

*For economists, the world seems to be getting better. For many environmentalists, it seems to be getting worse.*

Apocalypitics

"The sky is falling..."

Chicken Little

Realists

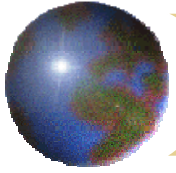
"The world needs a global war on poverty and environmental degradation that is as aggressive and well funded as the war on terrorism"

Lester Brown

Techno-Optimists

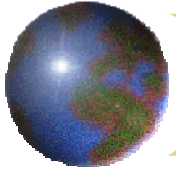
"The 'litany' of environmental fears is not backed up by evidence"

Bjorn Lomborg  
(The Skeptical Environmentalist)



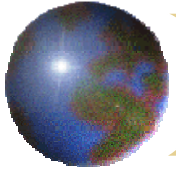
## *Emerging Trends*

- ➔ Rapid global economic growth
- ➔ Expansion of resource consumption
- ➔ Growing awareness of the consequences of rapid growth
- ➔ Emergence of new powerful stakeholders and a new worldview
- ➔ Emergence of credible alternatives to business as usual (NC, TNS, ZERI)



## *Four environmentalist fears*

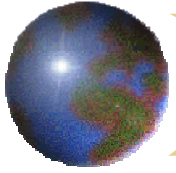
- Natural resources are running out
- The population is ever growing, leaving less and less to eat
- Species are becoming extinct in vast numbers, forests are disappearing and fish stocks are collapsing
- Earth's air and water are becoming more polluted



## *World Scientist's Warning to Humanity (1992)*

“Human beings and the natural world are on a collision course...If not checked, many of our current practices put a serious risk to the future that we wish for human society and..may so alter the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner that we know.

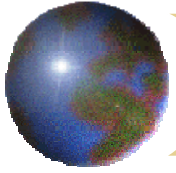
Fundamental changes are urgent if we are to avoid the collision our present course will bring about.



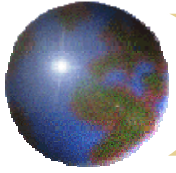
## *World Scientist's Warning to Humanity (1992)*

“We the undersigned, senior members of the world’s scientific community, hereby warn all humanity of what lies ahead. A great change in our stewardship of the earth and the life on it, is required, if vast human misery is to be avoided and our global home on this planet is not to be irretrievably mutilated”

Signed by 1600 scientists from 70 countries

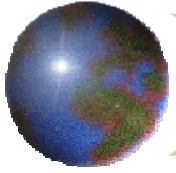


According to the Worldwatch Institute (1996), a ***sustainable economy*** is such that "...human deaths and births are in balance, soil erosion does not exceed the natural rate of new soil formation, tree cutting does not exceed tree planting, the fish caught do not exceed the sustainable yield of fisheries, the cattle on a range do not exceed its carrying capacity, and water pumping does not exceed aquifer recharge. It is also an economy where carbon emissions and carbon fixation are also again in balance. The number of plant and animal species lost does not exceed the rate at which new species evolve."



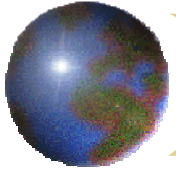
“Reality is what we take to be true. What we take to be true is what we believe. What we believe is based upon our perceptions. What we perceive depends upon what we look for. What we look for depends on what we think. What we think depends on what we perceive. What we perceive determines what we believe. What we believe determines what we take to be true. What we take to be true is our reality”

Gary Zukav

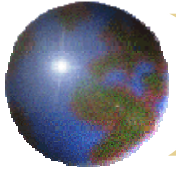


## **Statements for Jan. 25 class, Point/Counterpoint:**

- “It is simply wrong to believe that nature sets physical limits to economic growth—that is, to prosperity and the production and consumption of goods and services on which it is based.”
- “For most resources, economic and environmental constraints will limit consumption while substantial quantities remain. Long before coal disappears, coal production will probably be limited by the lack of atmospheric capacity to absorb safely more carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas...”
- “The reasons to preserve nature are ethical more often than they are economic.”
- “Natural ecosystems perform critical life-support services that make consumption possible and upon which the prosperity of all societies depends... These services operate on such a grand scale, and in such intricate and little-explored ways, that most of them could not be replaced by technology--...”



- “The idea that increasing consumption will inevitably lead to depletion and scarcity, as plausible as it may seem, is mistaken both in principle and in fact. It is based on four misconceptions”
- “We are possessed by our possessions: they are often harder to get rid of than to acquire”
- “External costs are a major reason that price signals are unreliable”
- “If all people of the world consumed fossil fuels and other natural resources at the rate now characteristic of developed countries (and with current technologies), this would greatly intensify our already unsustainable demands on the biosphere...” 1993 Fifty-eight scientific academies
- “In developing countries, however, a no-growth economy ‘will deprive entire populations of access to better living conditions and lead to even more deforestation and land degradation,’...”



- “Part of Sagoff’s complacency stems from his implicit assumption that price is the same thing as cost, and that price signals will therefore warn of any impending problems.”
- “ ‘The nation’s future has probably never been less constrained by the cost of natural resources.’” 1988 OTA report.
- “The cost of Kyoto, for the United States alone, will be higher than the cost of solving the world’s single most pressing health problem: providing universal access to clean drinking water and sanitation. Such measures would avoid 2M deaths every year, and prevent half a billion people from becoming seriously ill” (from Bjorn Lomborg)
- There is no credible argument, moreover, that all or even most of the species we are concerned to protect are essential to the functioning of the ecological systems on which we depend.”