

# **Is the 'Green Economy' privatized nature?**

**Answers from the Durban COP17 and Rio+20**

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**presented to Rhodes University**

**3 May 2012**

**Durban's COP17**  
***'Conference of the Parties'***  
**28 Nov-9 Dec 2011**  
***International Convention Centre***





# Durban's COP17 *'Conference of Polluters'*

**28 Nov-9 Dec 2011**  
*International Convention Centre*







*first time SA hosted  
global environment  
conference: WSSD*

**World Summit on Sustainable Development  
Johannesburg, 31 August 2002: 30,000 protested  
UN 'type-two partnerships', privatisation of  
water, emissions trading, neoliberalism**



A TIMETABLE TO  
REDUCE EMISSIONS?!  
..NOT UNTIL THERE'S MORE  
EVIDENCE OF GLOBAL  
CLIMATE CHANGE!

johannesburg  
world  
summit



EVAN TAYLOR 10-8-02  
© ZAPIRO



A GIFT FROM THE CORPORATE WORLD!

johannesburg World summit 2002

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- PROFIT
- SELF-REGULATION
- UNFAIR TRADE



Climate Justice Now! SA opposes emissions, privatised electricity, Eskom coal and nuclear, carbon trading: demands *conservation/renewables* and *electricity-as-a-right*

**to avoid this danger:**



**their idea: World Bank  
'impeccable' logic of  
green capitalist  
pollution trade**

**DATE: December 12, 1991**

**TO: Distribution**

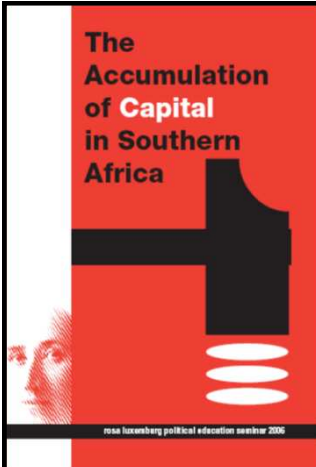
**FR: Lawrence H. Summers**

***'I think the economic logic behind  
dumping a load of toxic waste in the  
lowest wage country is impeccable  
and we should face up to that...'***

**(preparing for original Rio Earth Summit, secret memo of Bank chief economist Larry Summers, later US Treasury Secretary and Obama's economic manager – full memo: [www.whirledbank.org](http://www.whirledbank.org))**







**our theory:** 'impeccable logic' of capitalist/non-capitalist relations

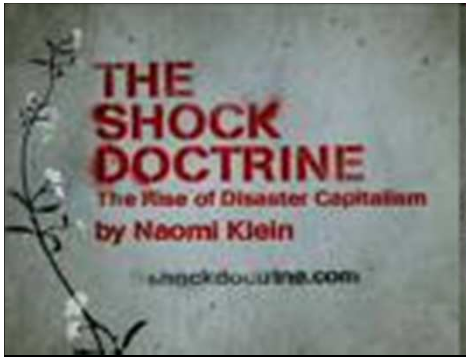


## Rosa Luxemburg

'Accumulation of capital periodically

**bursts out in crises** and spurs capital on to a continual extension of the market. Capital cannot accumulate without the aid of non-capitalist organisations, nor ... can it tolerate their continued existence side by side with itself. **Only the continuous and progressive disintegration of non-capitalist organisations makes accumulation of capital possible.'**

*The Accumulation of Capital, 1919.*



# Shock Doctrine by Naomi Klein (and Milton Friedman)



*extra-economic coercion is vital for neoliberalism*

according to Friedman (advisor to Pinochet after 9/11/73 coup in Chile): *'only a crisis - actual or perceived - produces real change'*

Chile: 'the most extreme capitalist makeover ever attempted anywhere... **"Chicago School"** revolution, as so many of Pinochet's economists had studied under Friedman there. He coined a phrase for this painful tactic: **"shock treatment"**.'





# accumulation by dispossession (‘primitive accumulation’)



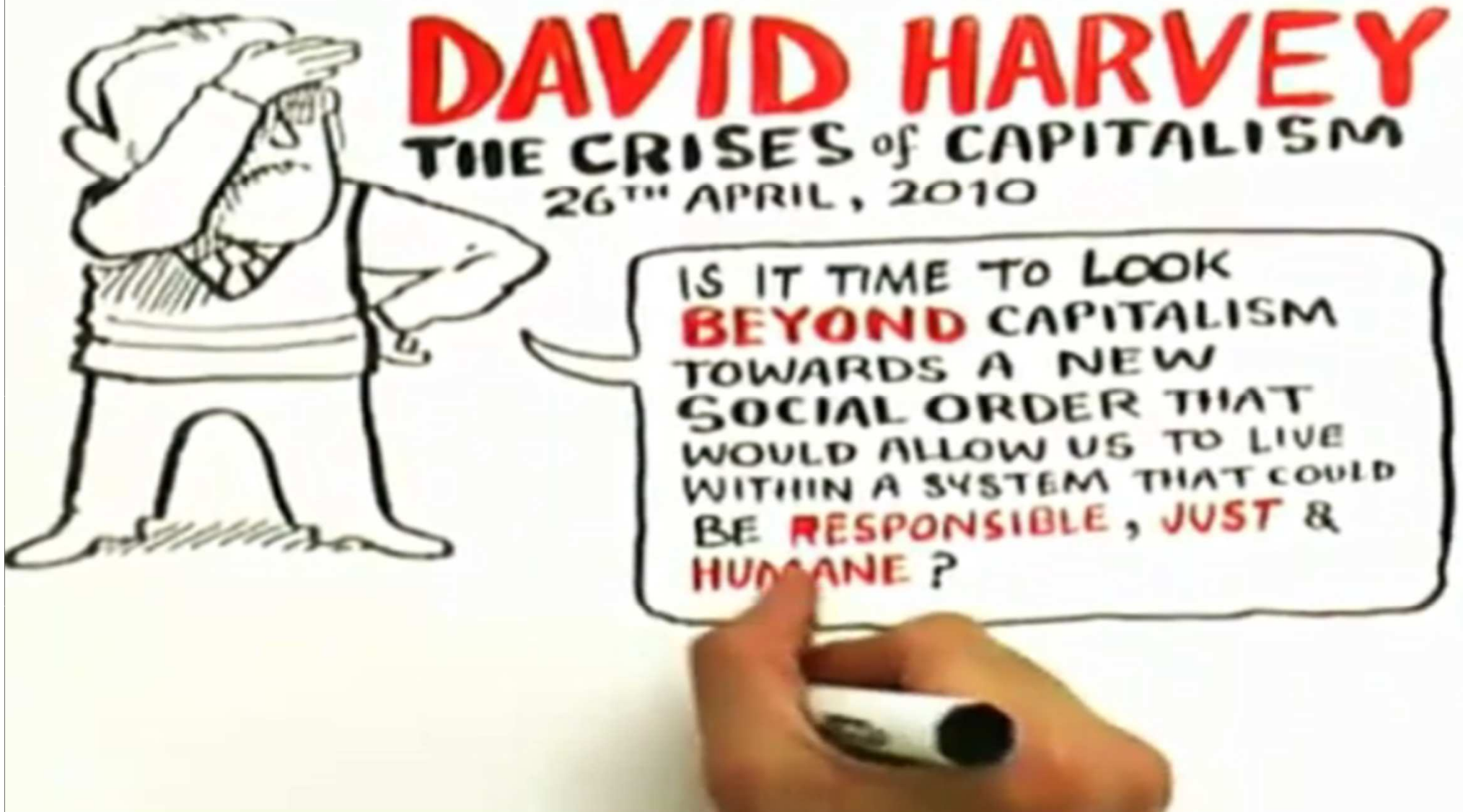
## David Harvey

A closer look at Marx’s description of primitive accumulation reveals a wide range of processes. These include

- the commodification and privatisation of land and the forceful expulsion of peasant populations;
- conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state, etc.) into exclusive private property rights;
- suppression of rights to the commons;
- commodification of labour power and the suppression of alternative (indigenous) forms of production and consumption;
- colonial, neocolonial and imperial processes of appropriation of assets (including natural resources);
- monetisation of exchange and taxation (particularly of land);
- slave trade; and
- usury, the national debt and ultimately the credit system as radical means of primitive accumulation.

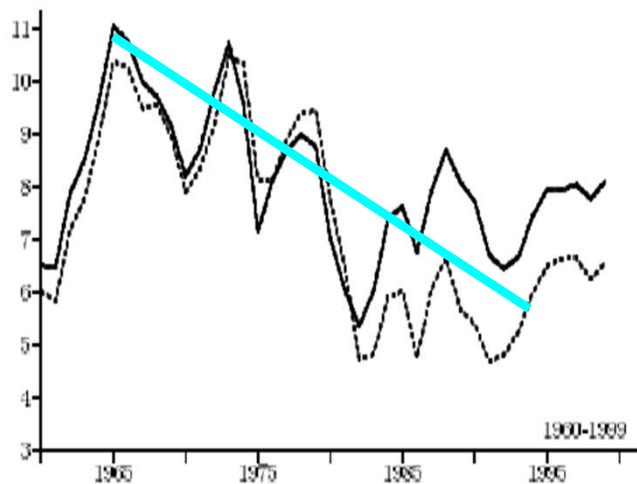
-- *The New Imperialism*, 2003

<http://davidharvey.org>



# 'overaccumulation' and GDP stagnation: source of decline in finance-adjusted US profits

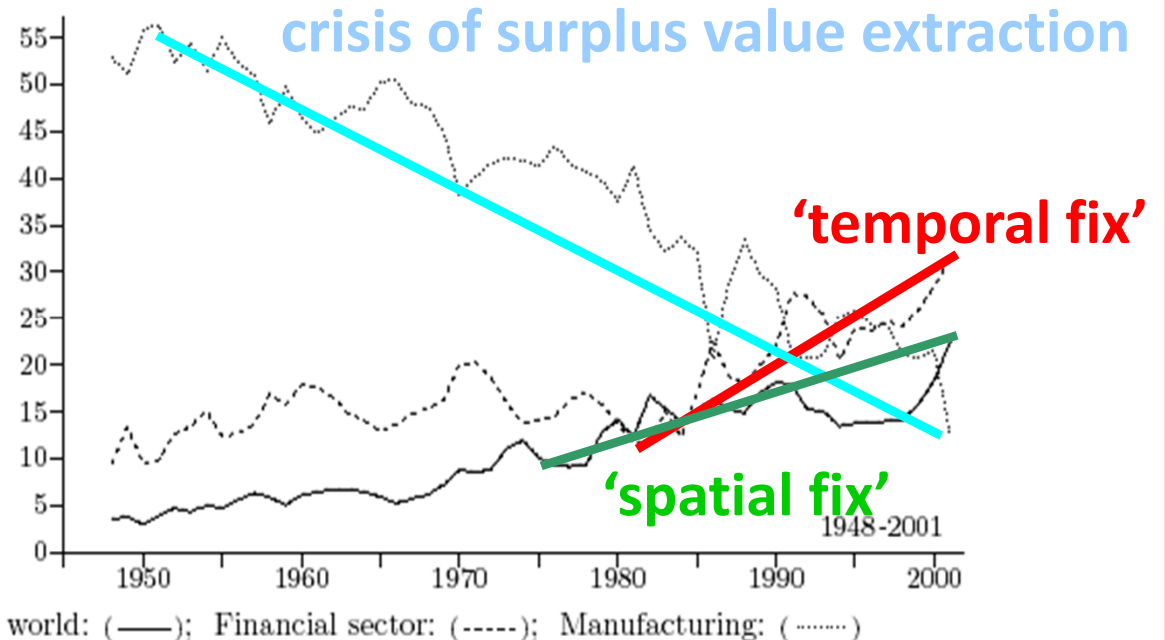
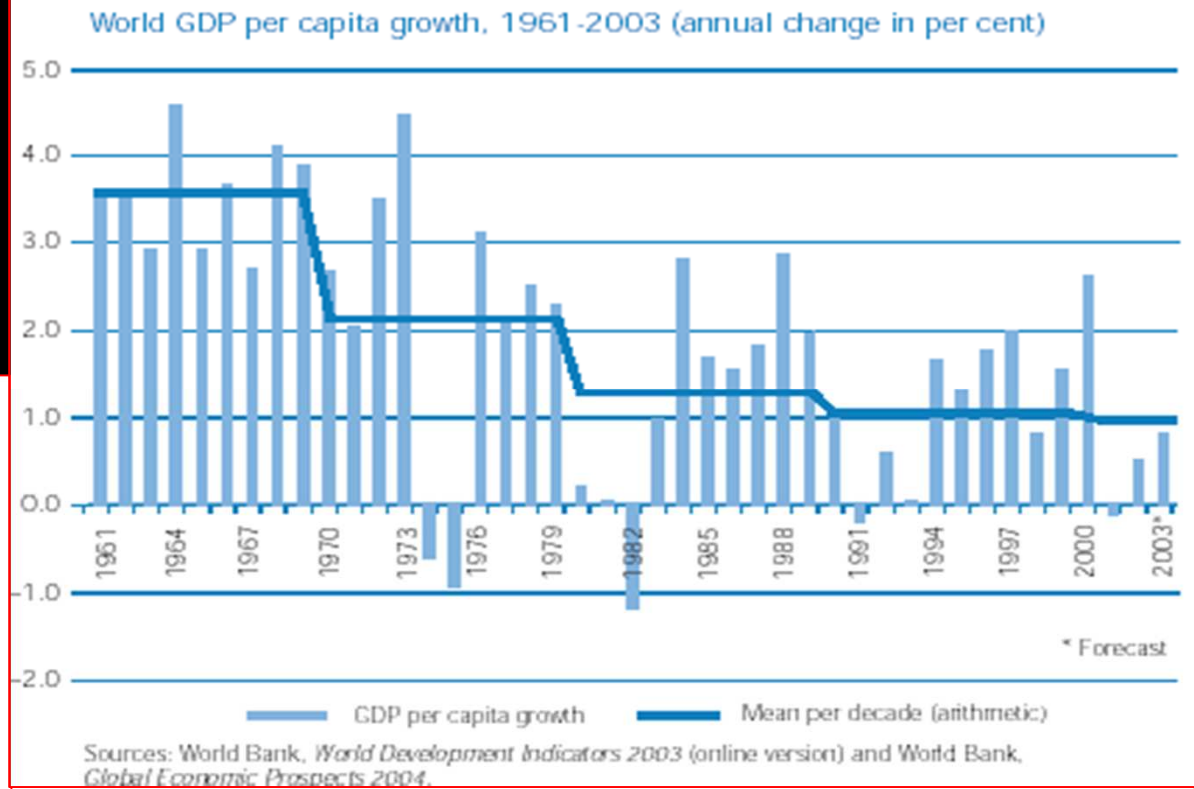
Figure 3 US, nonfinancial corporations: Profit rates prior to the payment of real interest (—) and after (-----), %



In the first series, profits are equal to the net product minus the cost of labor, and business and profit taxes. They are divided by the net worth (total assets minus debt). For the second series, real interest is subtracted from profits, i.e., interest minus a correction for the depreciation of debt resulting from inflation.

**US corporate profits derived much less from manufacturing products; much greater sources of profits came from abroad; profits also came more from returns on financial assets.**

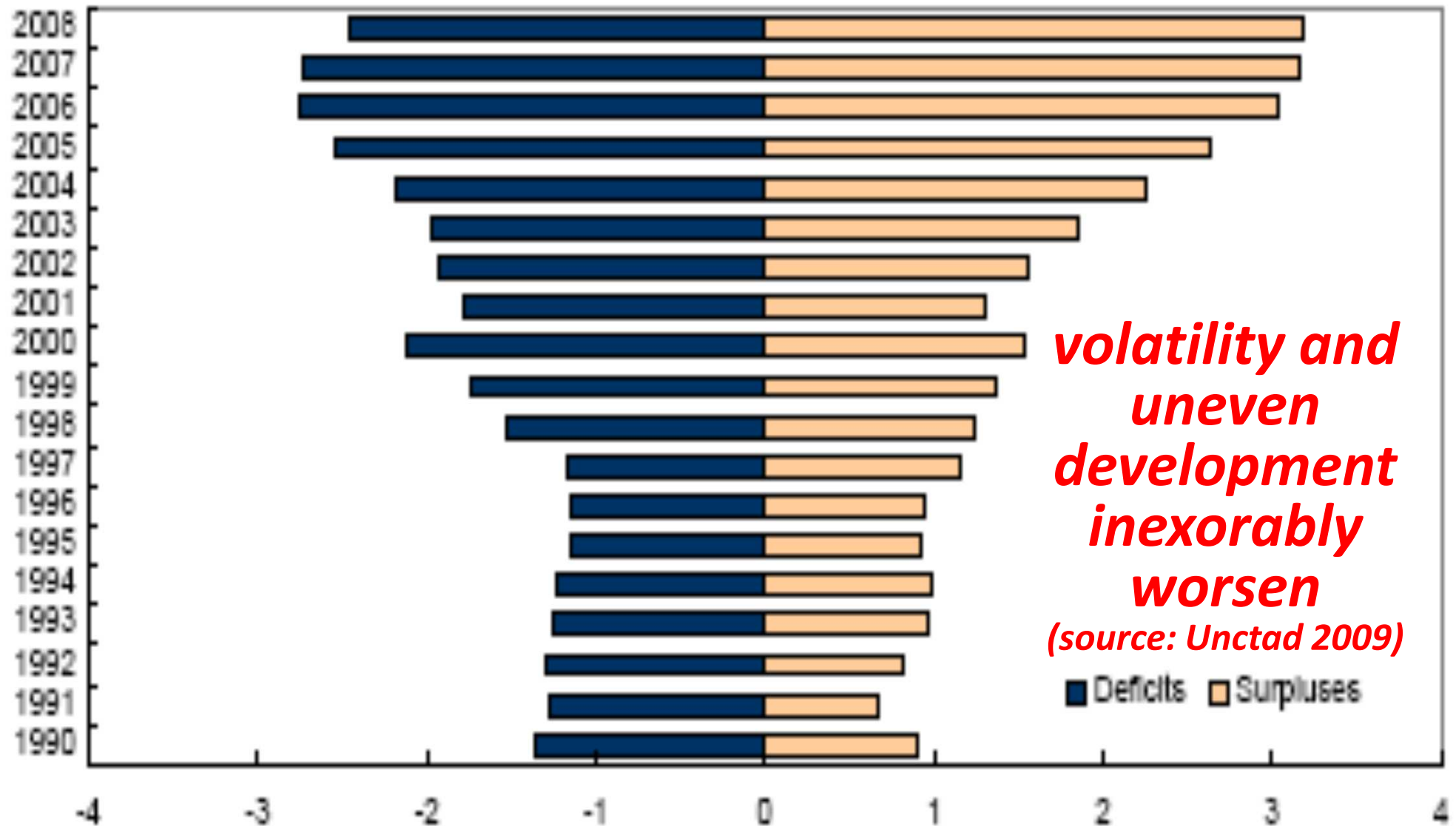
Source: Gerard Dumenil and Dominique Levy





# limits of the 'spatial fix': amplified uneven development

GLOBAL CURRENT-ACCOUNT BALANCE, 1990-2008  
(Per cent of GDP)



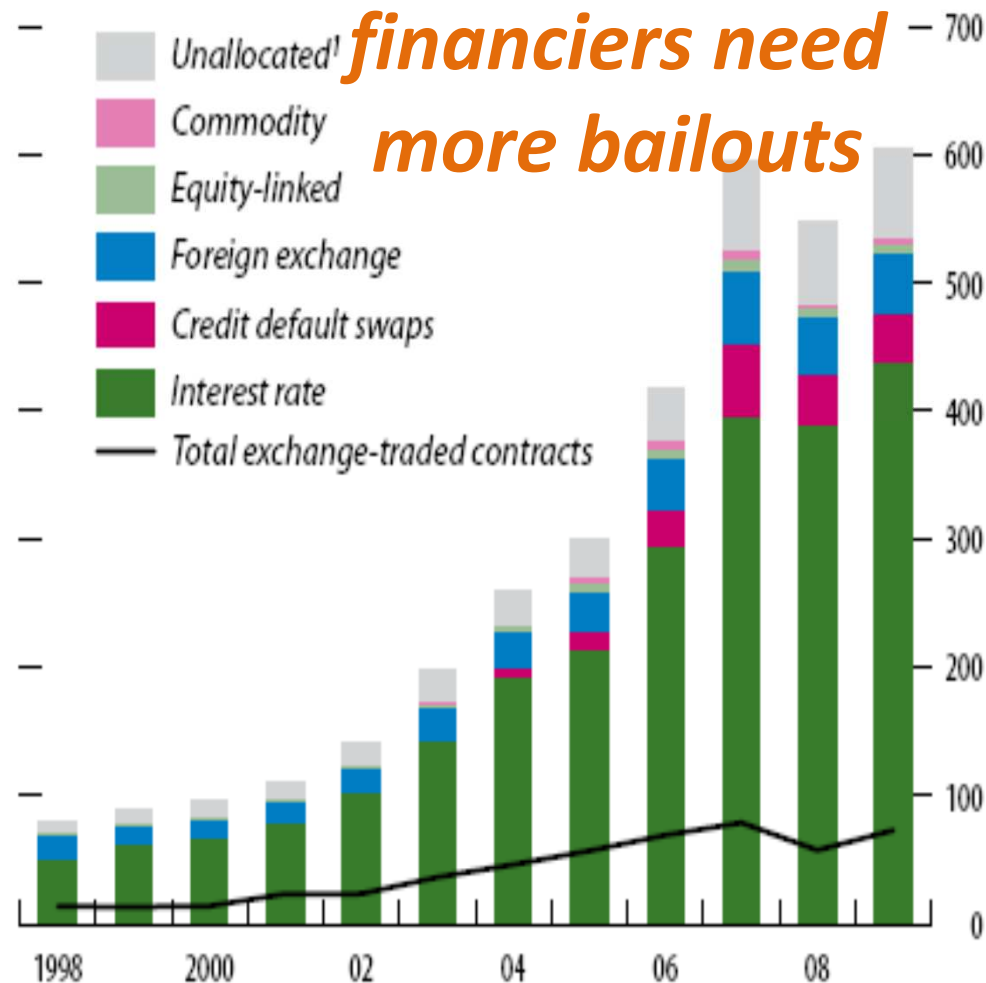
# limits of 'temporal fix': uncontrolled financial markets

Figure 3.1. Global Over-the-Counter Derivatives Markets

(In trillions of U.S. dollars; notional amounts of contracts outstanding)

*as limits are reached,*

*financiers need more bailouts*



Source: IMF, *Global Financial Stability Report*, April 2010

Figure 4.1. Global Liquidity

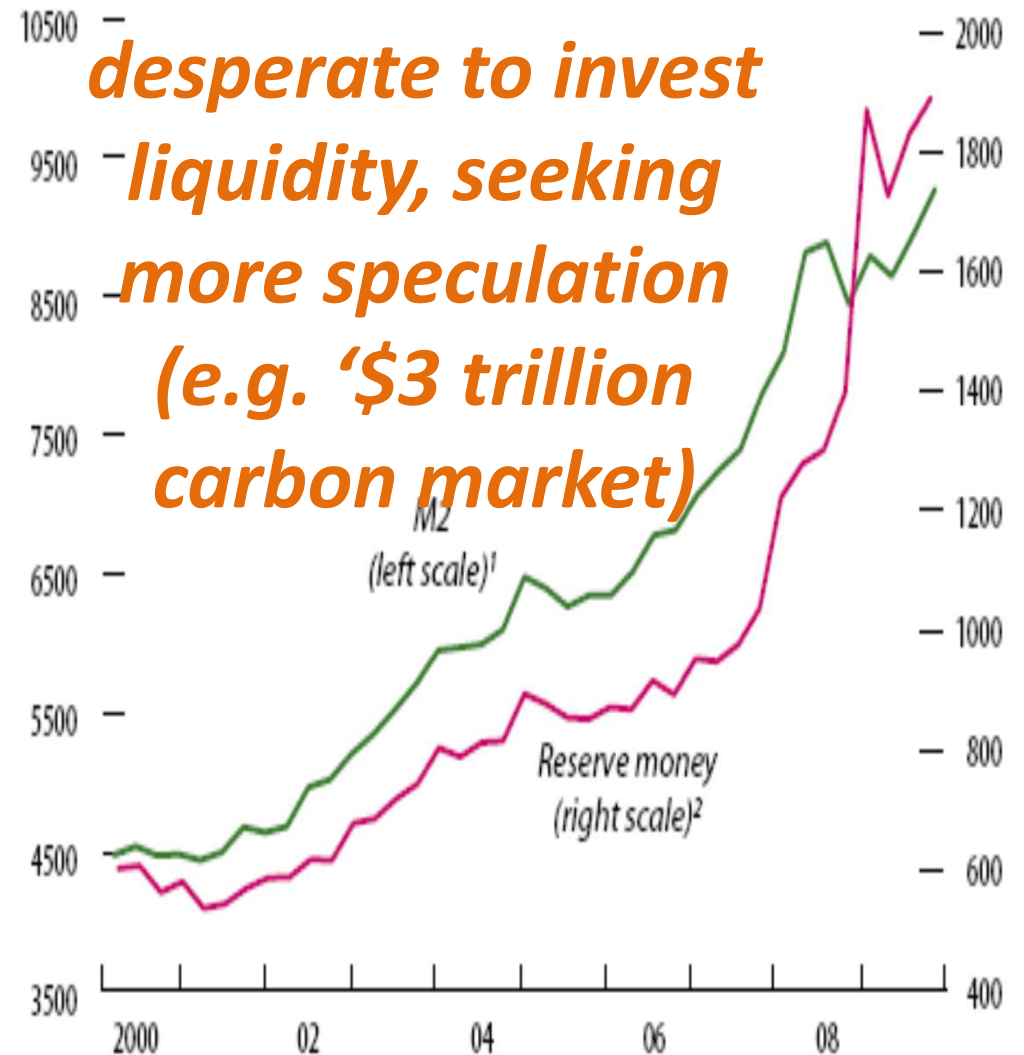
(In billions of U.S. dollars; GDP-weighted; quarterly data)

*and become more desperate to invest*

*liquidity, seeking*

*more speculation*

*(e.g. '\$3 trillion carbon market')*

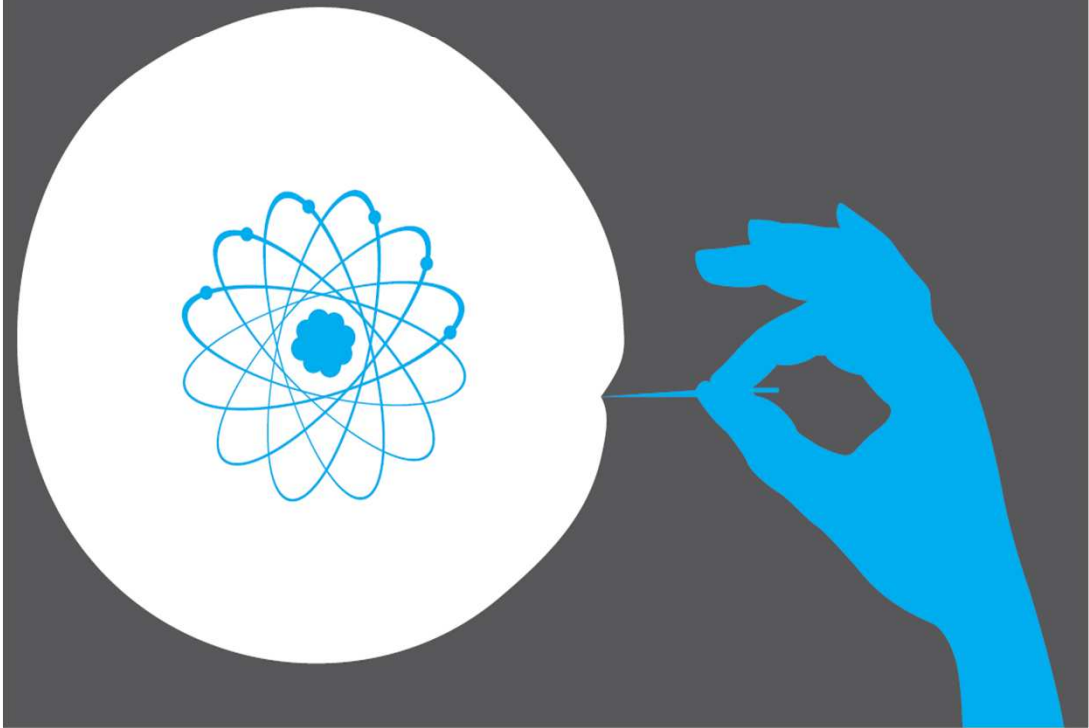


**UK Climate Change Minister  
Greg Barker, 2010:**  
**“We want the *City of London*, with its unique expertise in innovative financial products, to lead the world and become the *global hub for green growth finance*. We need to put the *sub-prime disaster* behind us ...”**



## Unburnable Carbon –

Are the world's financial markets carrying a carbon bubble?





HOODWINKED IN THE HOTHOUSE

# False Solutions to climate change

second edition



Rising Tide North America  
and Carbon Trade Watch



Indigenous Peoples' Guide  
**FALSE SOLUTIONS TO CLIMATE CHANGE**



**DON'T BE FOOLED!**

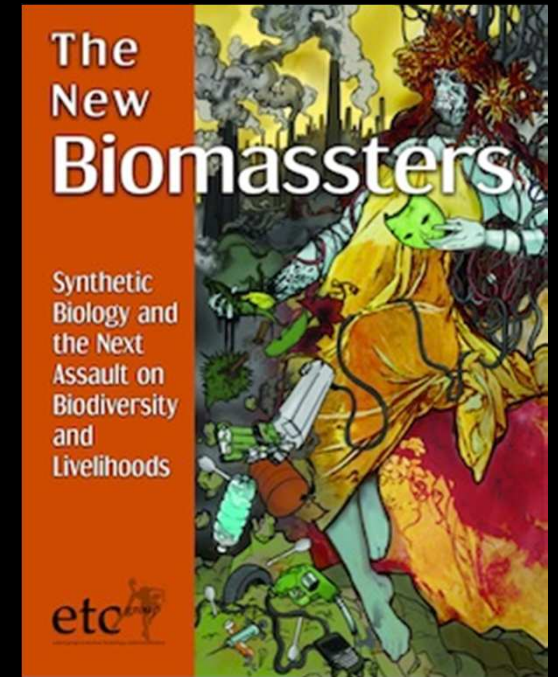
## ***False Solutions: technology***

- ***dirty 'clean energy': nuclear, 'clean coal', fracking shale gas, hydropower, hydrogen;***
- ***biofuels, biomass, biochar;***
- ***Carbon Capture and Storage; and***
- ***other whacky **geoengineering** gimmicks***  
(*Genetically Modified trees; sulfates in the air to shut out the sun; iron filings in the sea to create algae blooms; artificial microbes to convert plant biomass into fuels, chemicals and products; large-scale solar reflection e.g. desert plastic-wrap*)



# **biofuel** (soya, maize) as *False Solution*

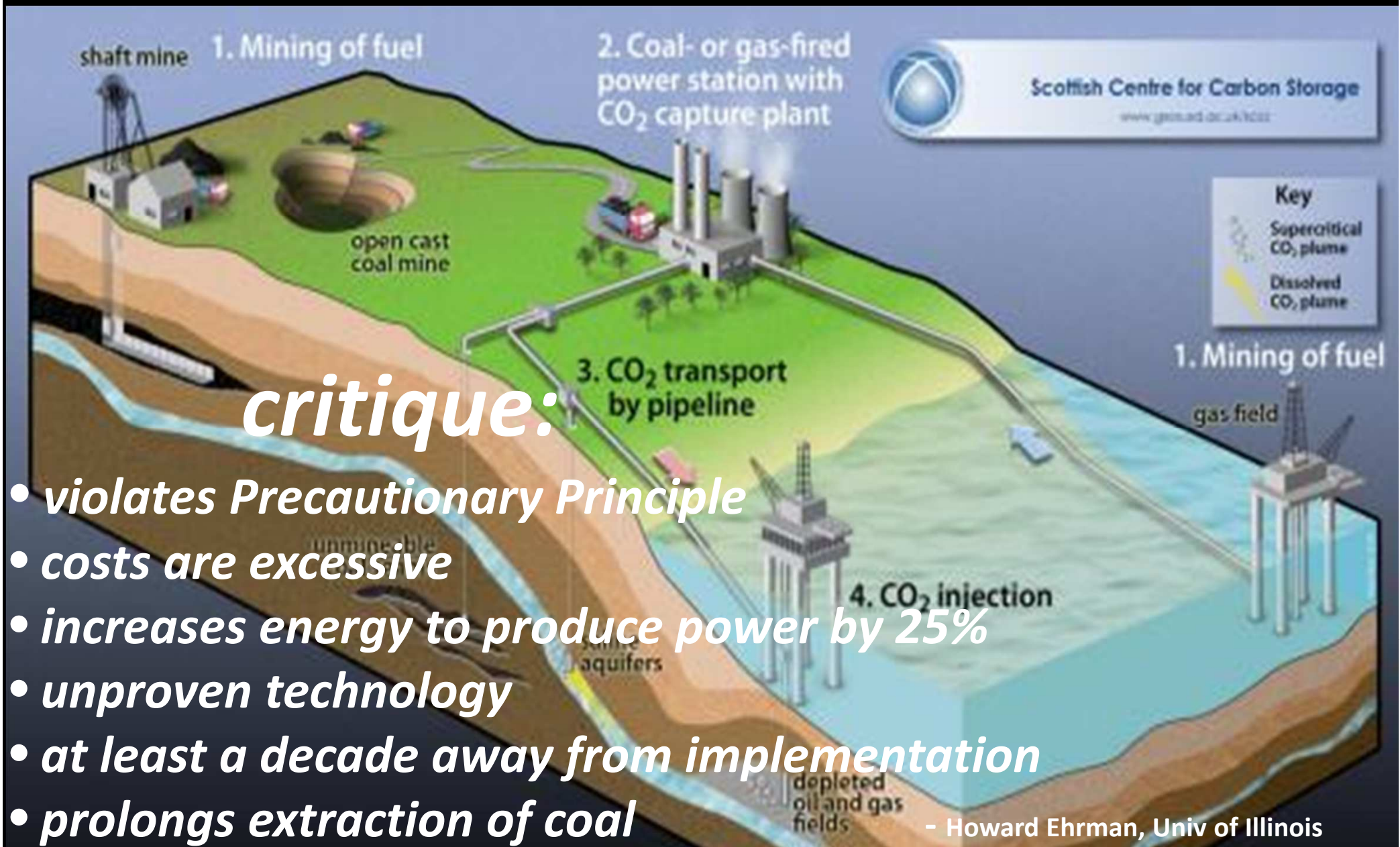
- *Energy Negative*
  - *Water Negative*
  - *Production Increases Air/Water Pollution*
  - *Drives up Energy, Food, Land Prices*
  - *Increases Monoculture, Decreases Sustainability*
  - *Increases Land Concentration in Fewer Hands*
  - *Increases Power/Control by MNCs*
- Howard Ehrman, Univ of Illinois



*‘The shift from petroleum to biomass is, in fact, **worsening climate change, increasing deforestation and biodiversity loss, degrading soils and depleting water supplies.** Further, the new “bio-based” economy threatens livelihoods, especially in the global South where it encourages “**land grabs**”.’*

- ETC Group, EcoNexus/African Biodiversity Network/Gaia, Biofuel Watch

# Carbon Capture and Storage as *False Solution*





# **geoengineering** *False Solutions stymied?*

Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, 2010:  
*no geoengineering activities should take place until risks to the environment and biodiversity and associated social, cultural and economic impacts have been appropriately considered*

Neth Dano, ETC Group Philippines: *“Not perfect... interim definition of geoengineering is too narrow because it does not include Carbon Capture and Storage technologies... a change of course is essential, and geoengineering is clearly not the way forward.”*



# Nagoya CBD decision, Oct 2010

*Ensure, in line and consistent with decision IX/16 C, on ocean fertilization and biodiversity and climate change, in the absence of science based, global, transparent and effective control and regulatory mechanisms for geo-engineering, and in accordance with the precautionary approach and Article 14 of the Convention, that **no climate-related geo-engineering activities that may affect biodiversity take place**, until there is an adequate scientific basis on which to justify such activities and appropriate consideration of the associated risks for the environment and biodiversity and associated social, economic and cultural impacts*

# Payment for 'Environmental Services'?

ecosystems useful to humans:

- **storage of carbon** by soils, vegetation, and oceans,
- **habitats** for plants, animals, and micro-organisms,
- **filtering of fresh water**, and even
- **aesthetic or spiritual significance** of landscapes

- source: Kathy McAfee, SF State University



# Payment for 'Environmental Services'?

*Compensating the poor and other land users for practices that maintain healthy, 'service-producing' ecosystems may be an important part of strategies for sustainable and equitable development. Serious problems arise, however, when such compensation schemes are framed as markets.*

-Kathy McAfee, SF State University

main *False Solution*: **global carbon market**  
*core to multilateral climate governance*

# can 'global governance' fix world crises?

recent record of elites: repeated *top-down failures*

- last solution: 1987 Montreal Protocol on CFCs (ozone hole)

but since then:

- dominant neoliberals (1990s), neoconservatives (2000s)
- World Bank, IMF Annual Meetings: trivial reforms (Chinese voting power rising a few %, Africa stagnant)
- 'Post-Washington Consensus': Stiglitz fired, 1999
- UN Millennium Development Goal rhetoric, 2000
- WTO Doha Agenda 2001: failure
- Monterrey Financing for Development summit, 2002, then G20 global financial reregulation, 2008-09: failure
- renewed wars in Central Asia, Middle East, North Africa
- UN Security Council reform attempts failed, 2005
- G8 aid promises (especially for Africa) broken, 2005
- Kyoto Protocol on climate: Copenhagen Accord tragedy

# Copenhagen Accord, COP 15, December 2009

**"they broke  
the UN!"**  
(Bill McKibbin,  
350.org)

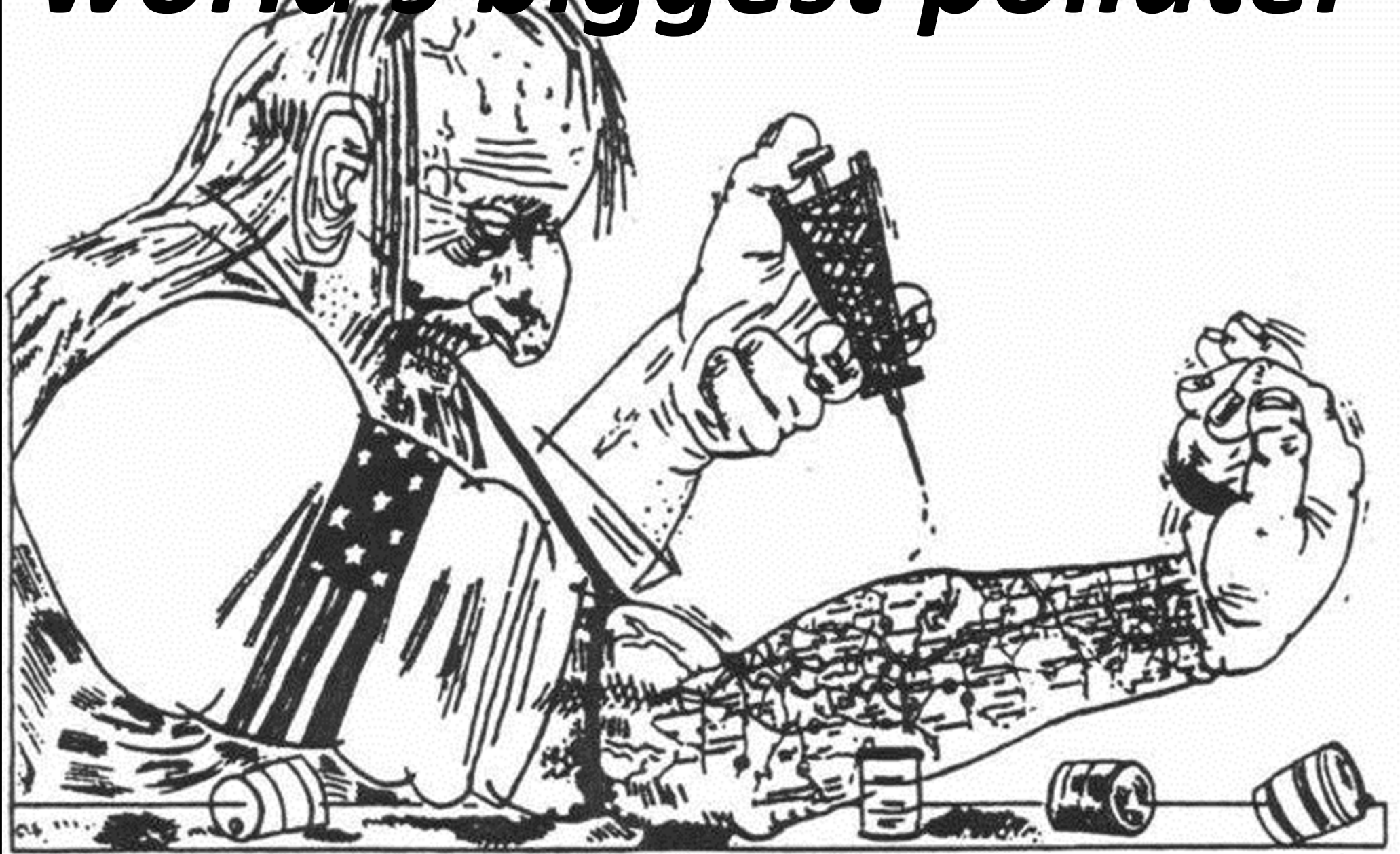
- Jacob Zuma (SA)
- Lula da Silva (Brazil)
- Barack Obama (USA)
- Wen Jiabao (China)
- Manmohan Singh (India)

**non-binding!  
4 degree  
increase!**





***world's biggest polluter***



# lead US climate negotiator Todd Stern, on demand for recognising climate debt?



Maldives cabinet gets  
\$50m in US aid = U-turn,  
to support Copenhagen

Ethiopian tyrant  
Meles Zenawi:  
UN Advisory  
Group on  
Finance cochair  
halved AU's  
2009 demands  
for climate debt



*'The sense of guilt or  
culpability or reparations  
– I just categorically  
reject that'*

Stern thus rejects core  
principle: *'polluter pays'*

*WikiLeaks revealed  
(Feb '10) Stern/Pershing  
bribery and bullying:  
Ethiopia, Maldives,  
Bolivia, Ecuador*

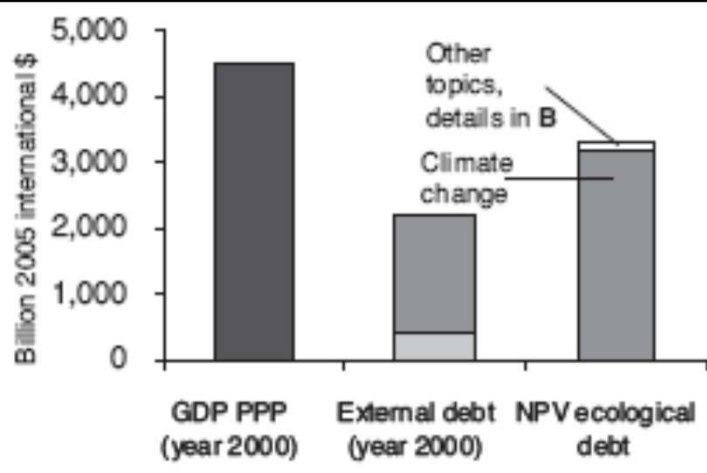


# concept of 'ecological debt' now recognised in serious research

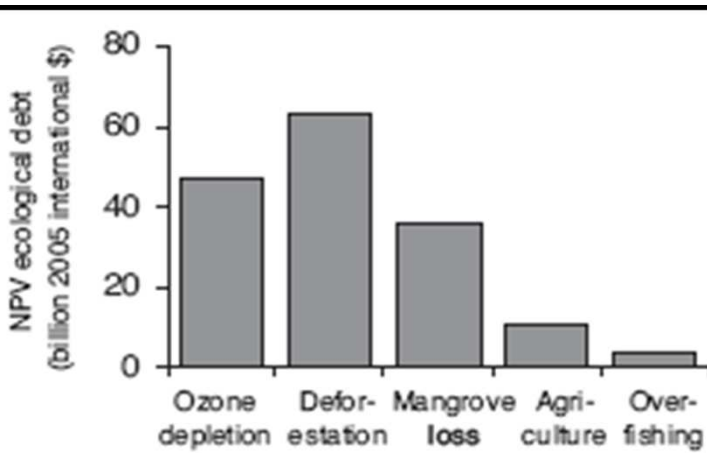
## The debt of nations and the distribution of ecological impacts from human activities

U. Thara Srinivasan<sup>a,b</sup>, Susan P. Carey<sup>c</sup>, Eric Hallstein<sup>d</sup>, Paul A. T. Higgins<sup>d,e</sup>, Amber C. Kerr<sup>d</sup>, Laura E. Koteen<sup>d</sup>, Adam B. Smith<sup>d</sup>, Reg Watson<sup>f</sup>, John Harte<sup>c,d</sup>, and Richard B. Norgaard<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Pacific Ecoinformatics and Computational Ecology Laboratory, Berkeley, CA 94703; <sup>d</sup>Energy and Resources Group, 310 Barrows Hall, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-3050; <sup>c</sup>Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-3114; <sup>e</sup>American Meteorological Society, 1120 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20005-3826; and <sup>f</sup>Sea Around Us Project, Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4



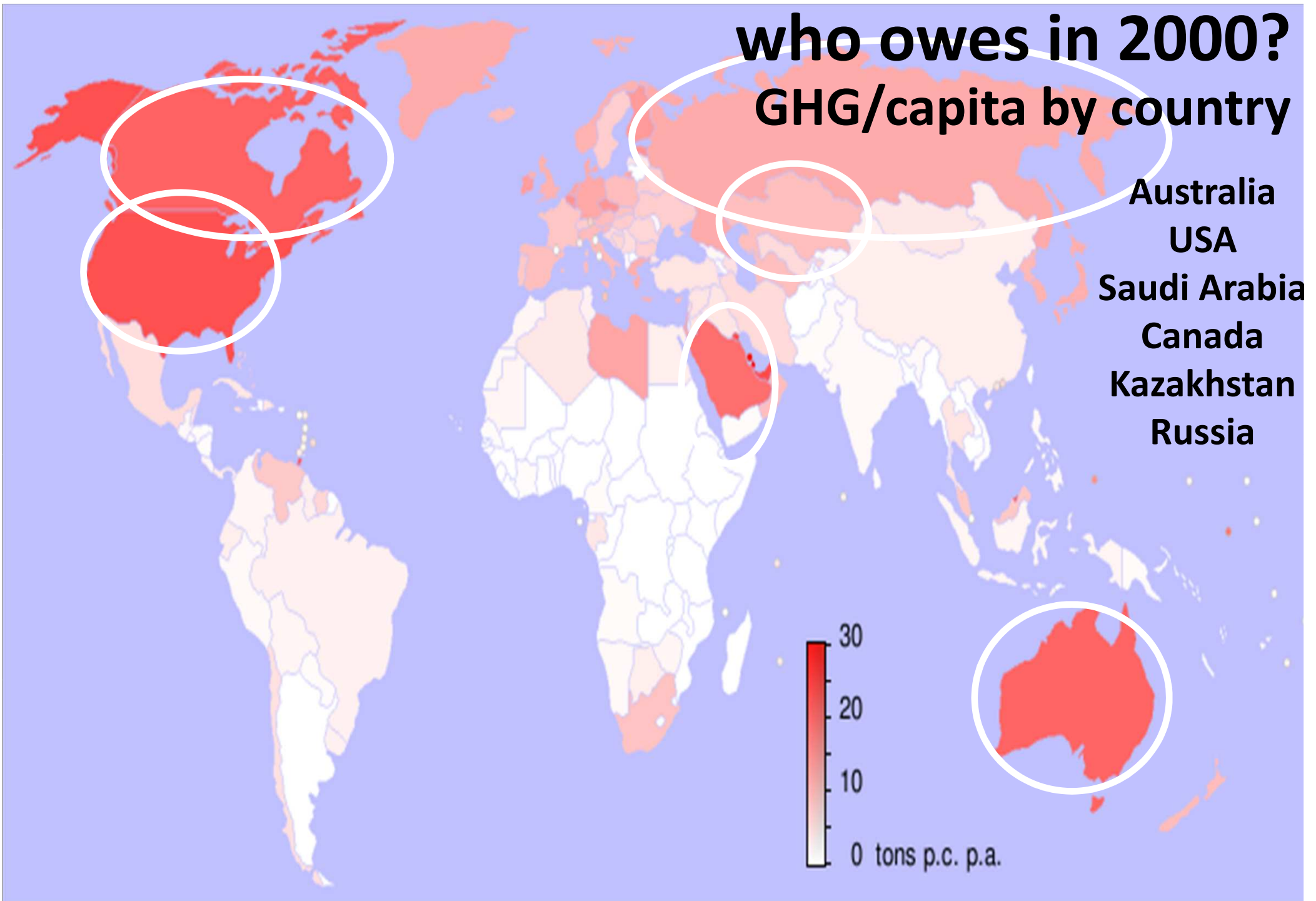
As human impacts to the environment accelerate, disparities in the distribution of damages between rich and poor nations mount. Globally, environmental change is dramatically affecting the flow of ecosystem services, but the distribution of ecological damages and their driving forces has not been estimated. Here, we conservatively estimate the environmental costs of human activities over 1961–2000 in six major categories (climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, agricultural intensification and expansion, deforestation, overfishing, and mangrove conversion), quantitatively connecting costs borne by poor, middle-income, and rich nations to specific activities by each of these groups. Adjusting impact valuations for different standards of living across the groups as commonly practiced, we find striking imbalances. Climate change and ozone depletion impacts predicted for low-income nations have been overwhelmingly driven by emissions from the other two groups, a pattern also observed for overfishing damages indirectly driven by the consumption of fishery products. Indeed, through disproportionate emissions of greenhouse gases alone, the rich group may have imposed climate damages on the poor group greater than the latter's current foreign debt. Our analysis provides *prima facie* evidence for an uneven distribution pattern of damages across income groups. Moreover, our estimates of each group's share in various damaging activities are independent from controversies in environmental valuation methods. In a world increasingly connected ecologically and economically, our analysis is thus an early step toward reframing issues of environmental responsibility, development, and globalization in accordance with ecological costs.



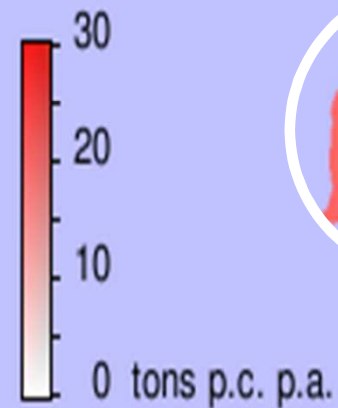
Category	Direct or indirect driver
Climate change	Greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide)
Stratospheric ozone-layer depletion	Chlorofluorocarbon emissions
Agricultural intensification and expansion	Consumption of agricultural goods
Deforestation	Consumption of agricultural goods and



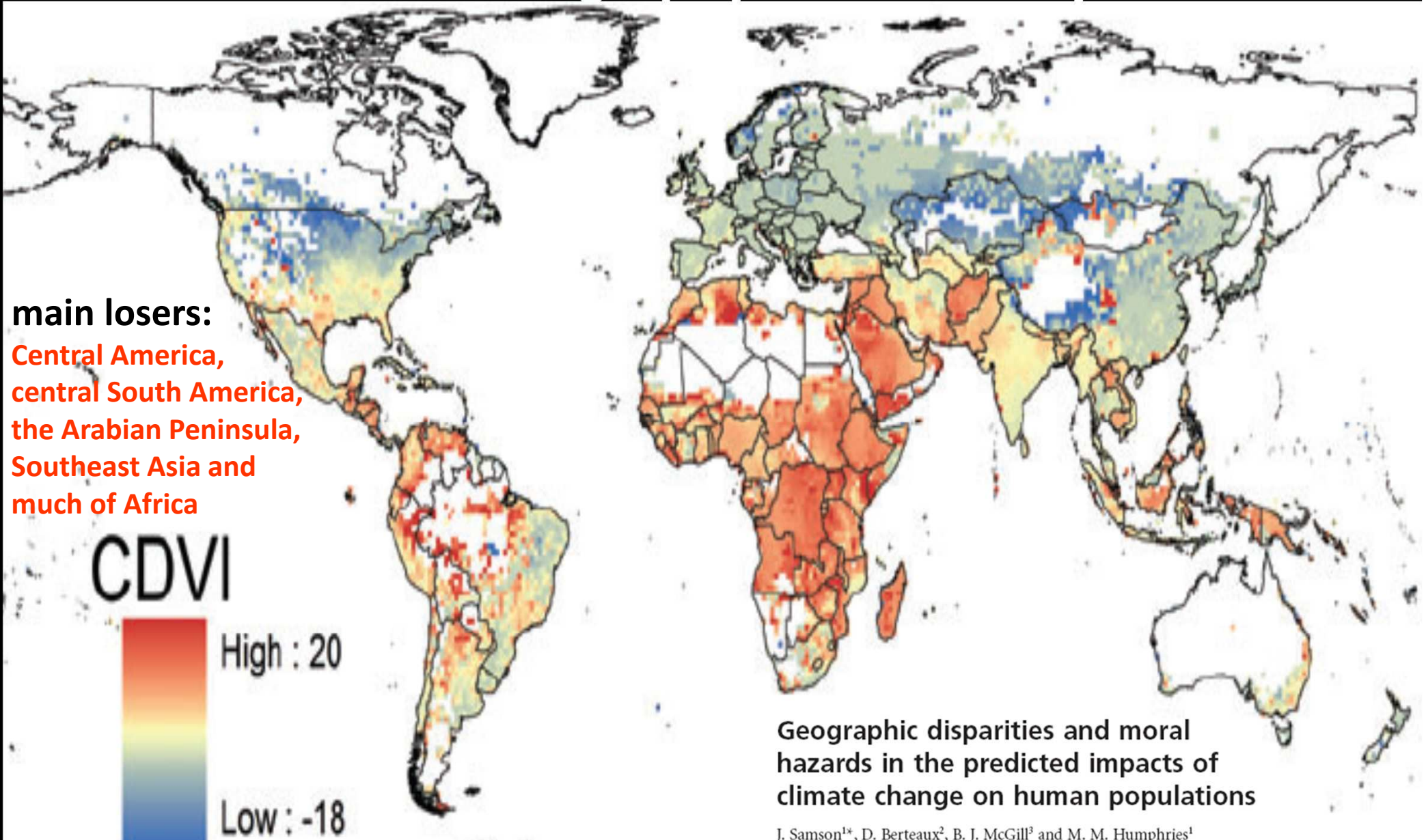
# who owes in 2000? GHG/capita by country



Australia  
USA  
Saudi Arabia  
Canada  
Kazakhstan  
Russia



# who loses from climate change? a 'Climate Demography Vulnerability Index'



# Cancun COP 16 revived market fix



*in theory, as a 'castle in the sky'... but in reality, relying upon carbon markets is like building that castle atop quicksand! – given the market's*

- corruption,*
- fraud,*
- thievery,*
- stagnation and*
- speculation*



# carbon trading gimmick:

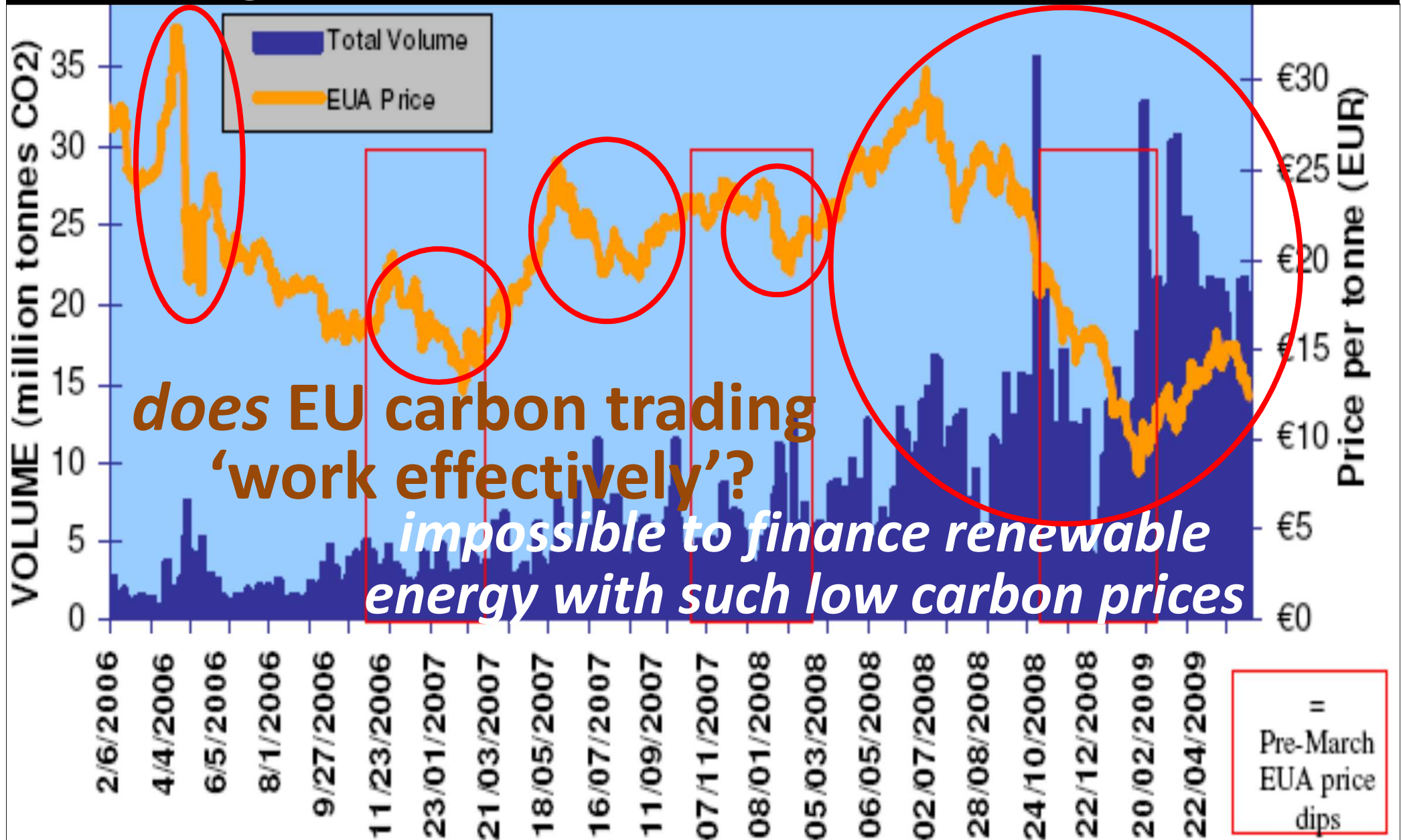
in 1997, US vice-president Al Gore  
(later a carbon trader) pushed for  
Kyoto to include emissions markets,  
in exchange for Washington's  
promised support ... *promise soon broken*

*'The European Union has  
adopted this US innovation  
and is making it work  
effectively there.'*

*(An Inconvenient Truth, p. 252)*



# emissions market's five major crashes, 2006-09, 2010 stagnation, 2011 theft-closure, 2012 denouement?





new critique of carbon trading  
[www.storyofcapandtrade.org](http://www.storyofcapandtrade.org)



New Film by *Story of Stuff* Creator Offers Provocative, Humorous Look at CAP & TRADE on Eve of Copenhagen Summit

### *The Story of Cap & Trade:*

Why you can't solve a problem with the thinking that created it

San Francisco, CA -- The Story of Stuff Project and Climate Justice Now!—an international network of climate justice advocates—will release *The Story of Cap & Trade*, a 9-minute animated film on carbon trading, on December 1st worldwide at [www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org).

Hosted by Annie Leonard, the creator of the viral video *The Story of Stuff*, (viewed worldwide over 8 million times), the *Story of Cap & Trade* is the first in a series of six short films the Story of Stuff Project is releasing over the coming year with Free Range Studios ([www.freerangestudios.com](http://www.freerangestudios.com)) and more than a dozen of the world's leading sustainability organizations.

*The Story of Cap & Trade* takes a provocative but humorous look at cap and trade, the leading climate solution under consideration in Copenhagen and on Capitol Hill. Employing the same urgent honesty that made *The Story of Stuff* so successful—and flash animation that makes it clear who wins and who loses—*The Story of Cap & Trade* points to the 'devils in the details' in current cap and trade proposals: free permits to big polluters, fake carbon offsets and, most importantly, distraction from the significant tasks at hand in tackling the climate crisis.

free download (en español):  
[WWW.STORYOFSTUFF.ORG](http://WWW.STORYOFSTUFF.ORG)



# introducing: Durban Group for Climate Justice

- **October 2004 initiative**
- **supported by Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, Sweden**
- **driven by grassroots activists in India, Brazil, Thailand, South Africa, etc**
- **largest signatory: Friends of the Earth International**
- **key sites: The Cornerhouse, FERN, SEEN, CarbonTrade Watch, CDM Watch, Dartmouth Univ Environmental Studies, UKZN Centre for Civil Society**

# Carbon Trading

a critical conversation  
on climate change,  
privatisation and power

development dialogue  
no. 48 september 2006

what  
next

# currents of a global eco-social movement

*'climate justice' traditions, 1990s-2011*

*missing! labour  
& anti-imperialism!*

- 1990s environmental anti-racism;
- 1990s *Accion Ecologica* environmental debt demands;
- late 1990s *Jubilee* movement against Northern financial domination;
- 2000s *global justice movement* (following Seattle World Trade Organisation protest) and first *'climate justice'* conference (Amsterdam);
- environmentalists and corporate critics who in 2004 started the *Durban Group for Climate Justice*;
- 2007 founding of the *Climate Justice Now!* (CJN) network in Bali;
- emergence of a parallel (but not programmatically opposed) political tendency in the *Peoples Movement on Climate Change* (2008);
- 2009 rise of the European left's *Climate Justice Alliance* in advance of the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties (COP);
- renewed *direct-action initiatives* that potentially ties in mainstream groups like Greenpeace and 350.org;
- renewed *grassroots campaigning* across the world; and
- potential link to *national states* (via Third World Network), e.g. April 2010 Cochabamba 'World Conference of Peoples on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth' sponsored by *Bolivian government*

# what is 'climate justice'?

*core principles from Rights of Mother Earth conference, Cochabamba, Bolivia (April 2010)*

- **50 percent reduction** of greenhouse gas emissions by 2017
- stabilising temperature rises to **1C and 300 Parts Per Million**



Evo Morales

- **acknowledging the climate debt owed by developed countries (6% of GDP)**

- full respect for Human Rights and the inherent rights of **indigenous people**
- universal declaration of **Mother Earth rights** to ensure harmony with nature
- establishment of an **International Court of Climate Justice**

- **rejection of carbon markets, and REDD's commodified nature and forests**

- promotion of **change in consumption** patterns of developed countries
- **end of intellectual property rights** for climate technologies



# One million climate jobs

Solving the economic and environmental crises

## UK labor's search for 'Just Transition'

Making renewable electricity	425,000 jobs
Renovating buildings	175,000 jobs
Changing transport	300,000 jobs
Industry and landfill	50,000 jobs
Education	50,000 jobs
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,000,000 jobs</b>

- £27 billion in wages for one million jobs over one year.<sup>8</sup>
- £5 billion in employers' national insurance and pension contributions.<sup>9</sup>
- £20 billion in costs like materials, fuel, supplies, rent and interest.

**Total cost £52 billion**

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Nick Grant, NUT		



vital need for SA **'Million Climate Jobs'** campaign,  
so metalworkers get 'Just Transition': guaranteed,  
well-paid jobs in public/community renewable  
sector that help society and save the planet

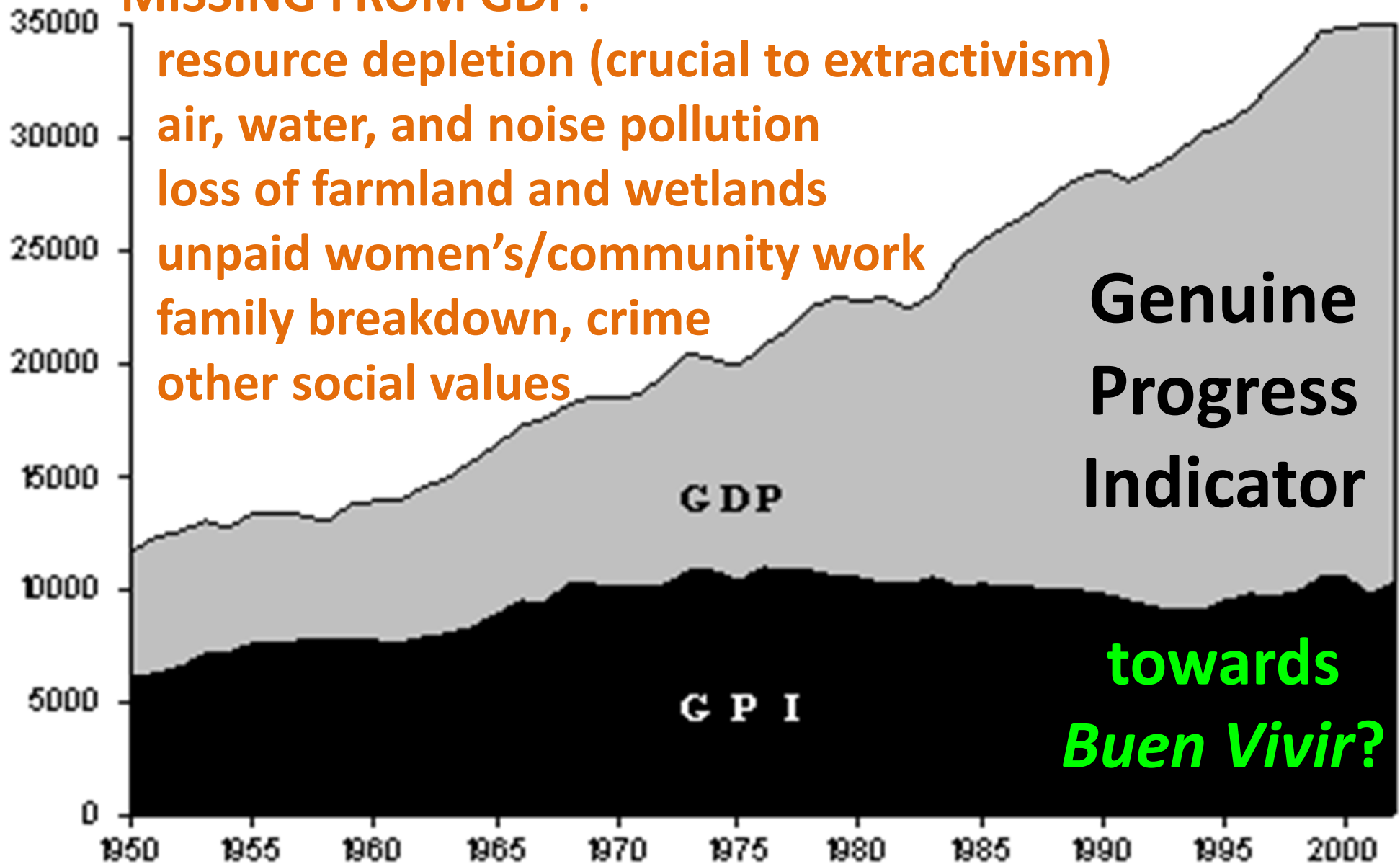


<http://www.climatejobs.org.za>

# new measurements: against GDP

## MISSING FROM GDP:

- resource depletion (crucial to extractivism)
- air, water, and noise pollution
- loss of farmland and wetlands
- unpaid women's/community work
- family breakdown, crime
- other social values





# new measurements against GDP

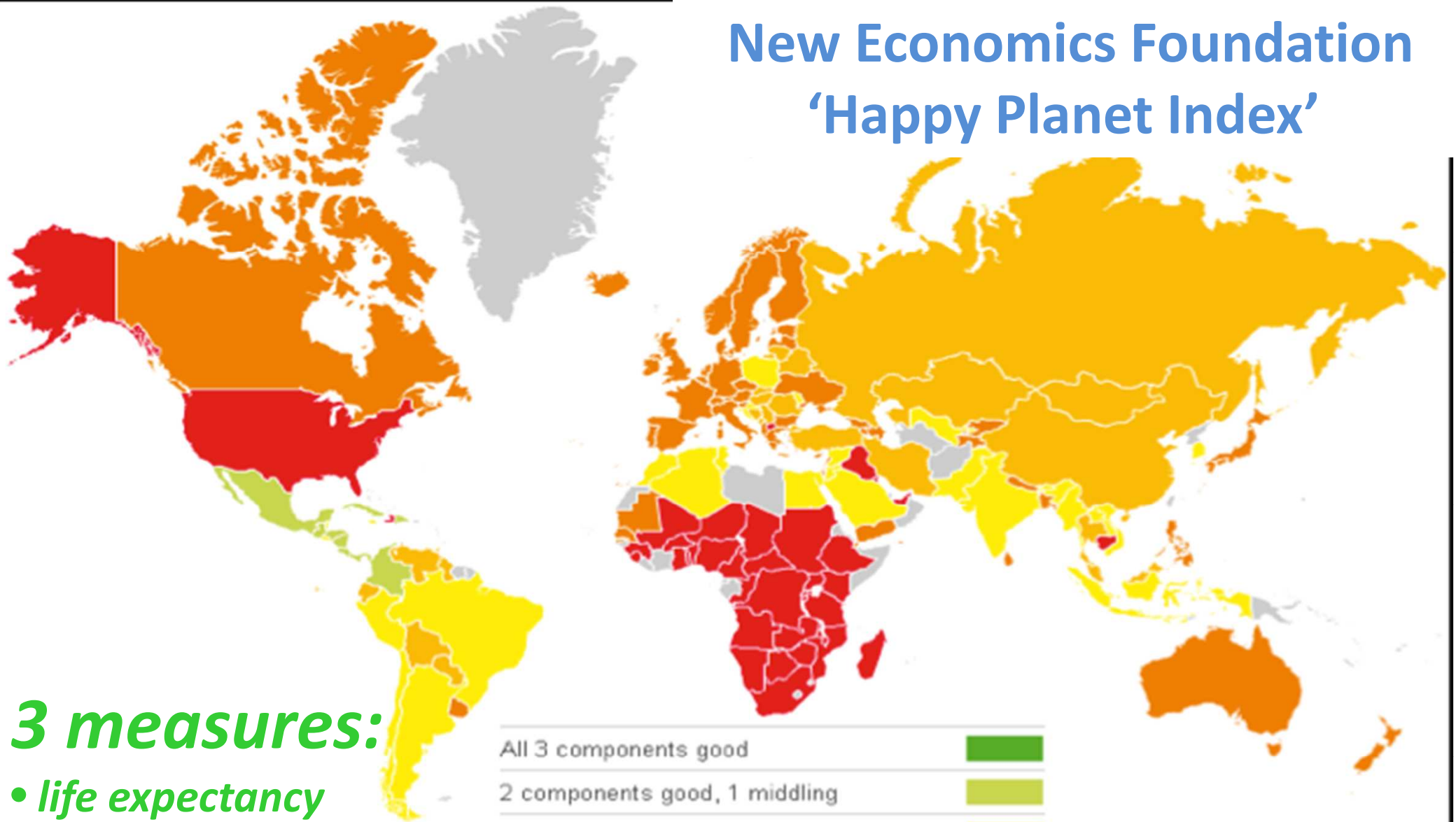
- Ecological footprint
- Full cost accounting
- Global Peace Index
- Green GDP
- Gross domestic product
- Happy Planet Index
- Human Development Index
- Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare

## Seattle:

- *physical health*
- *time or work-life balance*
- *social connection and community vitality*
- *education*
- *access to arts, culture and recreation*
- *environmental quality and access to nature*
- *good governance*
- *material well-being*
- *psychological well-being*



# New Economics Foundation 'Happy Planet Index'



## *3 measures:*

- *life expectancy*
- *life satisfaction*
- *ecological footprint*

All 3 components good	
2 components good, 1 middling	
1 component good, 2 middling	
3 components middling	
Any with 1 component poor	
2 components poor, or 'blood red' footprint	



**GLOBAL CLIMATE APARTHEID**

UN. TIMES 1-9-02 ZAPIRO®