

# ENVS 3521 Climate Politics & Policy



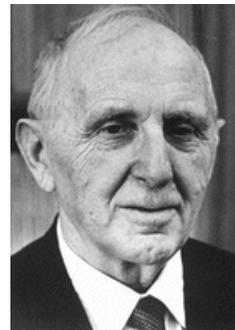
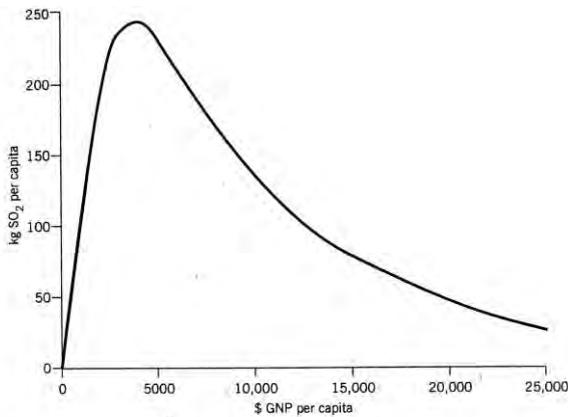
Spring 2012  
Component II – February 14



## Environmental Kuznets Curve



“The only way to attain a decent environment in most countries is to become rich.” ~ Wilfred Beckerman



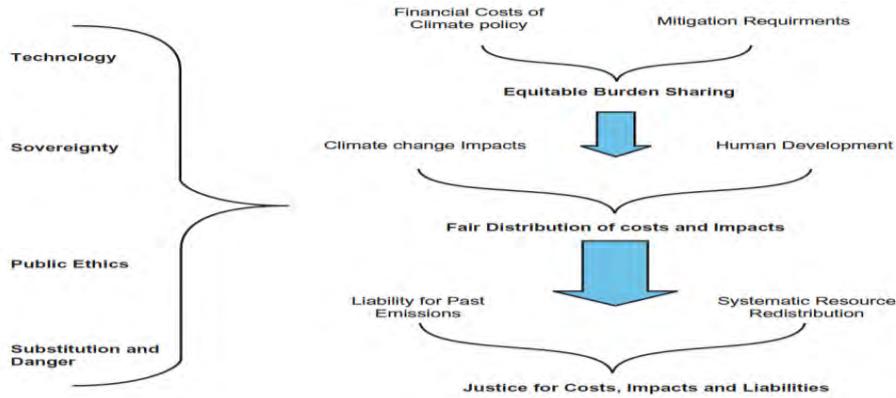
Simon Kuznets  
(1901 – 1985)

Critiques: cui bono? See Schneider et al (eds) Chapters 24 (Sagar & Baer), and Chapter 25 (Baer & Sagar) for more

justice & climate change:  
Klinsky & Dowlatabadi (2009)



“Distributive justice in climate change has been of interest both to the ethics and to the climate policy communities, but the two have remained relatively isolated ” (p. 88)



...this helps to “more carefully analyse which options present the best fit with the challenge of climate change and the potential implications of these choices and assumptions... recognizing its multiple interpretations and the varied perceptions of the burden to be shared may be an important first step.” (p. 104)

Human Development Indicator (HDI)



- indicators include:
  - GDP
  - reductions in income inequality
  - improvements in literacy
  - reduction in infant mortality
  - reductions in morbidity and mortality rates



- strong correlation with GDP
- accounting for environmental degradation?

## Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI)



**GPI = GDP + Nonmarket output**

- externality costs
- pollution abatement & cleanup costs
- depreciation of created capital
- depreciation of natural capital

## sustainable development



**Weak sustainability:** sum total capital intact

**Strong sustainability:** sum total of each capital intact

### Forms of capital

1. human-made/physical/created capital
2. human capital
3. natural capital
4. political capital
5. social capital
6. reputational capital

etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc...

## sustainable development



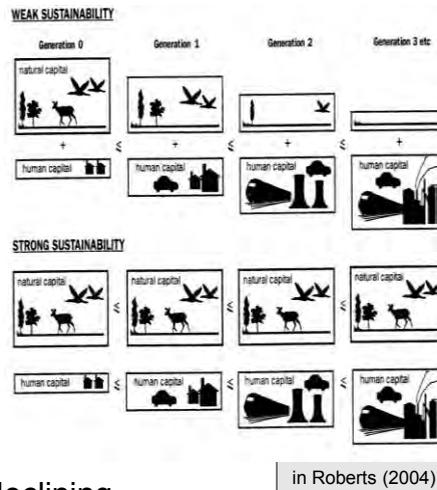
If, the total capital stock =  $K$   
 then Natural capital =  $K_n$   
 Physical Capital =  $K_p$   
 Human Capital =  $K_h$

### Weak sustainability:

$K = K_n + K_p + K_h$   
 where  $K$  is non-declining

### Strong sustainability:

$K = K_n + K_p + K_h$   
 where  $K$  and  $K_n$  are non-declining



## treaty

(a.k.a. agreement, convention, pact, covenant)

- any instrument between two or more States
- main function: creates specific legal obligations between States
- the principle method to create binding rules of international law
- governs obligatory legal relations between the signatories



## Int'l Action: *Why Participate?*



- shape the emergent policy
- 'horse trading'
- domestic politics
- financial compensation
- moral obligation?

**ongoing challenges of national sovereignty meeting international policy**

## overview of the IEL/IEA Process



### Five steps in the development of an int'l environmental treaty:

1. Identification of needs and goals
2. Negotiation
  - framing terms: set timetable, consensus/majority decision etc.
3. Adoption and Signature
  - country representatives vote
4. Ratification
  - national level legislative processes: U.S. → Senate vote
5. Entry into force
  - need for sufficient ratification as established in negotiations

Ongoing challenges: implementation, monitoring, enforcement of violations and possible sanctions, amendments, modifications

## The United Nations (UN)



- created in 1945
- many subsidiary bodies:  
e.g. UN Environment Program (UNEP)



## Int'l Environmental Agreements (IEAs)



### TWO (maybe THREE?) LANDMARK CONFERENCES:

1. the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment (also known as the *Stockholm Conference*)
2. the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (referred to either as *UNCED*, the *Rio Conference* or the *Earth Summit*)
3. the 2012 UN Rio+20 summit?

1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment



(the *Stockholm Conference*)

*Purpose:*

**“...protect and improve the human environment, and to remedy and prevent its impairment...enabling developing countries to forestall occurrence of such problems.”**



1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment



(the *Stockholm Conference*)

**THREE MAJOR PRODUCTS:**

1. *The Stockholm Action Plan*
2. *United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)*
  - mission: to facilitate international cooperation on the environment
3. *The Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment*
  - groundwork for development of the concept of ‘sustainable development’

from Stockholm to Rio (1972-1992)



### **‘first generation’ treaties**

→ wildlife conservation and habitat protection

### **‘second generation’ treaties**

→ more complex global processes

### **World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) – ‘Our Common Future’**

→ defined ‘sustainable development’

#### **Sustainable development**

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.”

~ WCED, Brundtland Report (1987)

### **climate risk management: *much ado about what to do...***



#### **Mitigation**

- (1) human intervention to reduce the sources of GHGs
- (2) can take shape through efficiency improvements or mode switching to renewable energy sources

#### **Adaptation**

- (1) the alteration of an organism or the capacity to make changes to suit conditions different than those normally encountered
- (2) the ‘adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects’
- (3) changes that societies make to respond to the negative impacts of unavoidable climate change



Maslin (2002)

## COP18 & 'The Doha Decision'



### Two tracks of negotiations:

Mitigation – emissions reductions commitments along a negotiated timeline to begin at the expiration of the Kyoto Protocol in 2012

Adaptation – agreements on how to disperse US\$30 billion over the calendar year 2012, as agreed by the 'Climate Green Fund' at COP16; who gets what, when and how?



→ **Feb 14:** appoint two lead negotiators for both negotiation tracks and for 'lead discussant's roles; continue to develop negotiating positions