

# LET'S STOP LAND CONSUMPTION

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## Land Consumption in Italy

A summarizing and meaningful fact : every year 500 squared km of soil are covered with a *repulsive crust of cement and asphalt* (as Antonio Cederna used to call it).

1,37 squared km a day, 3750 squared m per hour, 62,5 squared m a minute!

This land consumption is mainly concentrated in flat areas, which often consist of fertile farming land. With irreversible consequences for the farming production, for the landscape and for the eco-systems in general.

### The reasons why we consume (waste) land:

1. Land rent
2. The local administrations' need (often based on delusions of grandeur) to ask for money and to finance standing expenses (vicious circle of urbanization taxes)
3. The ruling class's limited sympathy and political culture
4. Impoverishment (in every direction) of agriculture
5. The pursuit of the myth of growth

### Does a (real) demand for spaces that are suitable for building actually exist ?

I would say it doesn't. The most conservative estimates show that 2 millions houses are empty. There are already thousands of both vacant and on sale warehouses. So the houses demand and the productive needs of real economy (the little real economy Italy has still got) might be widely satisfied by the existing building property. Of course, Politics should be emancipated and it should have supremacy over Economy and Finance again.

### The contribution of large projects.

Large projects that are mythicized by this development model (High Speed Trains, The Bridge over the Strait of Messina, New Motorways and Ring Roads), which are already a threat themselves for the land, will sooner or later drag a new cement flow. Both for the complementary projects and for the new settlements, above all commercial (outlets and large-scale retail trade) and logistic.

### Few Large Unnecessary and Harmful Projects vs. a lot of Useful and Wholesome Small Projects.

If the several dozens of billions of euro (which would anyway fall on national finance, that is to say on citizens, even using the magic slogan of *Project Financing*) that might be useful to build and maintain few large projects were placed at disposal of small projects aiming at restoring the hydro-geological upheaval, taking care of the land, building infrastructures that help smooth and slow mobility (cycle paths, rail and tram ways, navigable ways) and where it is necessary (and there are thousands of examples of that in every Italian Province) doing up the existing railways and motorways, economy would be anyway boosted, jobs would be generated and the Country would start to be settled.

### Large Projects, a litmus paper of an insolvent development model, led by extremists!

The ones who introduce themselves as *champions* of large projects (because they are useful to re-launch the economy, to create growth, development, competitiveness, etc.) often call themselves (or ask newspapers owned by their friends / relatives to call them) *moderate* !

And they try to label anyone opposing their model of society as a dangerous, subversive extremist.

But they are the actual extremists. They, who insist on following this development model. They, who do not have the courage to think of a different way and a different world. They are the actual extremists who are afraid of criticizing assumed certainties that have only a certain result, sooner or later disastrous, from an environmental, cultural and even economic point of view.

**A different land management model already exists.**

It is the model concretely realized in dozens of Italian municipalities, carried out by small purchase groups, farmed by new farmers, looked for by committees, clubs and associations that were born in every corner of the Country (to defend the common welfare, the land - the whole land and not only their own as a certain unbearable propaganda such as the one supported by the Forum Nimby would like to state ...). It is a model worked out by young and expert intellectuals, professors, researchers, who enthusiastically enliven meetings as the one organized in the Susa Valley in this scorching end of August.