

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

Apocalyptic

“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