to act now to say that politicians across Europe, especially, have got this all wrong.

If only they'd taken heed of the Green New Deal in 2008. With small changes it is what we also need now.