



# The Island Game

## The Scenario

Take a good look around, because these are the people with whom you have just been shipwrecked on a distant uncharted island.

As far as you know, you are the only survivors of global catastrophe and it is up to you to develop a new society. This society should meet your needs, as you define them, and it should avoid the mistakes of "the old ones", those who died in the recent tragedy.

Use the questions provided to guide your discussion of how you will set up this new society. Record your answers on a separate sheet of paper headed by the name you have given to the island. This is a beautiful island. It is tropical (average temperature 80°F), it has many sources of food (fruit trees, fish, land for agriculture), and it has a steady wind from the West of about 15 m.p.h..

Remember, this is not a vacation, you have work to do . . . so get to it !

## Roles:

- **Interrogator** Ask questions one at a time. Keep group moving along and on schedule.
- **Recorder** Record any group response to each question.
- **Group** Make sure answers do not conflict with one another and that they are consistent with the economic plan. Ask questions to help group develop more specific responses.
- **Map Specialist** Keep others aware of geography and natural resources of island to help group develop a realistic economy.

# SETTING UP YOUR ISLAND SOCIETY

## Economic Plan

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What will be your economic and/or socioeconomic goals? Choose only most important ones, recognizing trade-offs.



### Overall:

- What will be produced?
- How will it be produced?
- For whom will it be produced?
- Who will make those decisions (government, individuals or a mix)?
- How will your island government be involved in the economy?

**Directions:** Use answers to "Economic Plan" to determine the following. Make sure your responses are consistent with your overall plan.

## Land/Distribution/Location

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- Will the land be privately owned? If so, who gets it and how?
- Should the land be owned by everyone together?
- Should you divide it up and distribute it? If so, should it be divided equally? What constitutes equal?
- Where on the island should you live? (Draw this on map.)
- Should you consider the needs of the environment? How?
- Who has rights to the water? How will these be provided for?

## Labor

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- What work must be done?
- List the kinds of jobs required to sustain the lifestyle you desire.
- Who should do these jobs?
- What about the jobs that nobody likes?
- Does each person just have one job or many?

## Land

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- What natural resources will be used to produce goods?
- Will there be rules governing use of natural resources? Why or why not? If yes, which?

## Capital

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- What kind of capital (tools, machines, etc.) will be used to produce goods? How will this capital be attained?

## Basic Needs

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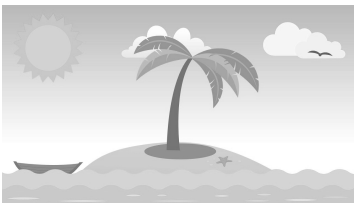
- Are there some basic needs that you believe should be guaranteed for all? If so, what are they? Or do you think that individuals should secure their needs by themselves?
- Create a name for your team that reflects the type of system you have developed.

## Population and Consumption

You notice that your natural resources are becoming overused and studies indicate that your society is consuming more that can be sustained in the long term.

Do you consider the needs of future generations?

How do you deal with a growing population and the overconsumptive habits of your society?



## Energy



You must come up with an energy policy.

Your ship was a nuclear ship and the equipment could be adapted for the production of nuclear power. You also have oil reserves right off your Western coast that you can tap and internal combustion engines from the ship. And you have the capability to build windmills, solar collectors and steam generators. You have your forests and you have a student that has studied energy efficient architecture.

What are the pros and cons of each of the sources of energy?

For what purposes will you need energy?

How will you generate this energy?

## International Finance and Debt

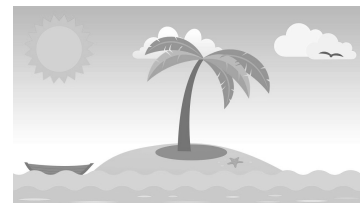
Representatives have visited you from another planet. They explain that although they cannot take you to their planet, they can assist you in improving yours. They will lend you the money and machinery to enable you to produce 10 times as much on your fields if in return you will grow and sell the crops needed by their society and if, once you have made enough money, you will repay them at 10% annual interest.

Remember, many of the fields that produce a variety of foods for your people will now get planted with cash crops for export. And these fields, because they are planted with one crop, may require pesticides and artificial fertilizers. Also, the visitors wish to lend the money to the most well off in your society to protect their investment, so the land holdings of these individuals may grow and force others to sell their land and become workers on the big farms.

What are the pros and cons of this offer?

Do you accept this offer?

Why or why not?



## Non-material Economy



Some people want to devote themselves to philosophical thinking, poetry, art and spiritual development.

Are these valid ways to make a living in your society?

Are they contributing to society?

How could such contributions be acknowledged or rewarded?

Are there other types of non-material work that should be acknowledged or rewarded?

What does it mean to be a healthy and productive citizen?

## Welfare

Some of the members of your group had various social problems, e.g. drug addiction and mental illness when you arrived. These people do not work very hard, at least for now, and need special medical care and psychological help.

Will the other members of the society provide for these individuals' needs?  
How and for how long?



## Guns and Butter

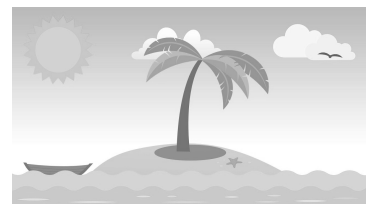
It is rumored that not far from you is an island of people who are very dangerous. Of all your time and resources, what percentage are you willing to devote to preparing to defend yourselves?

What activities, services, luxuries might be cut in order to provide for your defense?

Would you want a standing army, armed and ready to fight at any moment?

Who would serve in an army were you to need one?

What are the pros and cons to having a more "defense based" economy?







## Native Peoples

You have just found out that in a remote area of the island (a place with fantastic groves of mango and banana) there exists a tribe of people native to this island.

It is also rumored that the ground underneath this tribe is rich in coal deposits. You could use coal as a fuel for your new machines; what should you do?

Will you ask the tribe to join your culture and share the resources?

Will you leave them alone?

Will you remain separate but establish peaceful relations?

Will you ask them to move?

Give them another part of the island?

How will you deal with these 'new' people and their resources?

## Pollution



Water pollution has become a serious problem. The streams that flow on your island are quickly becoming unsafe for swimming and fishing. In fact, 1/3 of the fish population has died off from pollution. The causes of the pollution are many: pesticide and fertilizer run-off from farms; oil and coolant run-off from cars; waste from factories; erosion and manure from overgrazing cattle; and litter. How has water been treated as a free good? Develop a plan to deal with water pollution.

What are the trade-offs to your plan?

Who should be involved in making this plan?

# Evaluation of Your Island Economy



Show your understanding of the key economic concepts by clearly and specifically answering the following:

1. Describe your group's economic plan BRIEFLY by listing the following:
  - a. economic and/or socioeconomic goals
  - b. goods and services produced; methods of production and distribution employed
  - c. use of land, labor and capital.
  - d. whether and which basic needs will be guaranteed for all.
  - e. where decision-making authority lies.
  - f. level/degree of government involvement
2. Is your system more capitalist or socialist?
  - a. What type of economic system (market, mixed or command)?
  - b. Explain referring to evaluation list (items a-f above).
3. Explain the opportunity cost of pursuing any one of your goals.
4. How do economics and ecology interact in your island society? Are they in harmony or conflict?
  - a. Explain using specifics from your island economy, particularly use of natural resources and the concept of scarcity.
5. Which problem did you have to address in your island economy?
  - a. How did you respond?
  - b. How was it consistent or not with your economic system described above in question #2? Be specific.

# The Island Game

## Team Information



TEAM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

### TEAM MEMBERS:

	NAME	Points
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

**Total points allotted to team:**

# The Island Game



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*(team name)*

## *Response Sheet*

### *Overall Economic Plan*

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### *Land/Distribution/Location*

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### *Labor*

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*Land*

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*Capital*

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*Basic Needs*

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**Problem Solving Responses**

*Population and Consumption*

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***Energy***

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***International Finance and Debt***

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***Non-Material Economy***

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***Welfare***

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***Guns and Butter***

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***Native Peoples***

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***Pollution***

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