

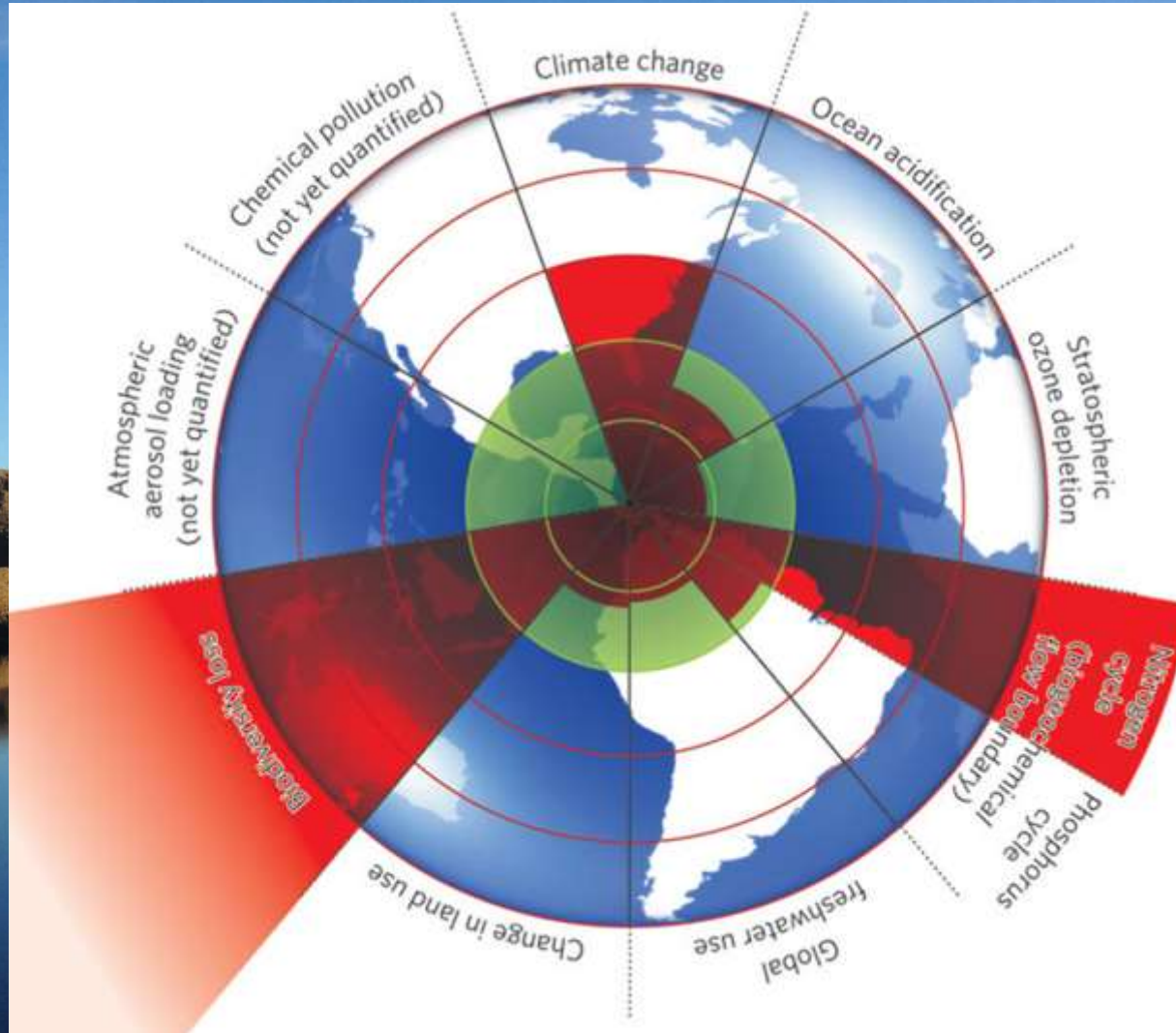
Flourishing within Limits

towards a social science for sustainable prosperity

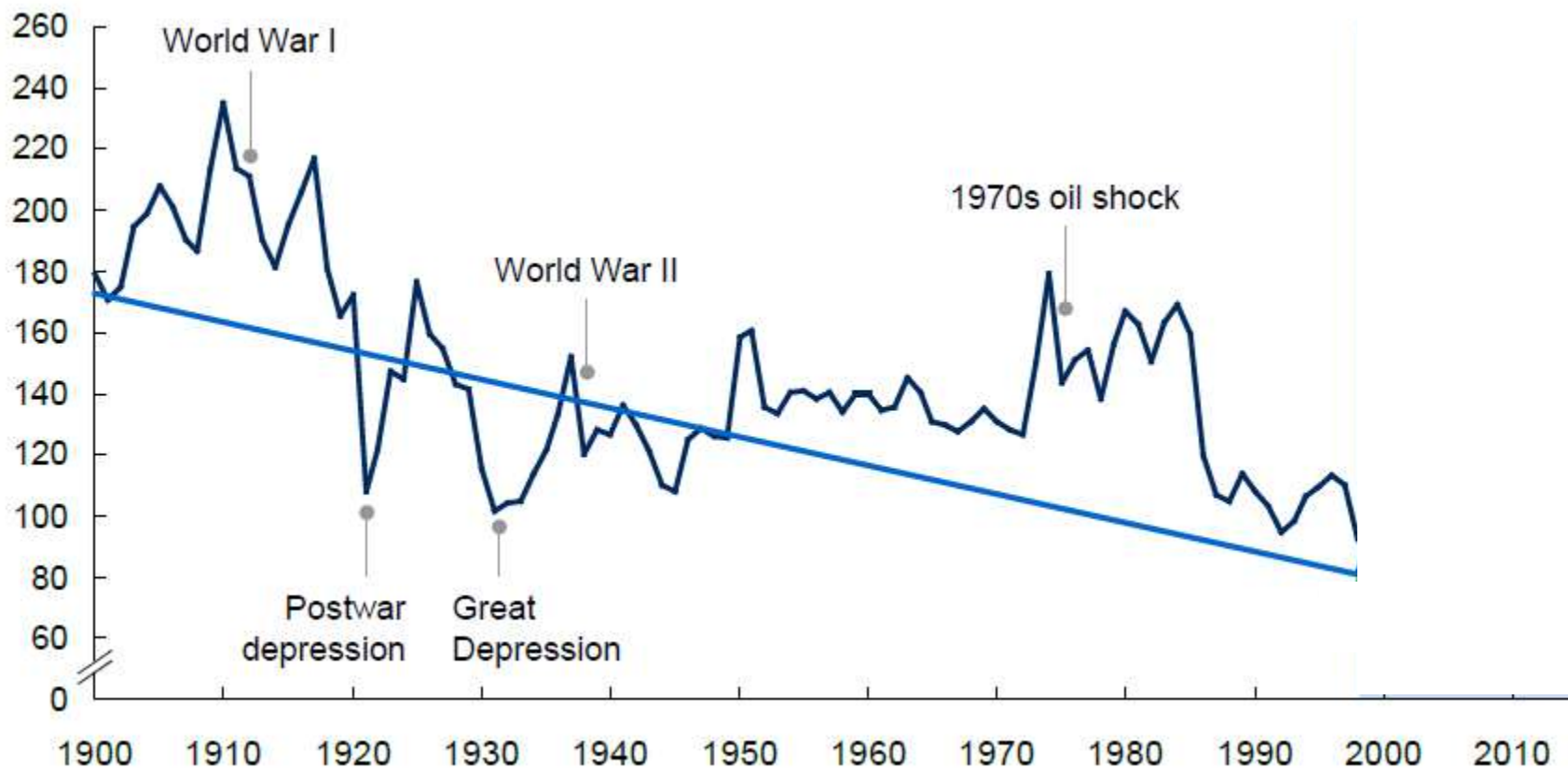
19th November 2015

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Limits to Growth?



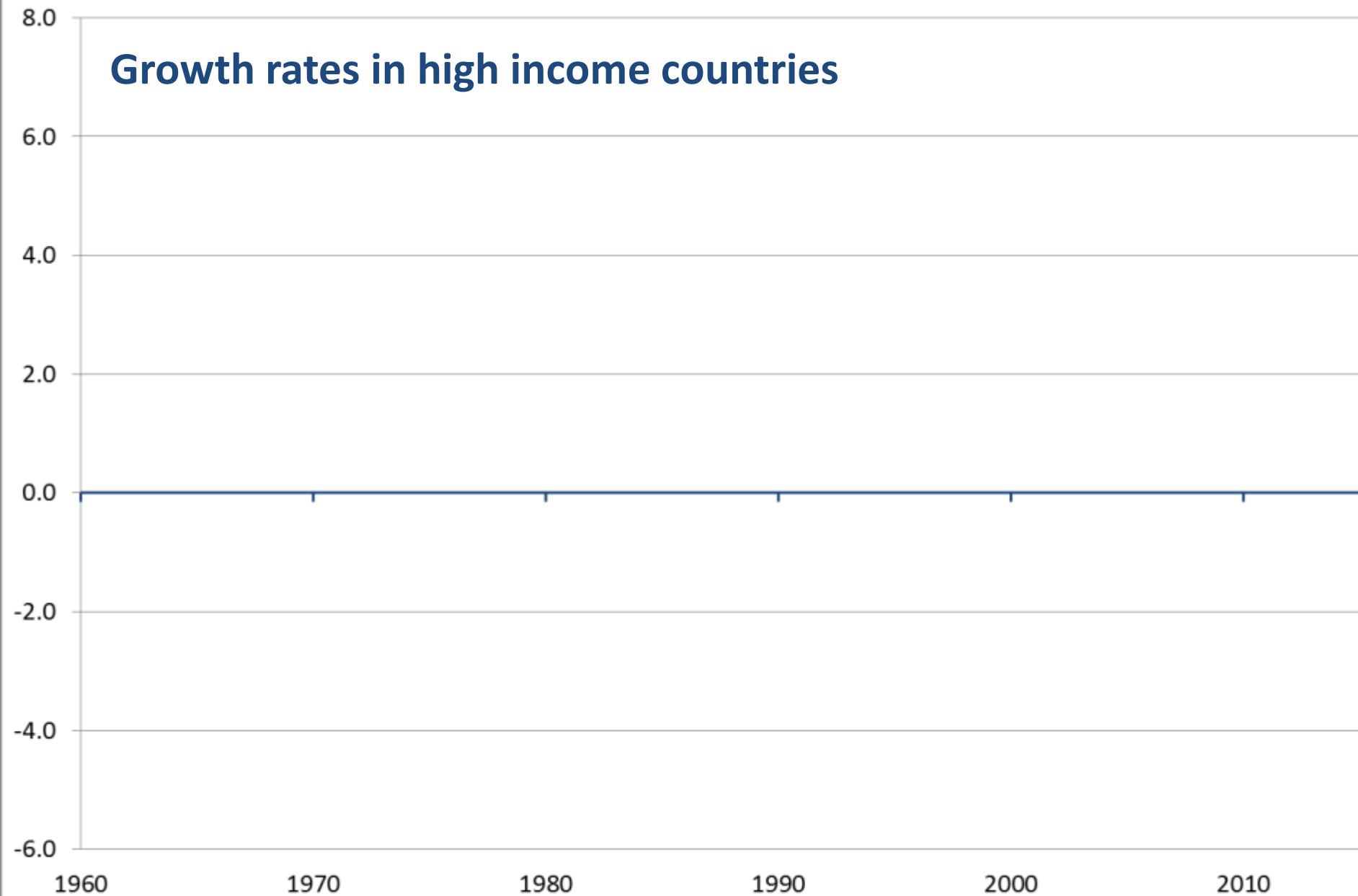
Limits to Growth?



Source: Resource Revolution (Mckinsey Global Institute, Sept 2013, p 6)

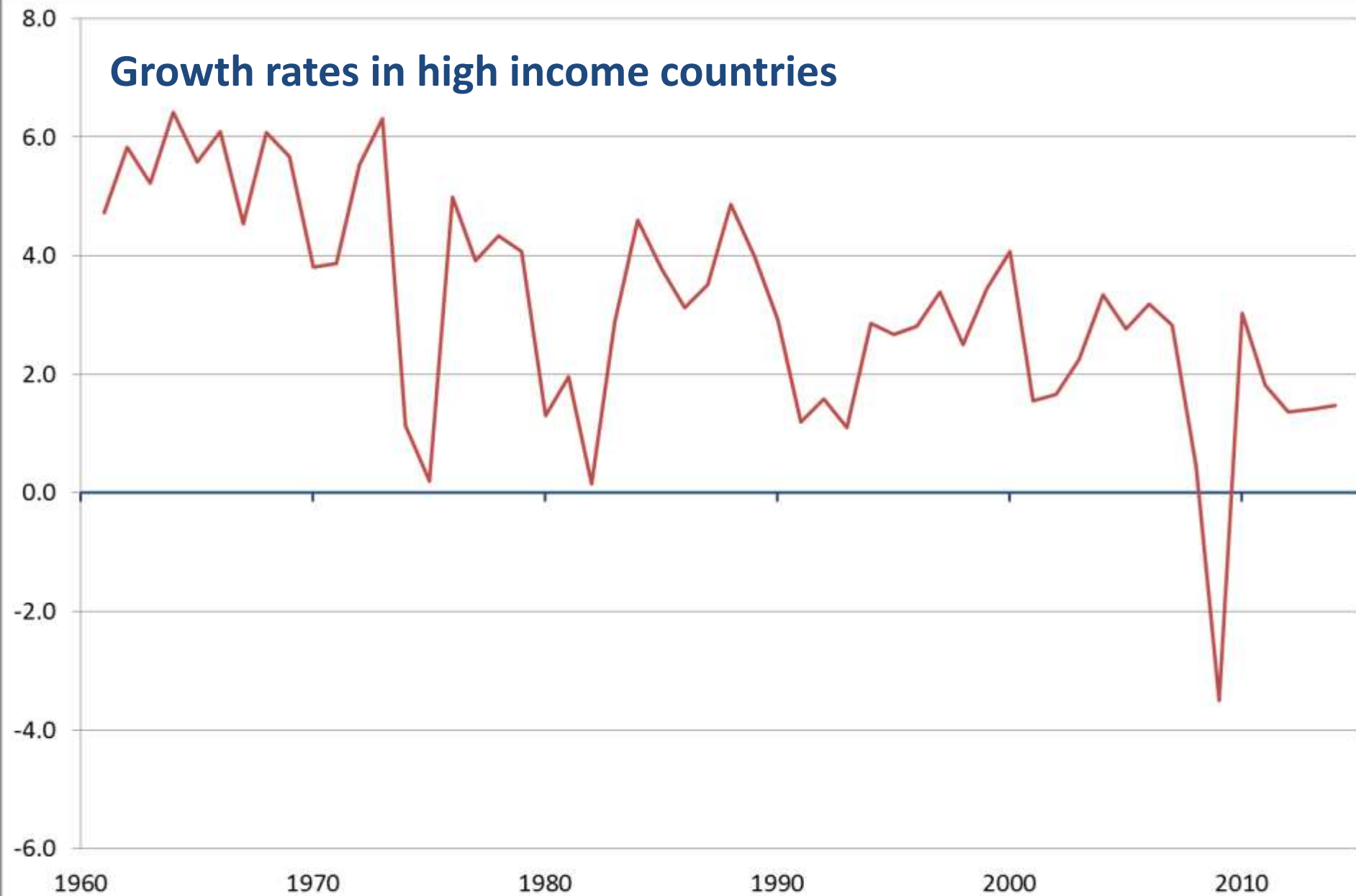
Limits to Growth?

Growth rates in high income countries



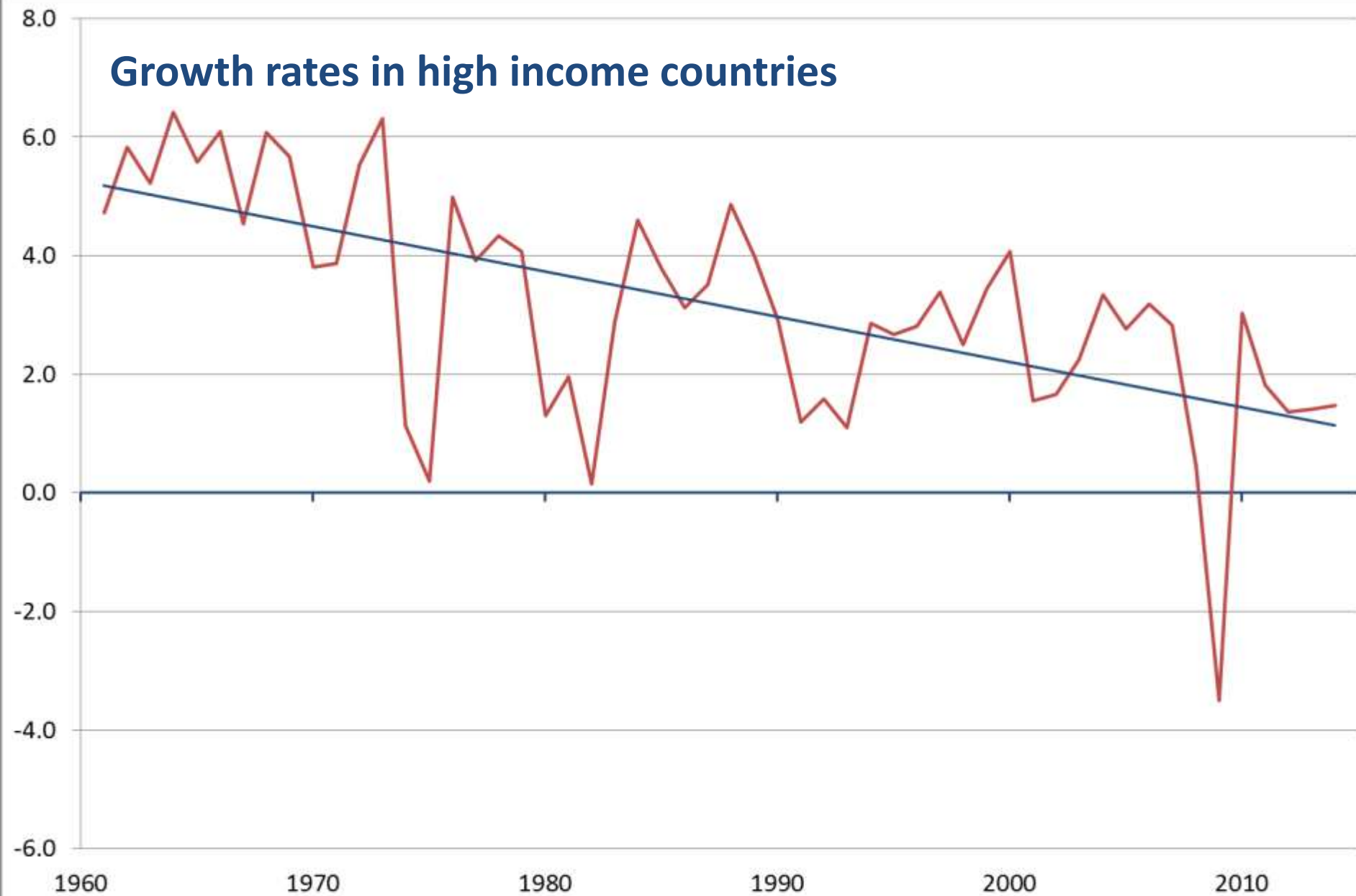
Limits to Growth?

Growth rates in high income countries



Limits to Growth?

Growth rates in high income countries



Limits to Growth?



Income share of the top decile in the US: 1910 – 2010

Source: Piketty 2014

Limits to Growth?

“I am not charmed with the ideal of life held out by those who think that the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on; that the trampling, crushing, elbowing and treading on each other’s heels, which form the existing type of social life, are the most desirable lot of human kind. . .

The best state for human nature is that which, while no one is poor, no one desires to be richer, nor has any reason to fear being thrust back, by the efforts of others to push themselves forward.”

John Stuart Mill 1848

Perspectives on Limits

‘There are no great limits to growth because there are no limits on the human capacity for intelligence, imagination and wonder’

Ronald Reagan 1983

‘Our duty as men and women is to proceed as if limits to our ability did not exist. We are collaborators in creation.’

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin 1955

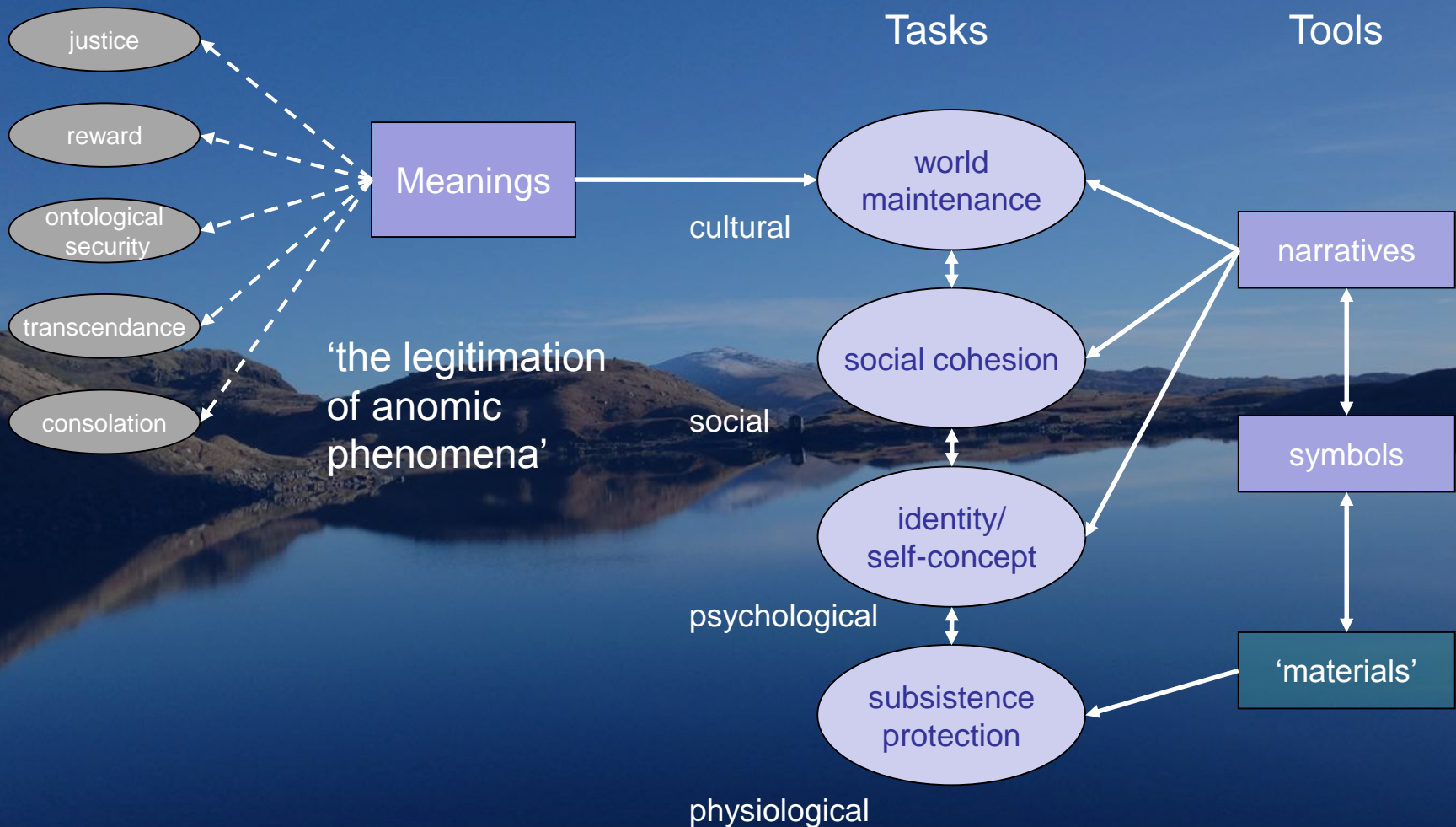
‘The concept of limits is economically illiterate.’

UK Government Economist 2009

‘Our human and earthly limits, properly understood, are not confinements, but rather inducements ... to fullness of relationship and meaning.’

Wendell Berry 2008

The Limited and the Limitless



Prosperity transcends material concerns. It resides in our sense of identity, our pursuit of meaning. It rests in our ability to participate in the life of society. Prosperity consists in our capability to flourish as human beings.



Guiding vision

Sustainable prosperity consists in the capabilities that people have to flourish as human beings, within the ecological and resource constraints of a finite planet

Overall aim

The overall aim of CUSP is to explore the dimensions of sustainable prosperity and to develop clear, pragmatic steps that could be taken in pursuit of it.

Research objectives (MAPSS)

- M** – to examine the **meanings and moral framing** of sustainable prosperity;
- A** – to explore the role of **art and culture** in achieving sustainable prosperity;
- P** – to establish the **political economy** of sustainable prosperity and propose concrete institutional architectures for it;
- S** – to understand the **social and psychological dimensions** of people's aspirations for the good life;
- S** – to analyse the **system dynamics** of an ecologically bounded macro-economy and explore viable scenarios for change.

Guiding vision

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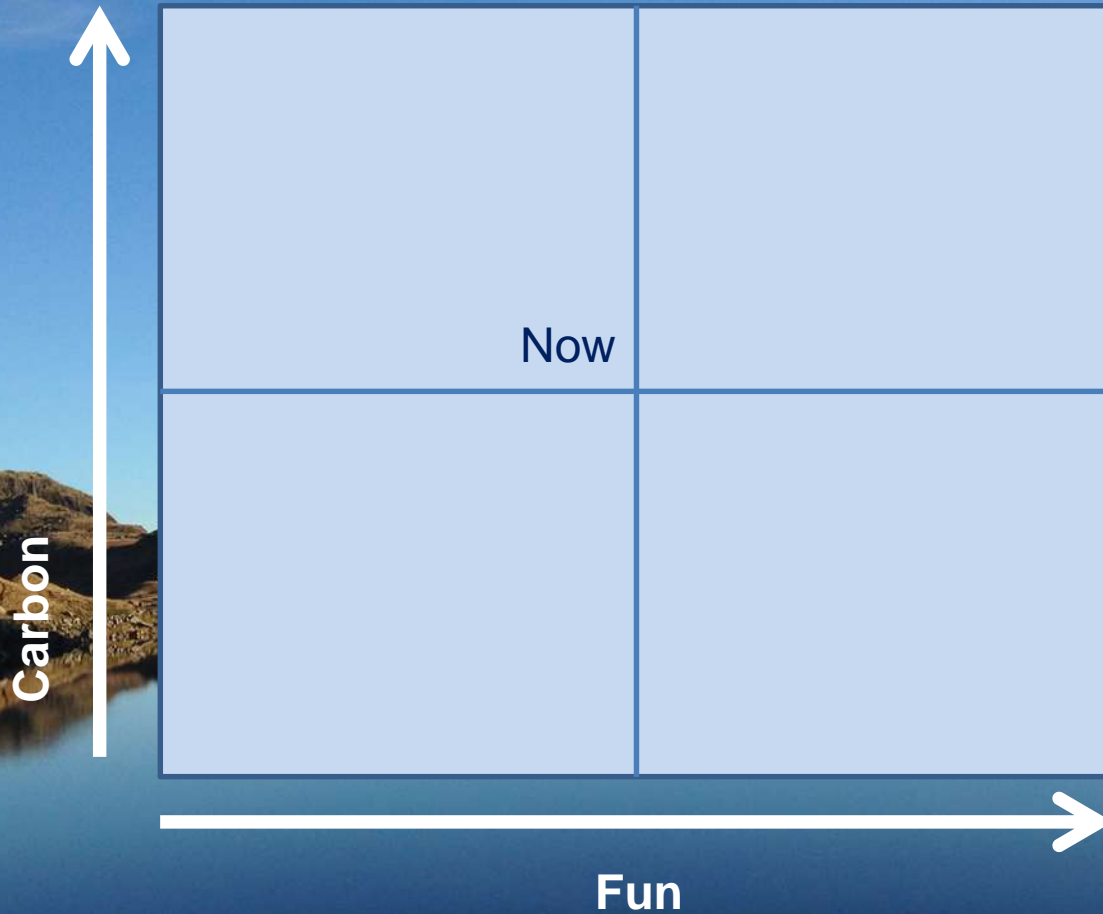
Cross-Cutting Initiatives

- Sustainable Prosperity Dialogues – chaired by Dr Rowan Williams
- An Economy that Works – hosted by the World Futures Council
- APPG on Limits to Growth – chaired by George Kerevan

A Hypothesis

Is it possible to have more fun with less stuff?

More fun; less stuff



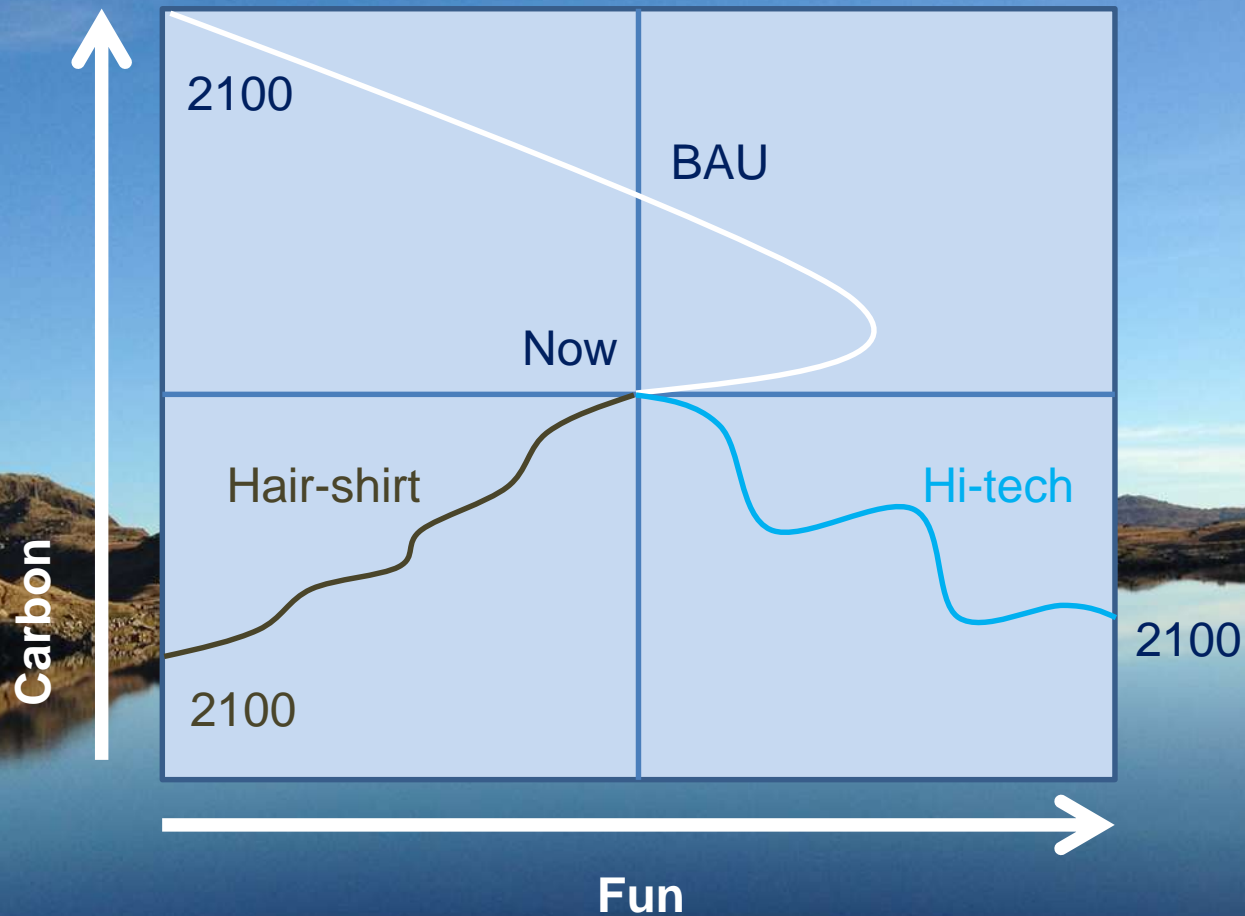
More fun; less stuff



More fun; less stuff



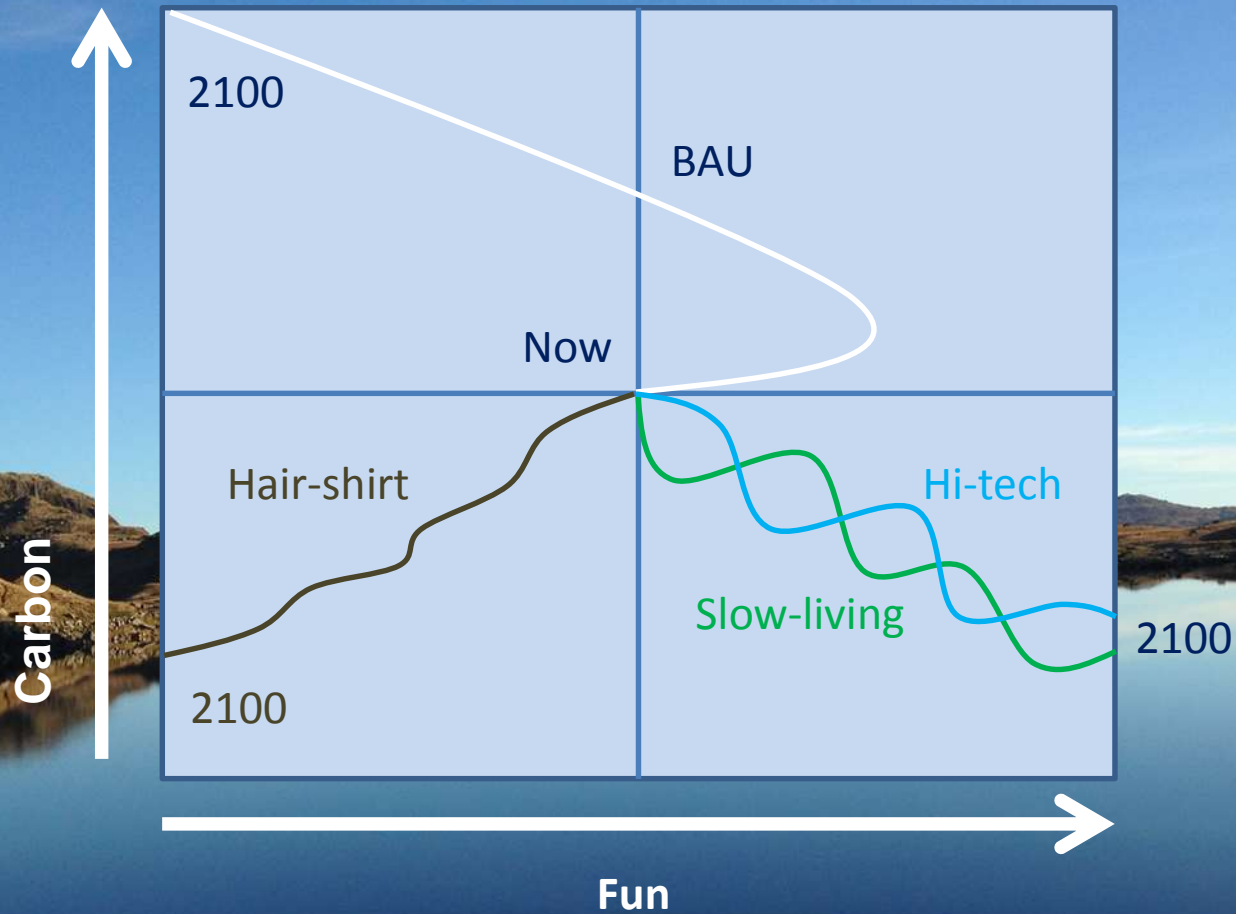
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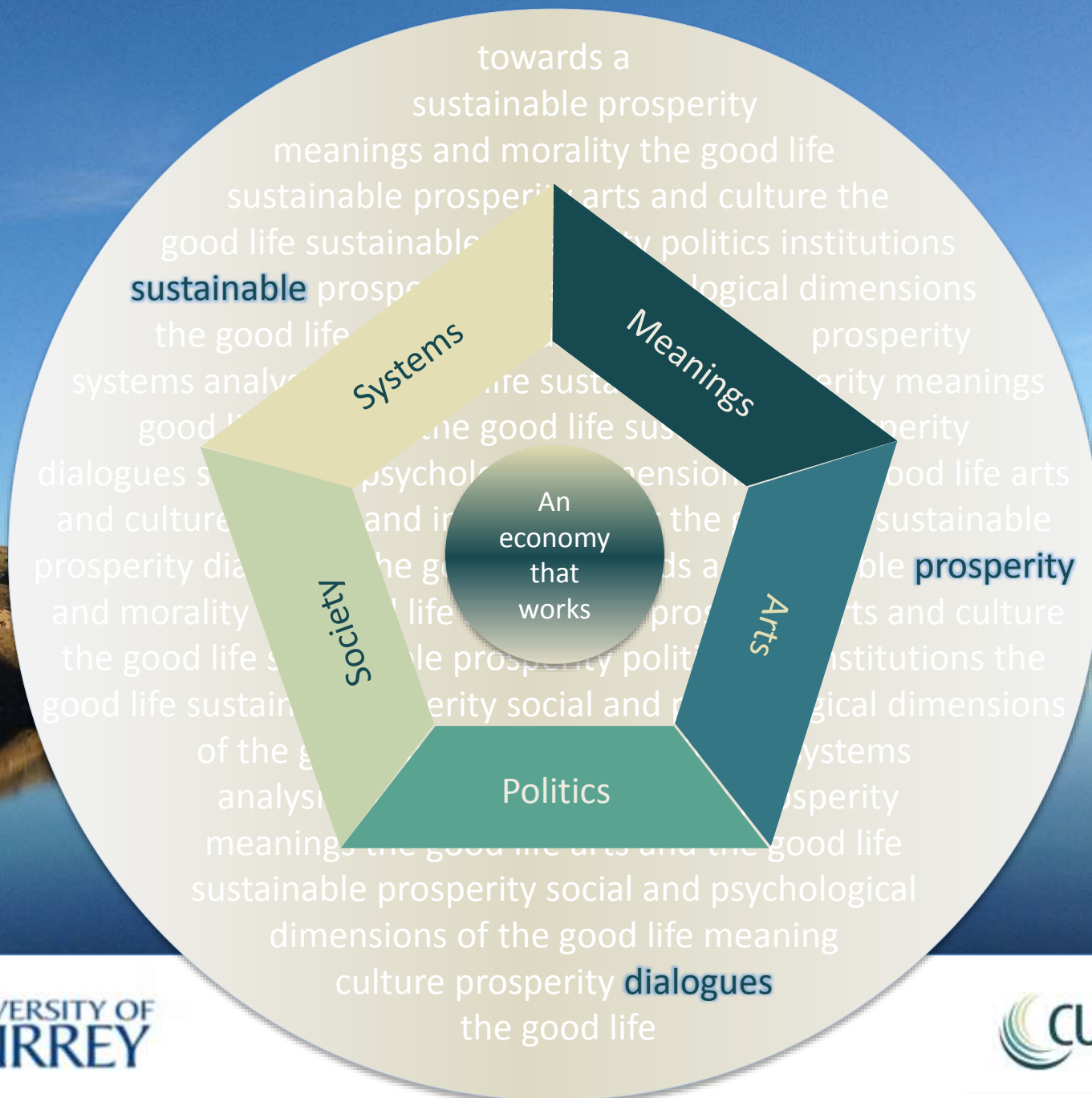


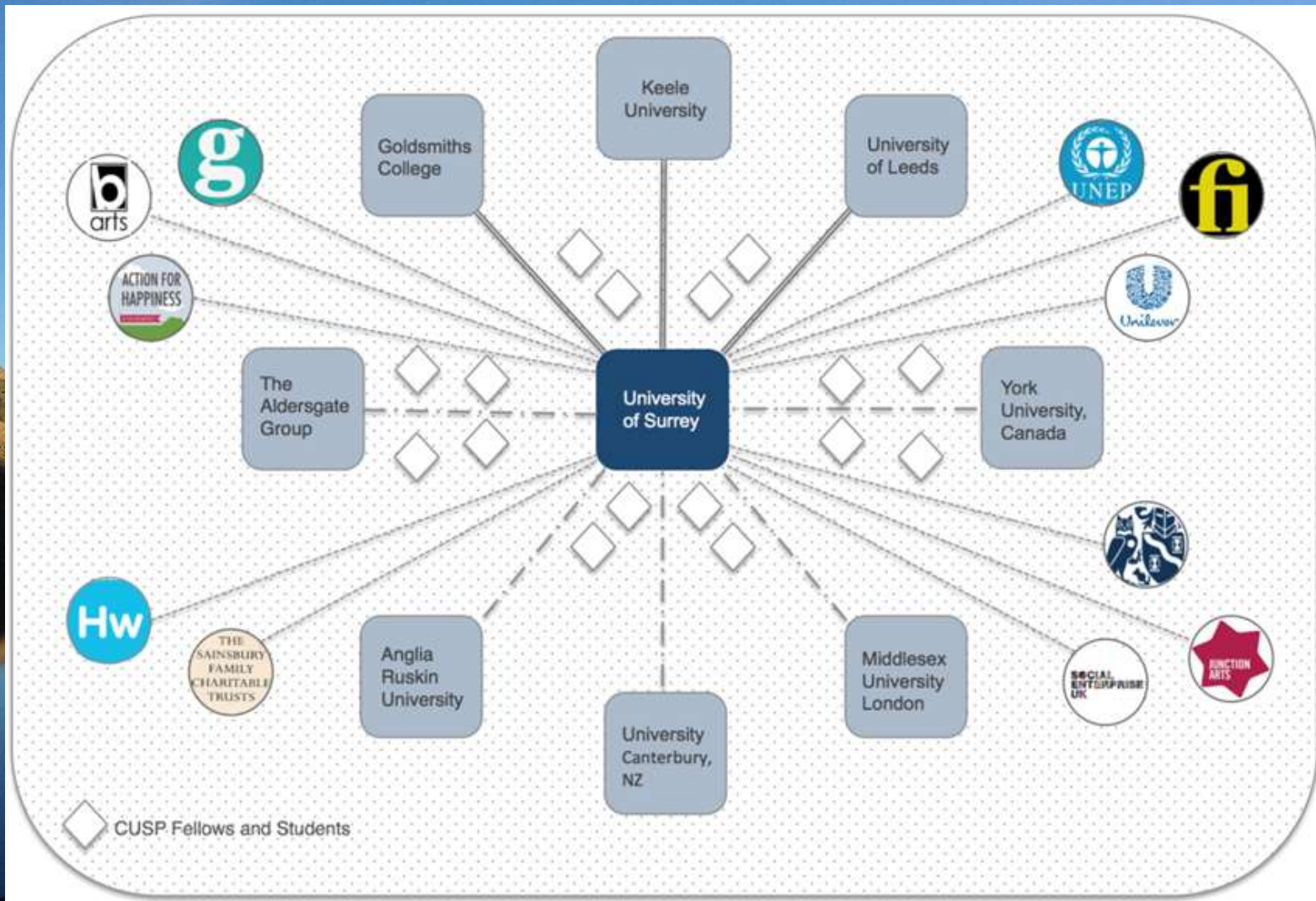
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More fun; less stuff







Sustainable prosperity as the art of living well
– within the limits of a finite planet.



Thanks for listening

<http://www.cusp.ac.uk>
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