

Sustainable, Healthy Cities

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ANOTHER WAVE OF
ILLEGALS WHERE
WILL IT END ?!

moit

A fundamental point

- ▶ The future is not somewhere we are going, it is something we are creating
- ▶ Many possible futures
- ▶ We should be trying to shape a sustainable future

CoAG 1992

- ▶ National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development
- ▶ “a path of economic progress that does not impair the welfare of future generations”
- ▶ “equity within and between generations”
- ▶ “recognition of the global dimension”
- ▶ “protection of biological diversity”
- ▶ “maintenance of ecological processes and systems”

UN 2015 report on progress

- ▶ Australia 18th of 34 OECD nations
- ▶ Below Canada, NZ, even UK
- ▶ Among worst in OECD on resource use per head, waste per head, GHG / GDP, obesity rate
- ▶ Well below average on poverty, inequality, gender pay gap, women in elected office
- ▶ Scandinavian nations, USA

Criteria for sustainable cities

- ▶ Stabilised population
- ▶ Stabilised per capita consumption
- ▶ Renewable resources not over-used
- ▶ Clean air
- ▶ Secure supplies food, water
- ▶ Local biodiversity conserved
- ▶ Stabilised global climate
- ▶ Social equity

How are our cities doing?

- ▶ No Australian city meets those criteria
- ▶ Manning, J. (2019) Top Ten: Sustainable Cities in Australia, *Green Lifestyle Magazine*, summarises least poorly performing cities
- ▶ All have some redeeming features, e.g. Brisbane, Darwin & Townsville score well for biodiversity conservation, Sunshine Coast for air quality, Canberra for renewable energy & green buildings, Melbourne for low-carbon developments, Cairns for low car ownership...
- ▶ BUT: Darwin has large ecological footprint & poor community health, Brisbane & Canberra rely heavily on cars, Sunshine Coast & Gold Coast are expanding rapidly and losing natural areas, Sydney & Melbourne are expanding peri-urban settlement with poor facilities
- ▶ Almost all our cities are increasing their carbon footprint

The Limits to Growth – 1972!

- ▶ If trends of growth in population, resource use, industrial production, agricultural output and pollution all continue, we will reach limits to growth within a hundred years
- ▶ The likely outcome would be economic, social and environmental decline, starting about 2030
- ▶ These trends are not inevitable

Limits to Growth + 40 years data

On *all* key parameters [population, resource use, industrial output, agricultural production and pollution] we are tracking the “standard run” which leads to economic and ecological collapse before 2050.

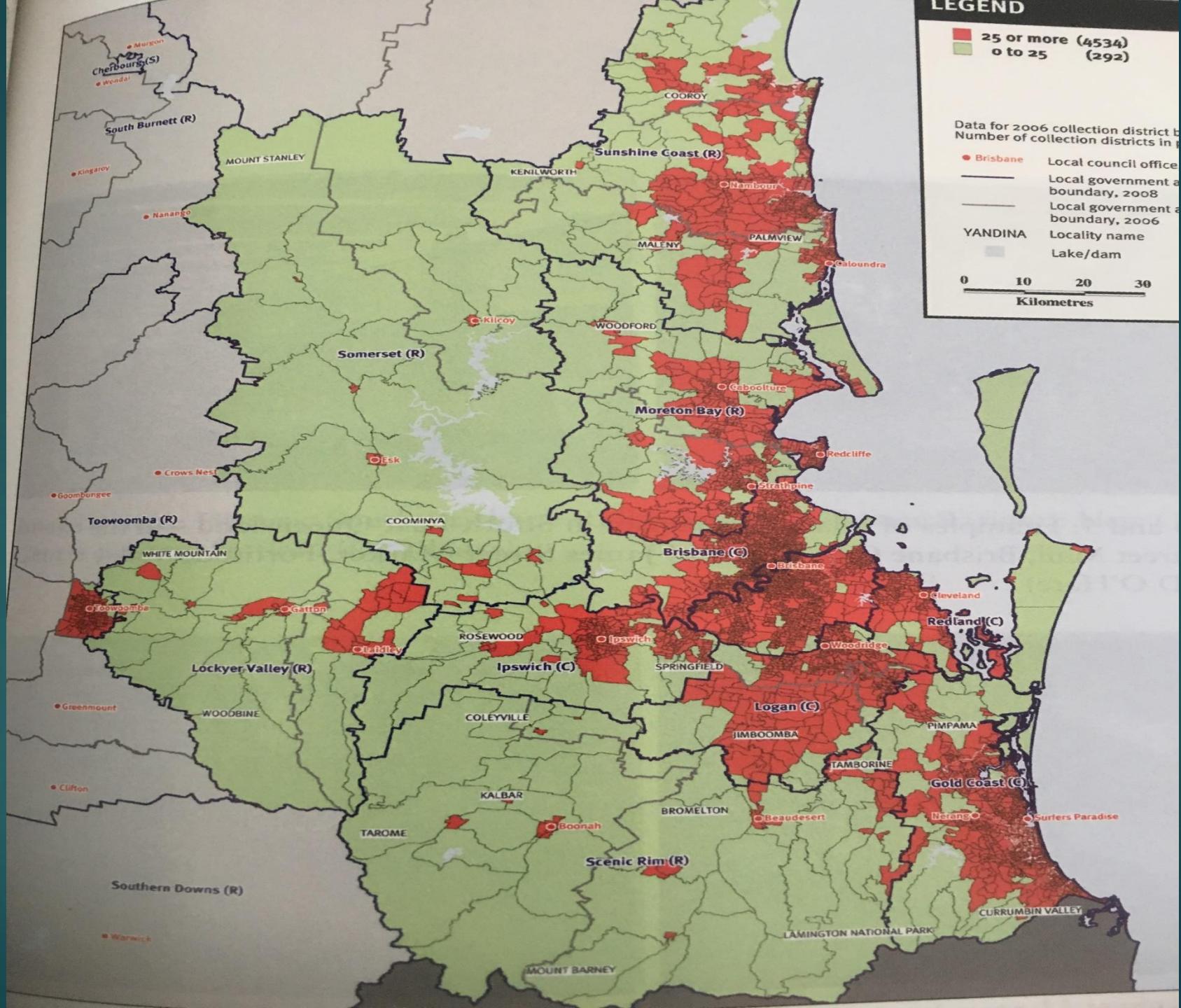
LEGEND

■ 25 or more (4534)
■ 0 to 25 (292)

Data for 2006 collection district by
Number of collection districts in 2006

- Brisbane Local council office
- Local government area boundary, 2008
- Local government area boundary, 2006
- YANDINA Locality name
- Lake/dam

0 10 20 30 Kilometres

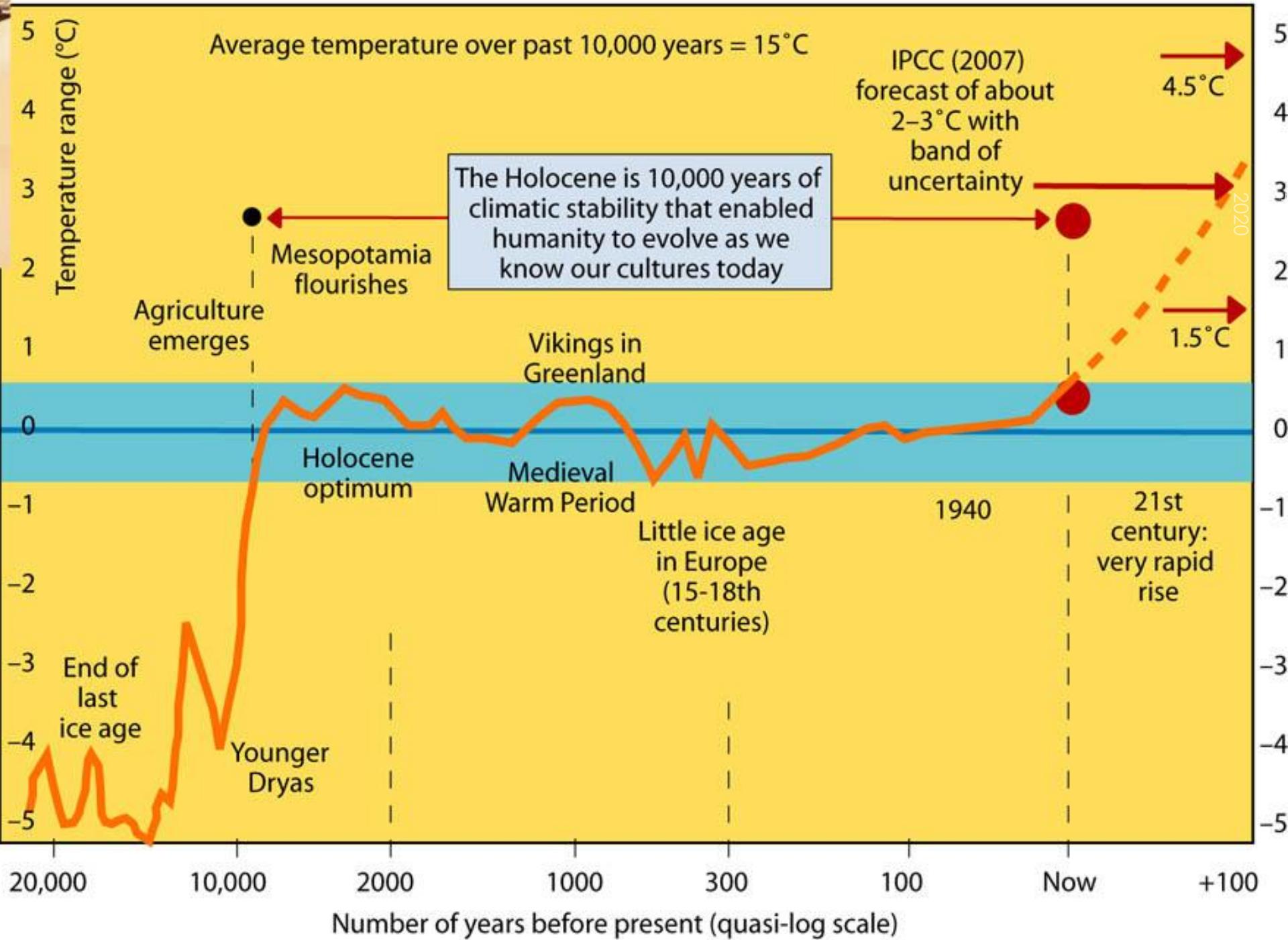


Fundamental issue of limits

- ▶ Need to accept there are physical, ecological & social costs of expansion
- ▶ Legitimate differences about where limits are
- ▶ Obvious problems of growth: infrastructure, natural areas
- ▶ Perception quality of life being eroded
- ▶ Adelaide leaders lamenting lower growth rate !

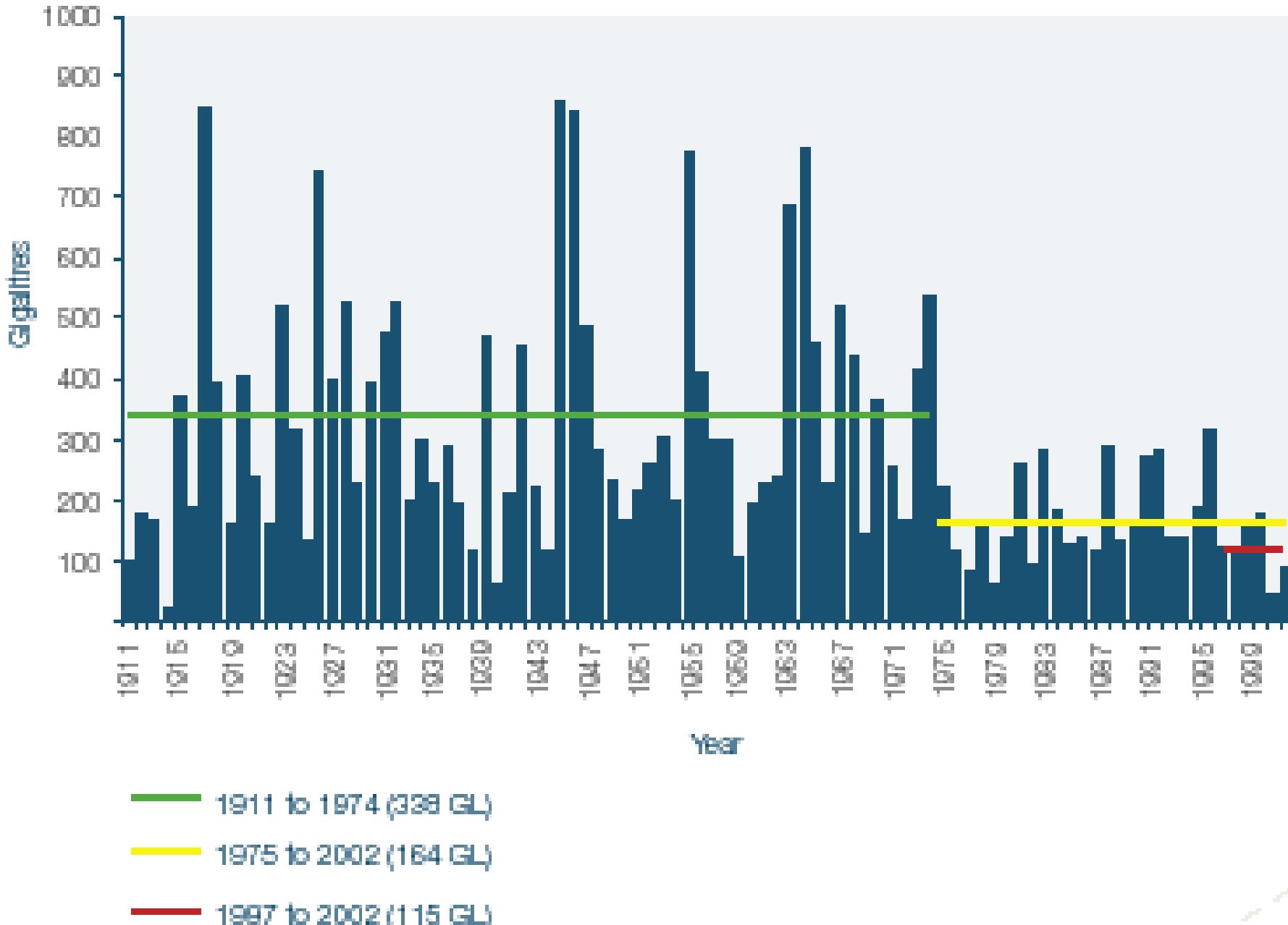
Some critical issues

- ▶ Food: losing productive areas, longer supply lines
- ▶ Water: storage limits, less reliable rainfall
- ▶ Air quality: Chinese cities as exemplars
- ▶ Transport: two-tier cities, peri-urban expansion
- ▶ Loss of biodiversity, climate change



Total annual inflow to Perth dams

Source: WA Water Corporation 2004



To have a **better than even** chance of keeping global average temperature rise below 2°C, the **world** would need to be emitting **45 per cent less** CO₂ by 2030, with rapid further reduction.

So emissions **everywhere** need to decline rapidly **from now**.

“To prevent widespread misery and catastrophic biodiversity loss, humanity must practise a more environmentally sustainable alternative to business as usual... Soon it will be too late to shift course away from our failing trajectory, and time is running out.”



“these recent crises - fuel, food and finance - are simply the three canaries in the mine. These are the early warning signals that our current economic system is simply not sustainable.”

- WEF Summit on Global Agenda, Dubai 2008

Peter Victor, Managing Without Growth

- ▶ “there are indeed feasible economic alternatives but getting to them will be beyond us unless we change how we think about our economy, society and environment, undertake some close reflection on what is important to ourselves and others, including other species, and develop a readiness to rethink and transform much of what we have taken for granted”

New suite of values

- ▶ Domination of nature becomes *ecological sensitivity*
- ▶ Consumerism replaced by *quality of life*
- ▶ Individualism -> *human solidarity*

Vision for a Sustainable City

Sustainability

Sustainability is about living within our means. It is about managing our consumption of resources and balancing environmental, economic and social outcomes. It means improving our quality of life, but making that improvement without leaving a burden on the future generations.

Looking after our Environment

Environmental Sustainability is about reducing our impact on the environment by protecting our air, water and land, our native flora and fauna. It means reducing the load on our natural resources, such as water and fuels for energy, and decreasing our production of waste.

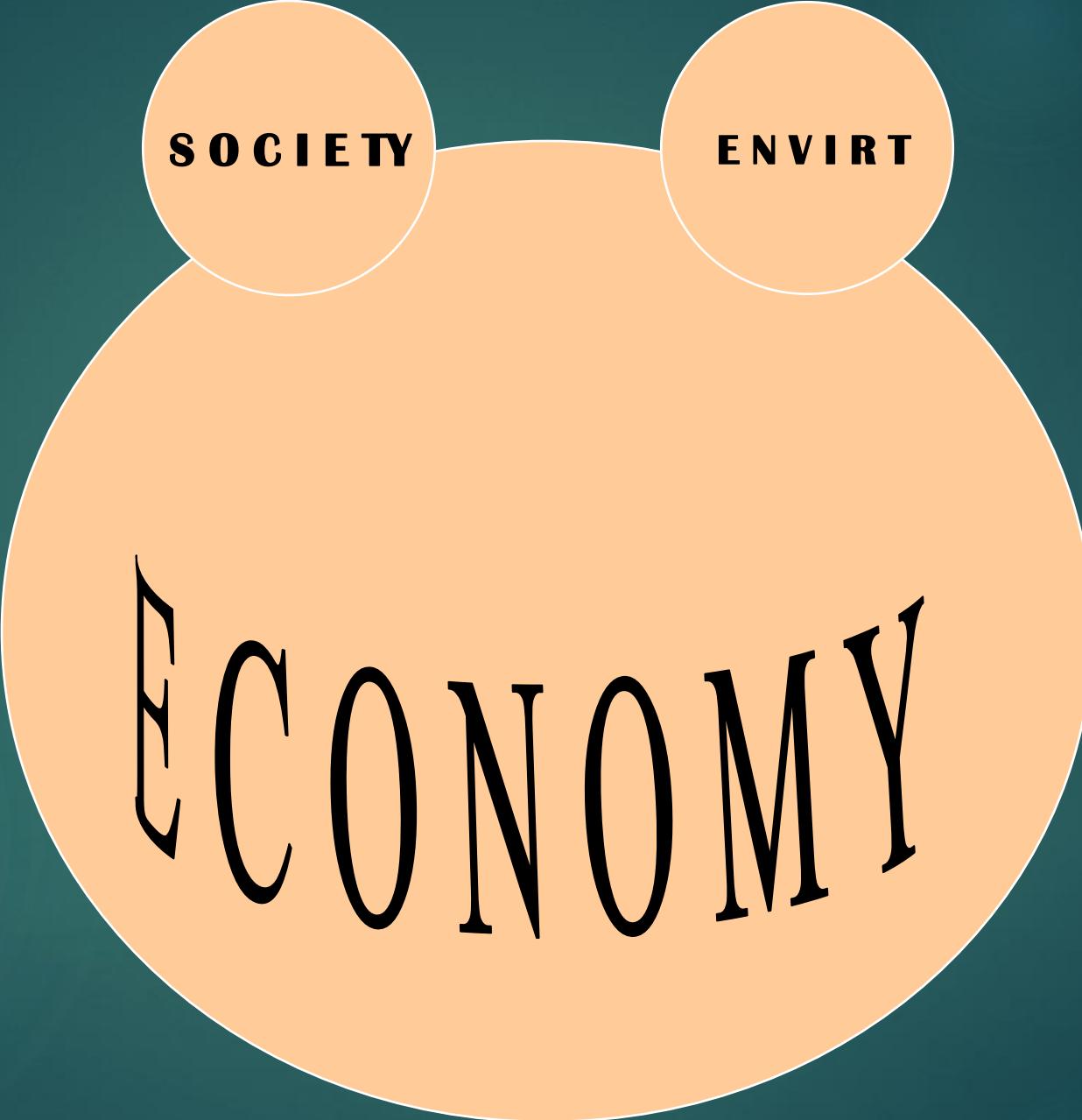


Supporting our Economy

Competitiveness is about supporting Sydney's role as a Global city, and ensuring our city's long term economic prosperity. It means providing quality infrastructure and services to service our jobs and the economy, and supporting urban centres

A Better Place to Live

Liveability is about making Sydney a better place to live. It means being able to walk to your corner shop, local school, park or bus stop, as well as providing us with a choice of housing that meets our needs.



SOCIETY

ENVIRT

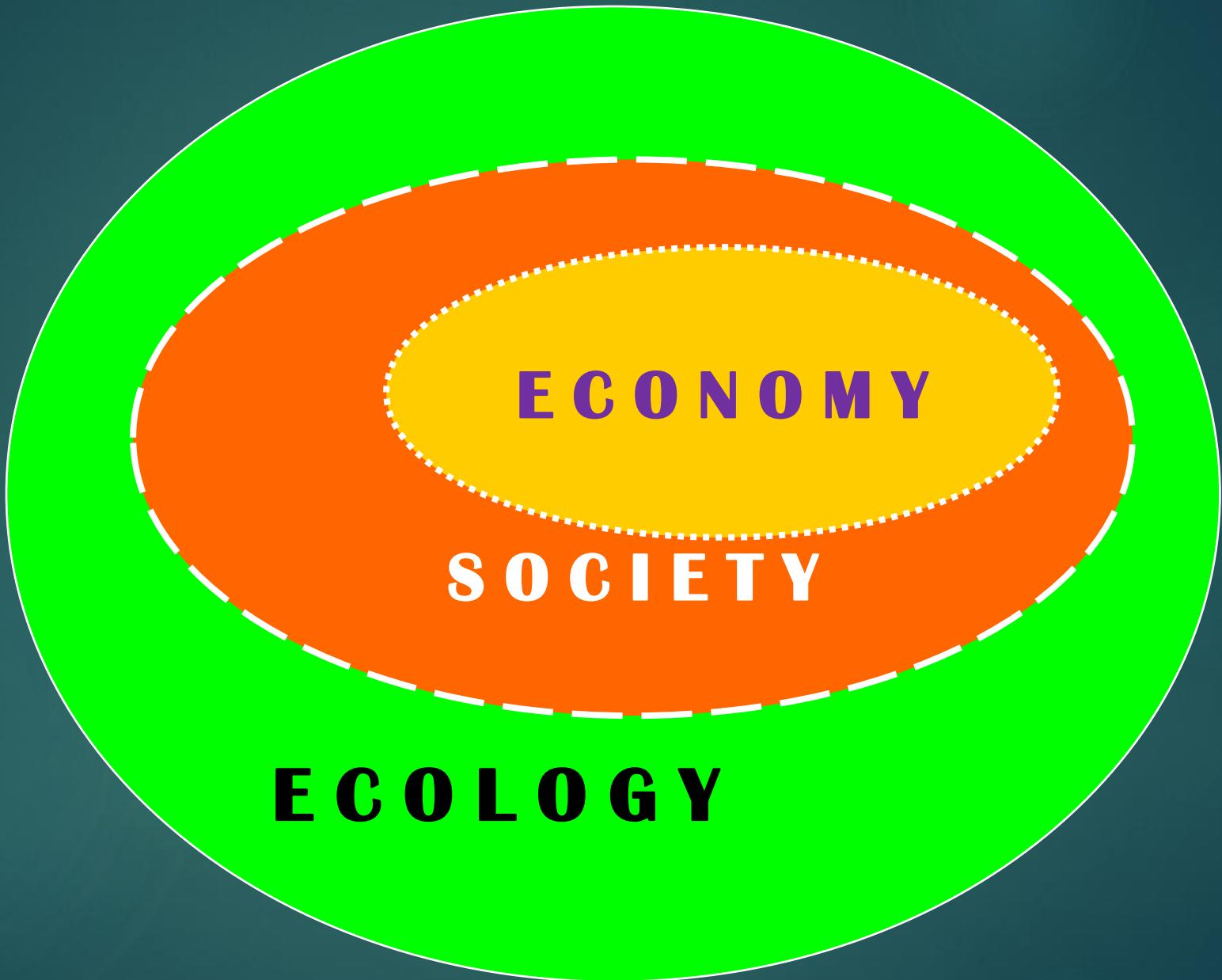
ECONOMY



Markets give us things
many of us want

**NATURAL SYSTEMS GIVE
US THINGS WE ALL
REALLY NEED**





Utopian?

- ▶ 1800: end slavery
- ▶ 1900: votes for women
- ▶ 1989: Berlin Wall
 - South Africa without apartheid
 - Apology to stolen generations
 - African-American US president
 - Female political leaders
 - Good coffee, civilised licensing laws in Qld !
- ▶ Practically all features of modern life

Obvious problems for our cities

- ▶ Presumption of unlimited growth
- ▶ Increasing per capita consumption
- ▶ Loss of natural areas
- ▶ Increasing GHG emissions
- ▶ Increasing inequality
- ▶ No long-term vision

Conclusion

- ▶ CoAG, but no overall vision or national policy
- ▶ Addressing **driving forces** should be a priority
- ▶ So stabilising population an essential goal
- ▶ Moving toward a steady-state economy
- ▶ More equitable access to essential services
- ▶ “**Living within our means**”

