

Friends of the Earth Europe conference: Responsible or irresponsible?
Europe's resource use and its impacts

8–9 November, European Parliament

European resource consumption: responsible or irresponsible?

Prof. Jacqueline McGlade
Executive Director, EEA



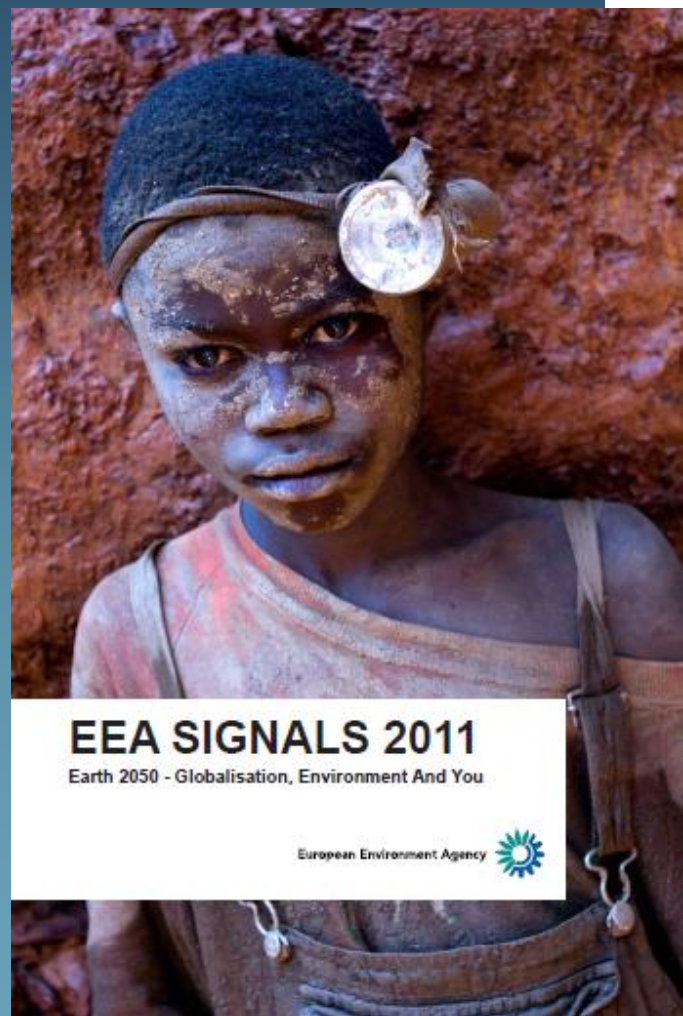
European Environment Agency



"When reality is changing faster than theory suggests it should, a certain amount of nervousness is a reasonable response" The Economist



EEA studies provide valuable insights into the drivers and impacts of consumption – and pathways to sustainability



Europeans have a high level of consumption

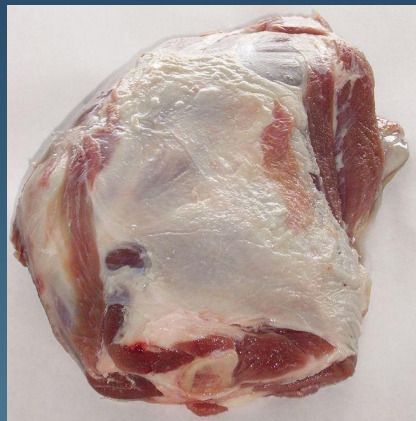


One week's food of a family in the United Kingdom

Source: *Hungry Planet: What The World Eats*, by Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio



Europeans consume...



15 % of world meat output

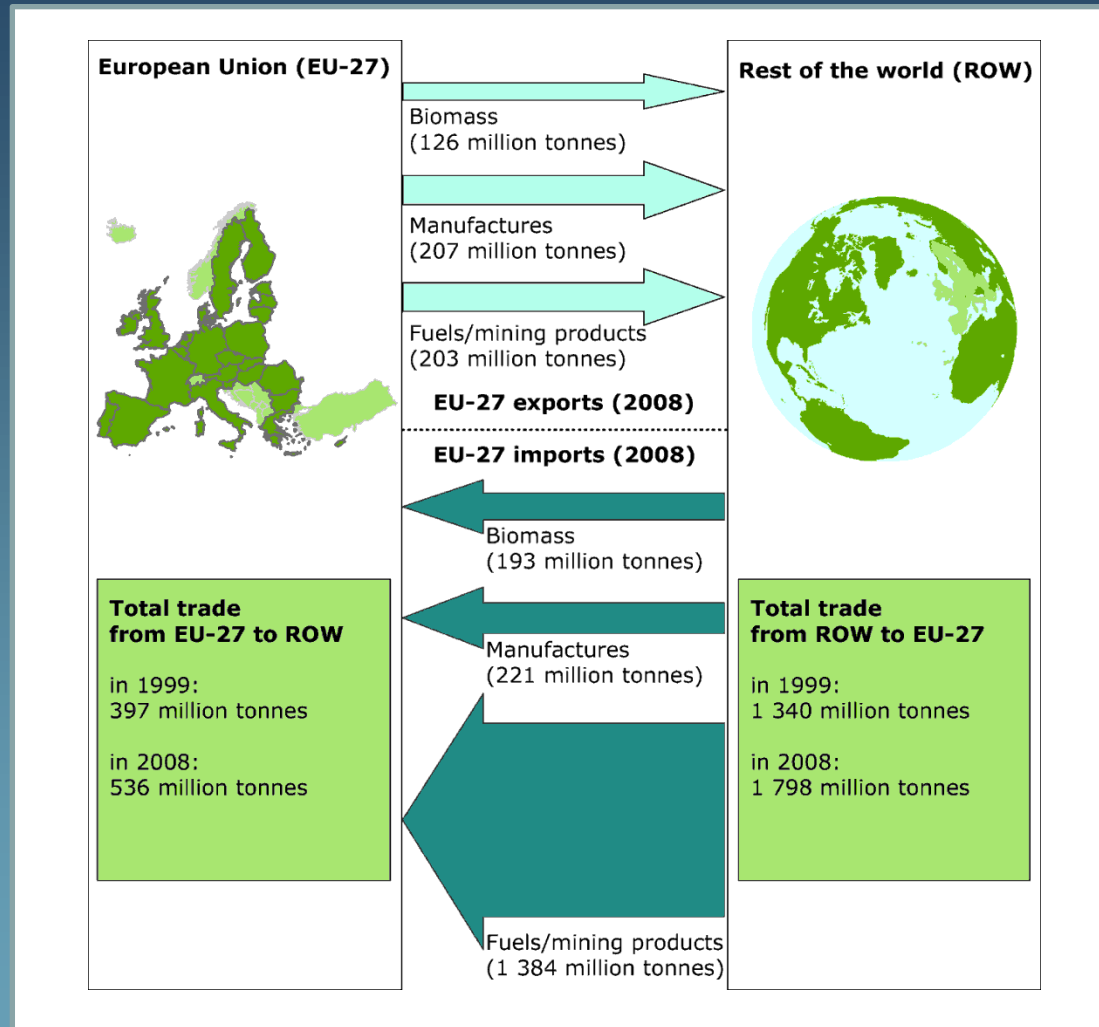
15 % of world energy output



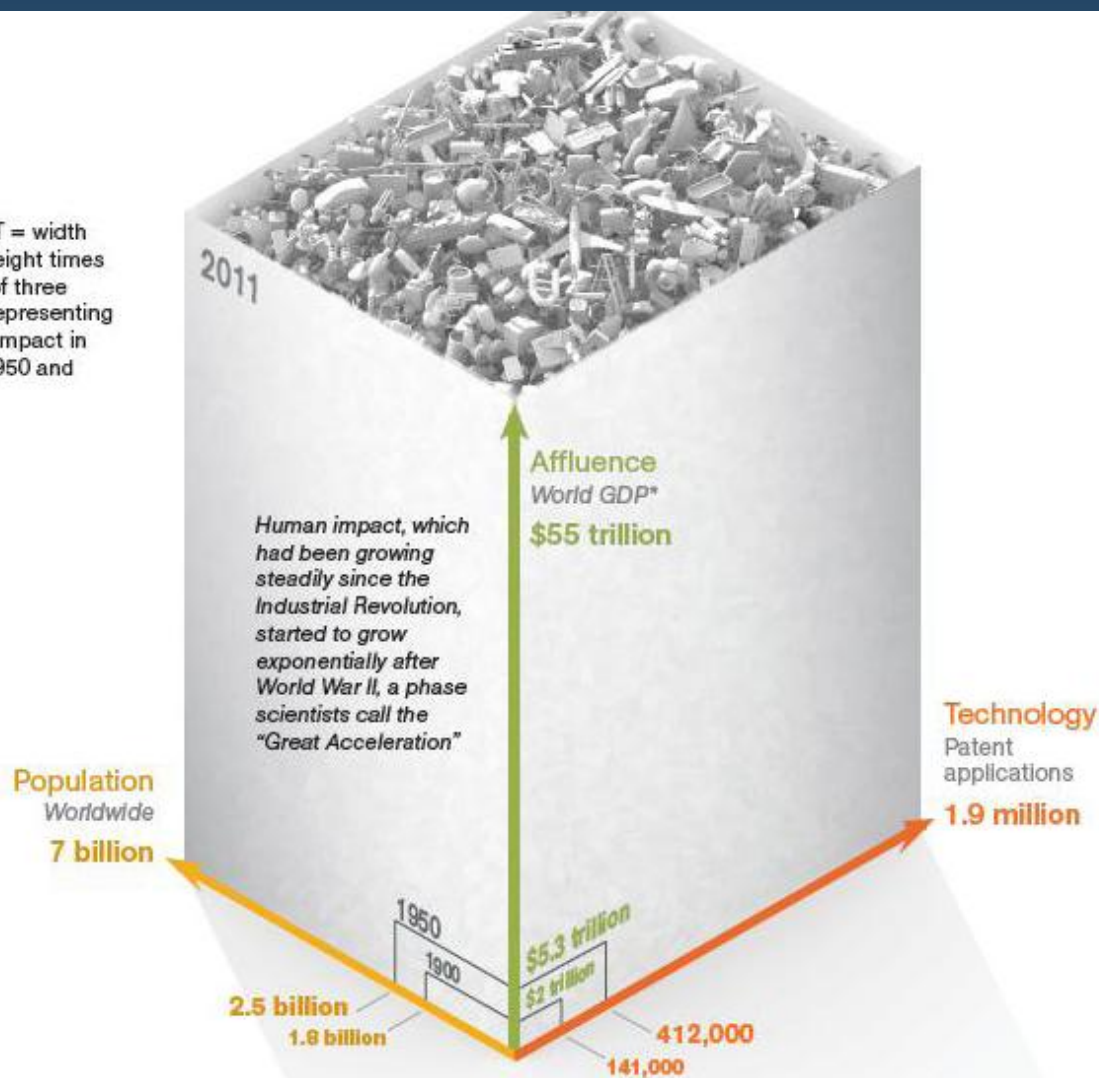
25 % of world paper production



Europe's trade figures reveal significant net inflows of resources from overseas



P x A x T = width
times height times
length of three
boxes representing
human impact in
1900, 1950 and
2011.



20th Century

Population 4X

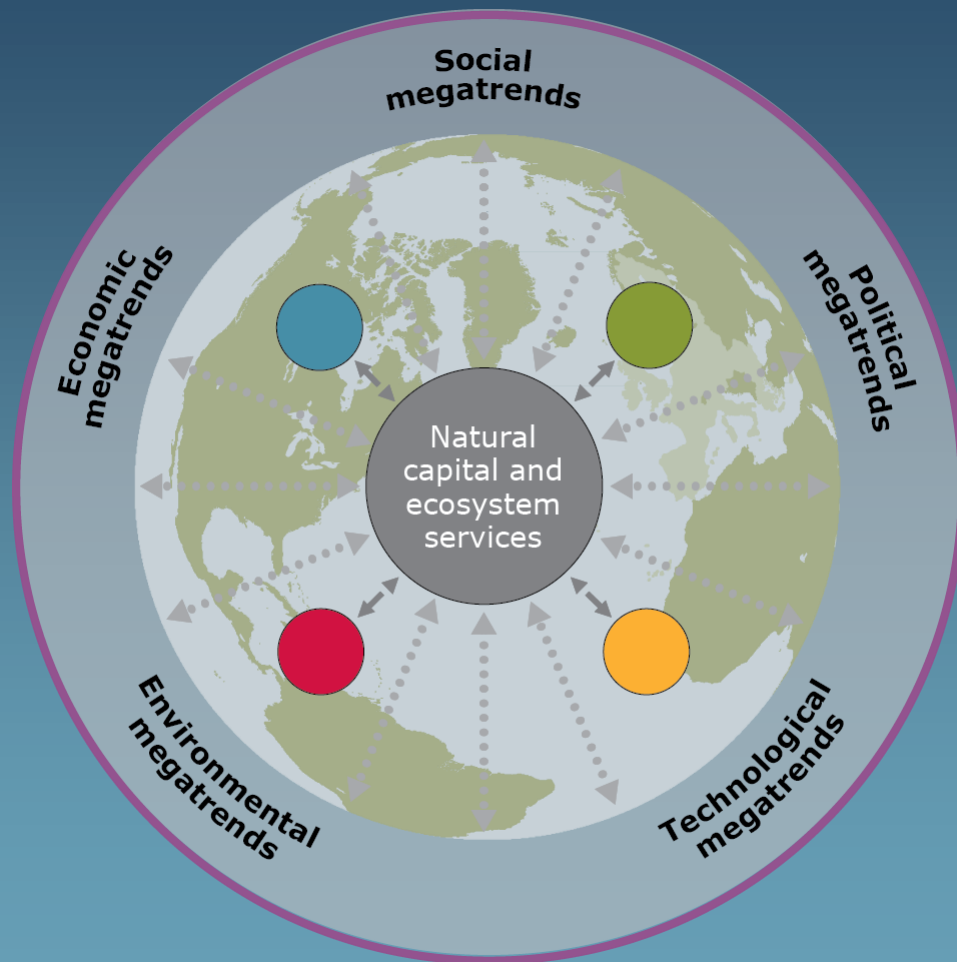
Economic
Output 22X

Fossil fuel
consumption 14X

OECD



Global megatrends will shape Europe's access to key resources



These links highlight the necessity of an integrated response, ensuring coherent management of natural capital across sectors and policy domains.

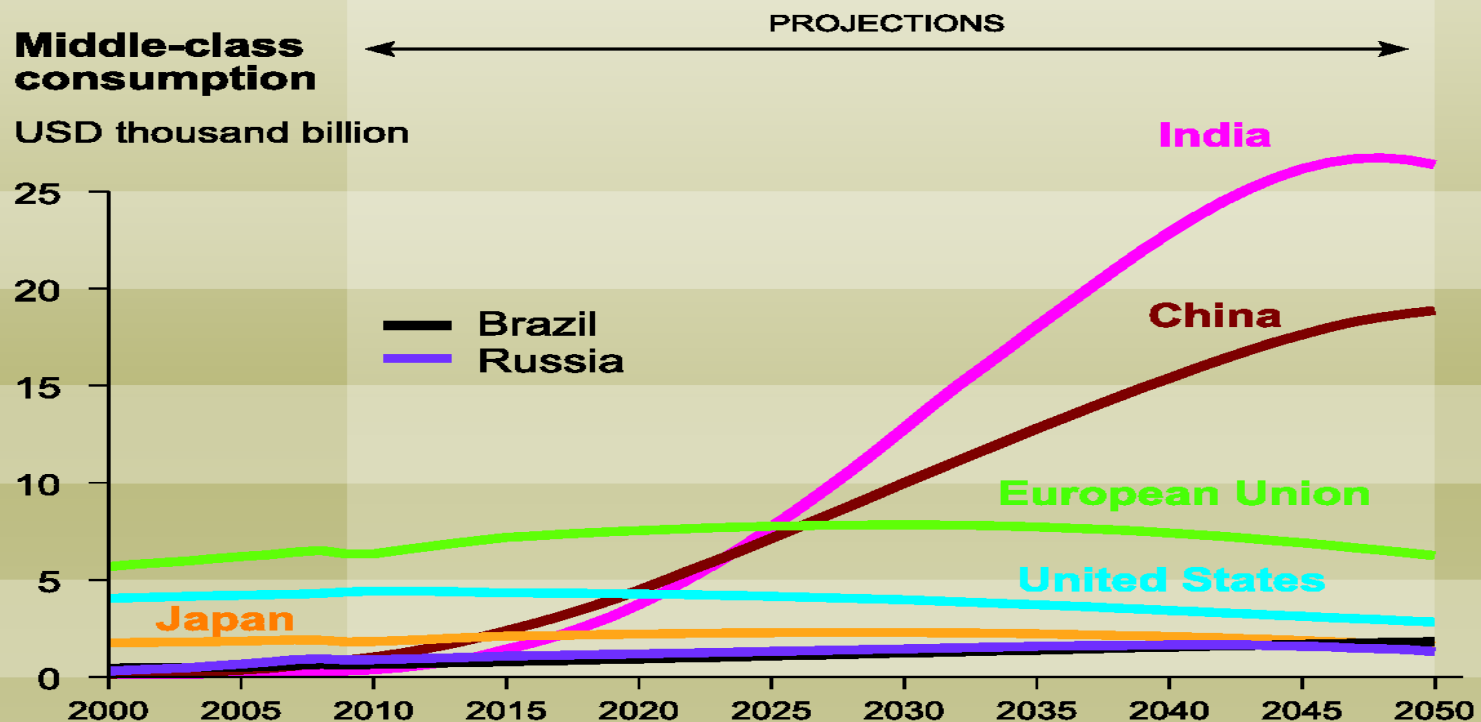
Environment policy priority areas

- Climate change
- Nature and biodiversity
- Natural resources and waste
- Environment, health and quality of life



Economic growth, rather than population growth,
will be the core driver of consumption

Changing middle class



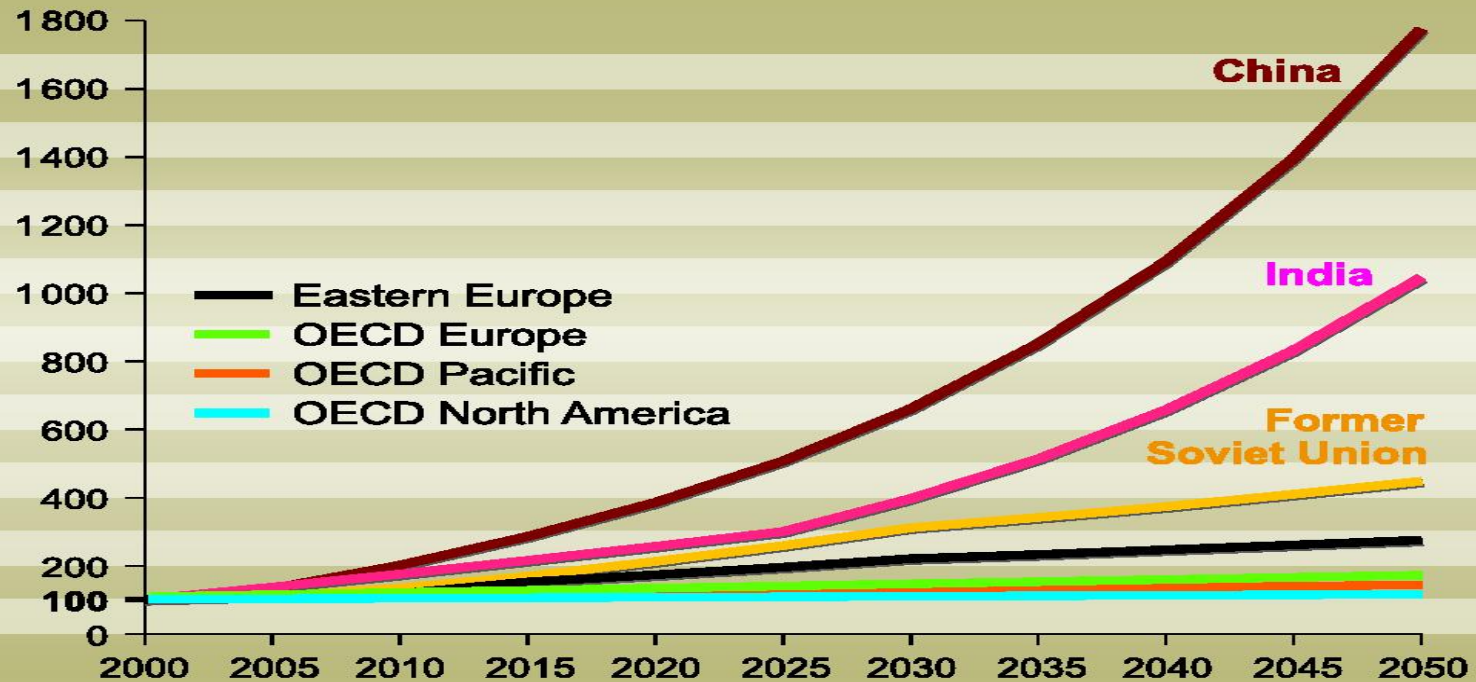
Car ownership is set to soar

Car ownership rates projections

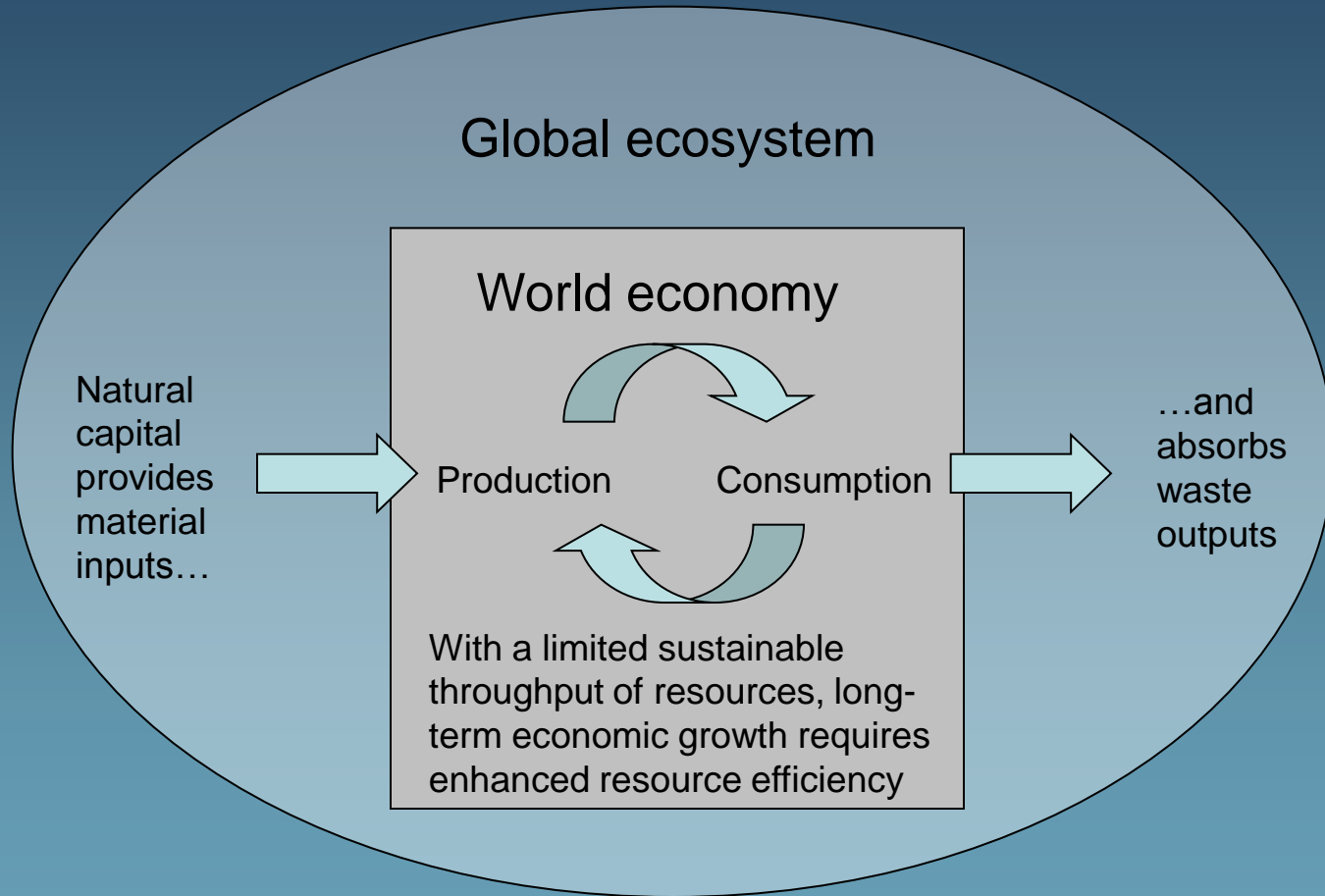
Car ownership rates

Trend

Index = 100 in 2000

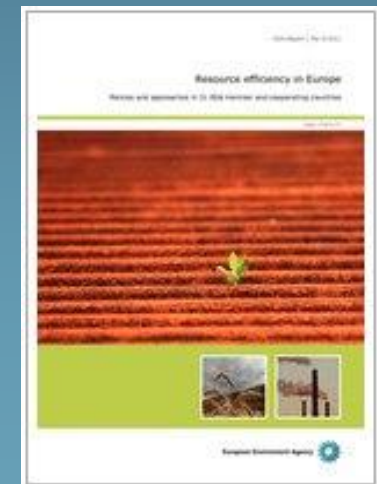


The global ecosystem provides enormously valuable services — but its capacity is finite



Resource efficiency policies in Europe

- Thirty one detailed ‘country profiles’ available on the EEA website
- An analytical report “Resource efficiency in Europe” (Oct 2011)

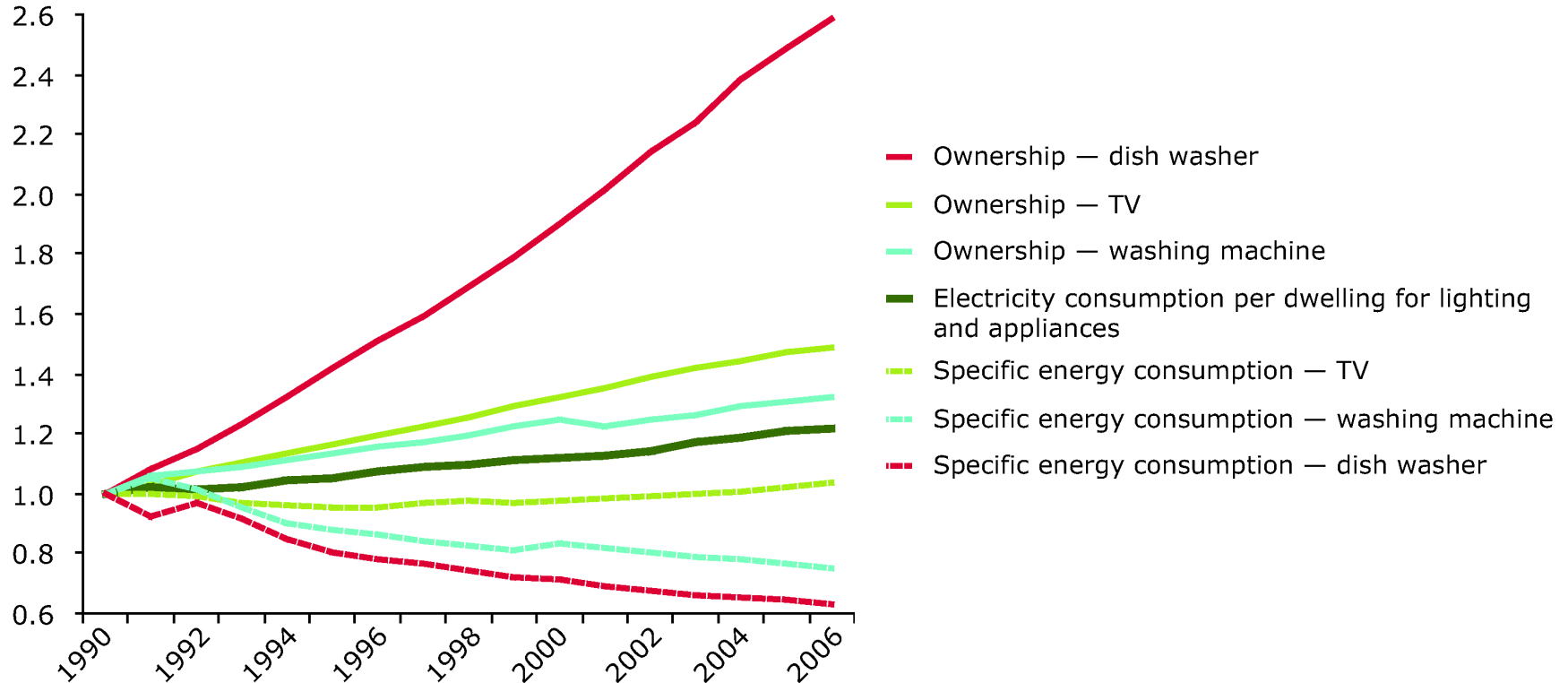


Innovation: incentives and disincentives

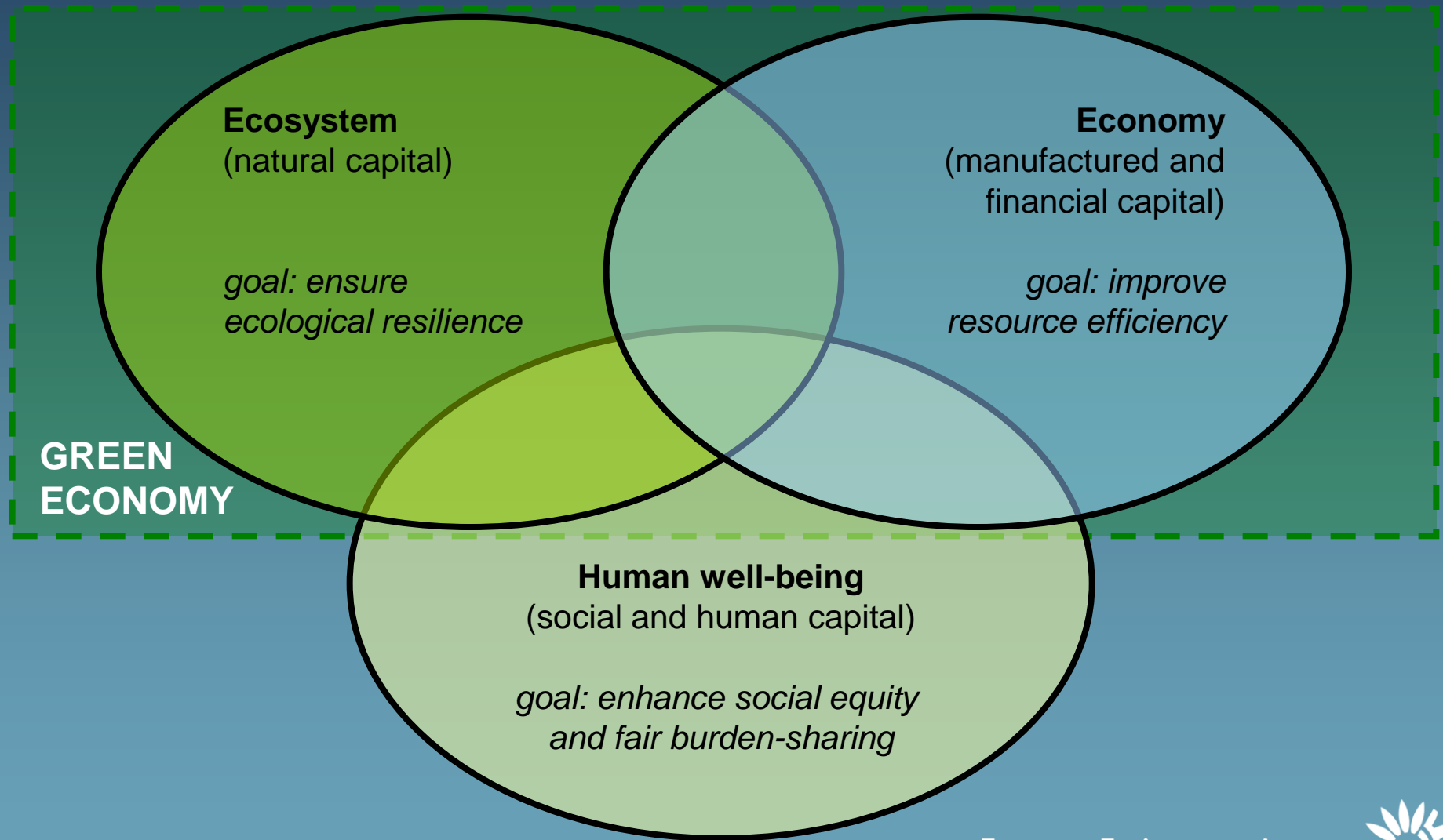


The rebound effect: greater efficiency does not always translate into reduced consumption

Index 1990 = 1



The green economy includes a focus on ecosystem resilience and human well-being



Paying for pollution and clean-up



Innovation in critical times



Our planet has a limited capacity to provide the goods and services that sustain our economies and societies



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Thank you!

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