

Can decoupling result in responsible resource use ?

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The IRP

www.UNEP.org/resourcepanel/

- independent scientific assessments on resource use
- better understanding of how to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental impacts

Can decoupling result in
responsible resource use?

YES

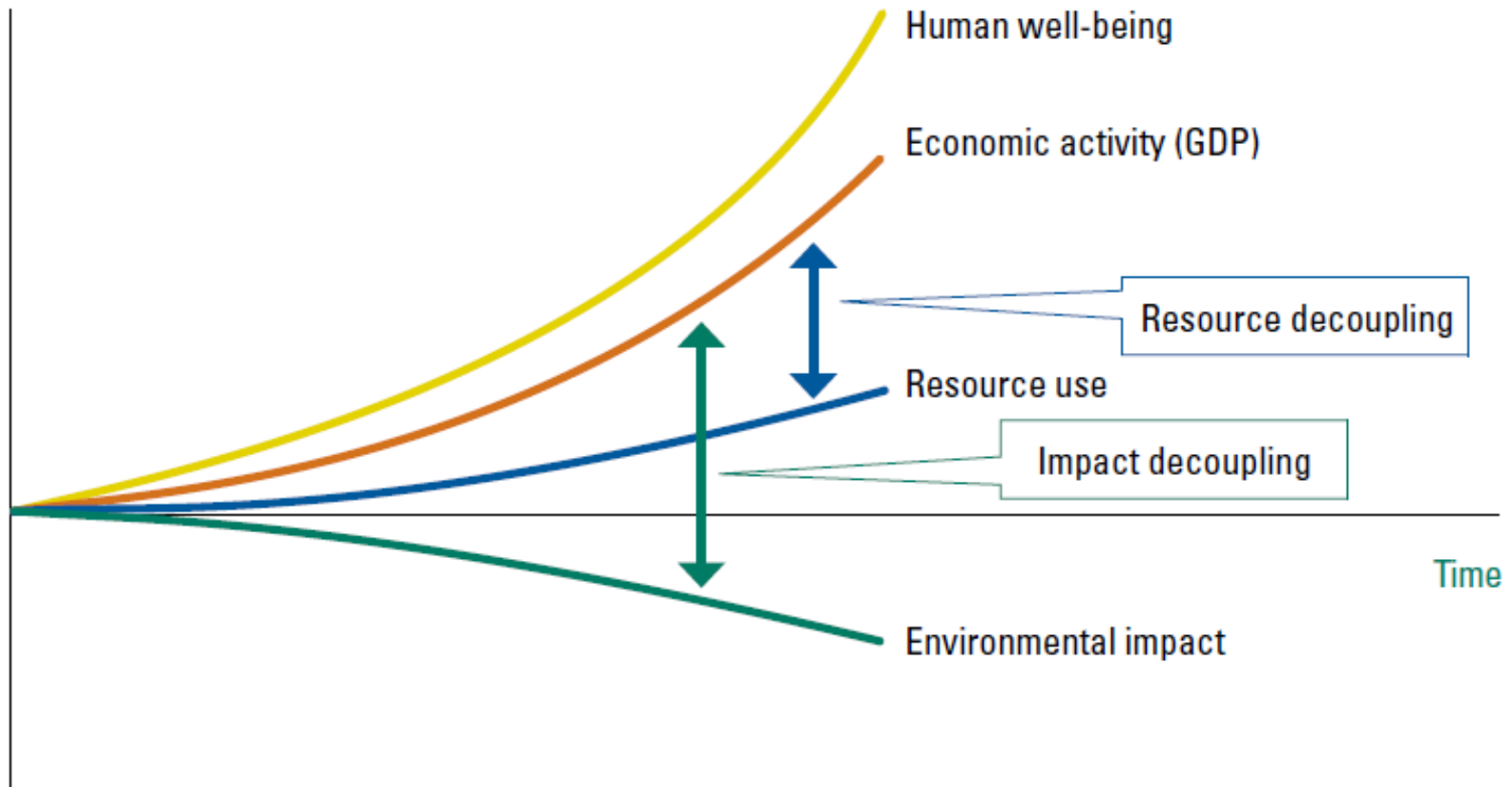
But if there is political will!

Definitions 1

- **Resource efficiency** : achieving more with less , Mi/Mo
- **Resource productivity** : economic gains are achieved through resource efficiency
- **Decoupling** : delinking economic growth from both resource use and environmental impacts

Conceptual and stylised representation of resource decoupling and impact decoupling graph.

(Source: Decoupling 1, UNEP IRP, 2011)



Definitions 2

- Relative decoupling
- Absolute decoupling
- Rebound effect

Targets for decoupling

4 principles:

- **Regeneration**
- **Substitutability**
- **Assimilation**
- **Avoiding irreversibility**

Quantified Targets and Indicators

- **Factor 10**
- **6 - 7 tons
materials/year/person**

A road map 1

- **Systems thinking**
- **Preventative approach**
- **Circular economy**

A road map 2

Technological innovation (hardware and software):

- * widespread use of existing decoupling technologies
- * leapfrogging
- * quantum leaps

A road map 3

Develop market signals:

- * fiscal reform
- * suppress perverse subsidies

Use additional policy options :

regulations , institutional reforms,
education, norms , research ,

The international dimension of decoupling

- 27% of energy related CO2 emissions are in traded products
- An international approach is also needed
- To be leader gives a competitive advantage

Not an easy road ! Many obstacles

- **Short term thinking**
- **Belief that it will decrease quality of life**
- **Belief that heavy investments are needed**
- **Lobbying**
- **Prices of products do not reflect their impacts**

In Conclusion

- **We have decoupling technologies**
- **We have policy know how for responsible resource use**
- **We need more convincing power**
- **Make the case again and again, and seed.**