

We Can No Longer Ignore That Environmental Apocalypse Is Coming

Business Insider Jun. 13, 2012

<http://www.businessinsider.com/environmental-collapse-rio-conference-2012-6?op=1#ixzz1xuB8A1jO>

In 1992, global leaders gathered in Rio de Janeiro and made a pledge to protect Earth's climate and biodiversity.

Now scientists are lining up to explain just how badly that pledge has failed. Ahead of the June 20-22 Rio+20 conference, significant progress has been made on only four of 90 of the most important environmental goals set down twenty years ago.

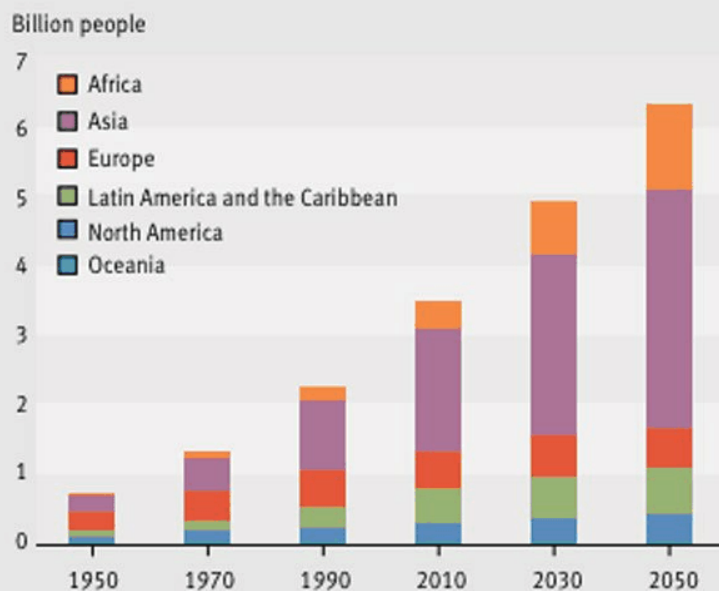


Three recent reports from the The Royal Society's 'People and the Planet,' The World Wildlife Fund's 'Living Planet 2012,' and the UN's own Global Environmental Outlook argue that climate change, population growth and environmental destruction are driving the Earth toward an irreversible collapse.

We've gone through the reports and chosen the most alarming charts and diagrams.

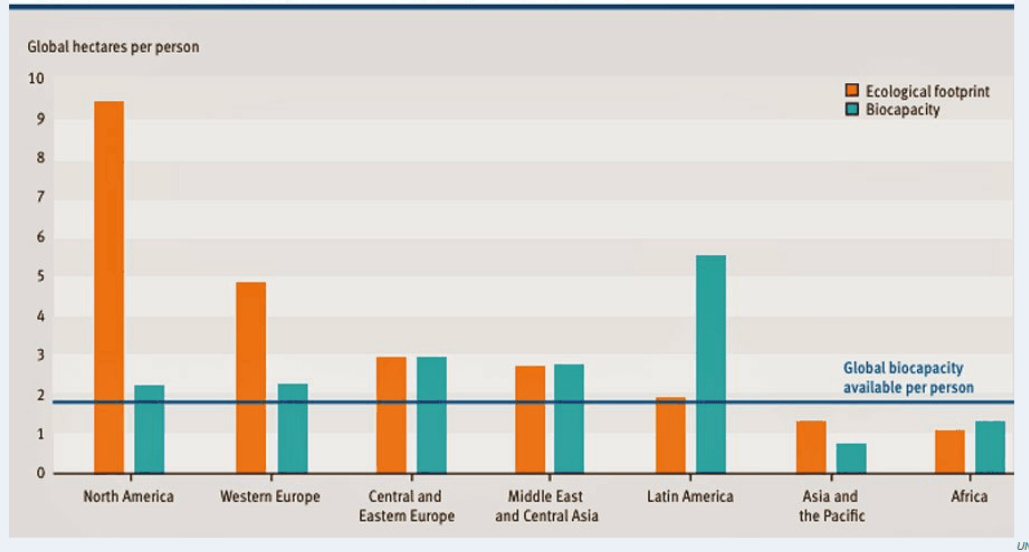
OVERPOPULATION: The UN estimates that human population will reach between 8 and 11 billion by 2050 (and two out of three people will live in a city)

Figure 1.2 Urban population, 1950–2050



OVER-CONSUMPTION: The WWF report found that the world needs 1.5 years to replenish the natural resources that humans consume in a single year

Figure 7.7 The ecological footprint and biocapacity of regions, 2002



By 2030 TWO planet earths won't even be enough to sustain the current rate of human consumption

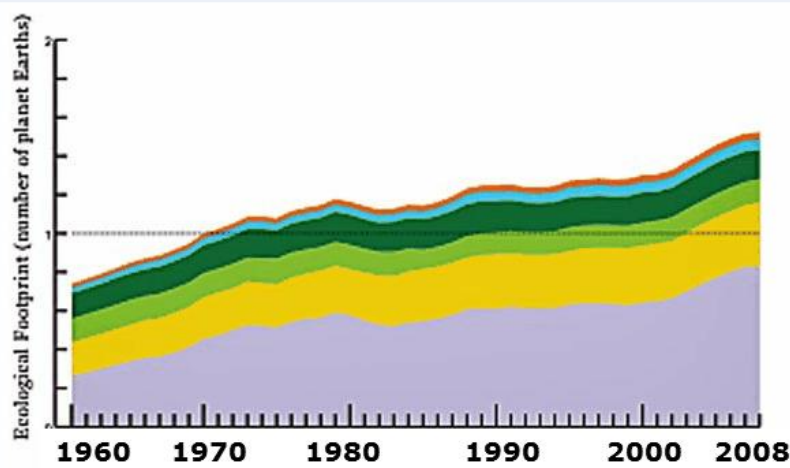


Figure 3: Global Ecological Footprint by component, 1961-2008

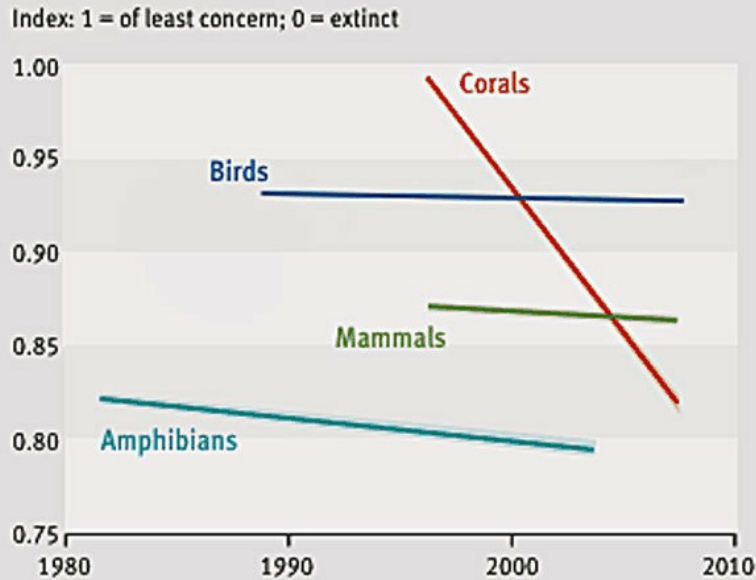
The largest component of the Ecological Footprint is the carbon footprint (55%) (Global Footprint Network, 2011).

Key

- Built-up land
- Fishing
- Forest
- Grazing
- Cropland
- Carbon

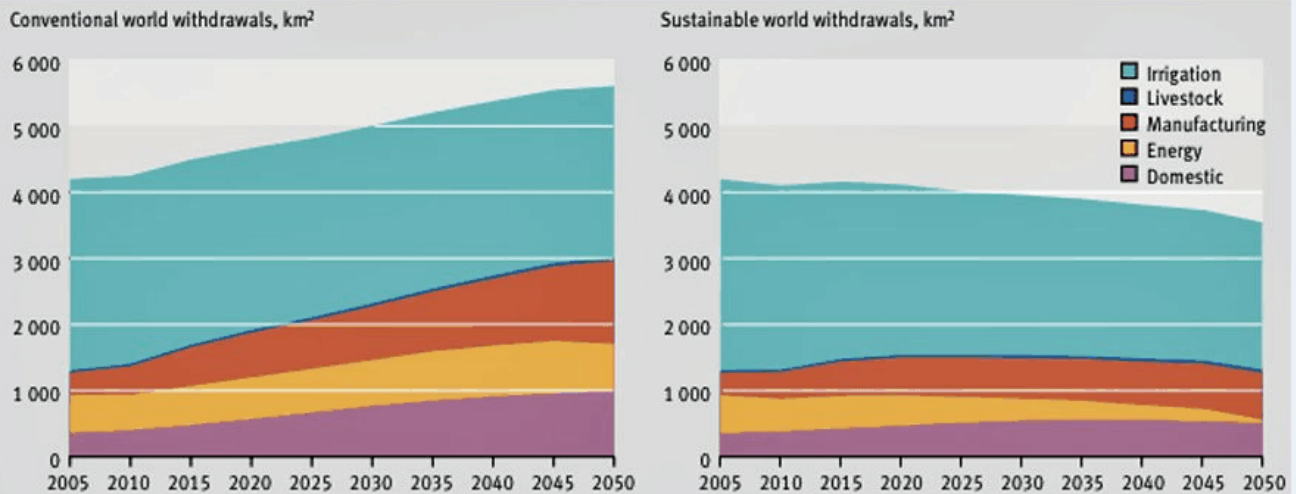
The WWF reported that coral reefs declined 38 percent since 1980 and overall there was a 28 percent reduction in global biodiversity between 1970 and 2008

Figure 5.7 Red List Indices of species survival for all species of birds, mammals, amphibians and corals, 1980–2010



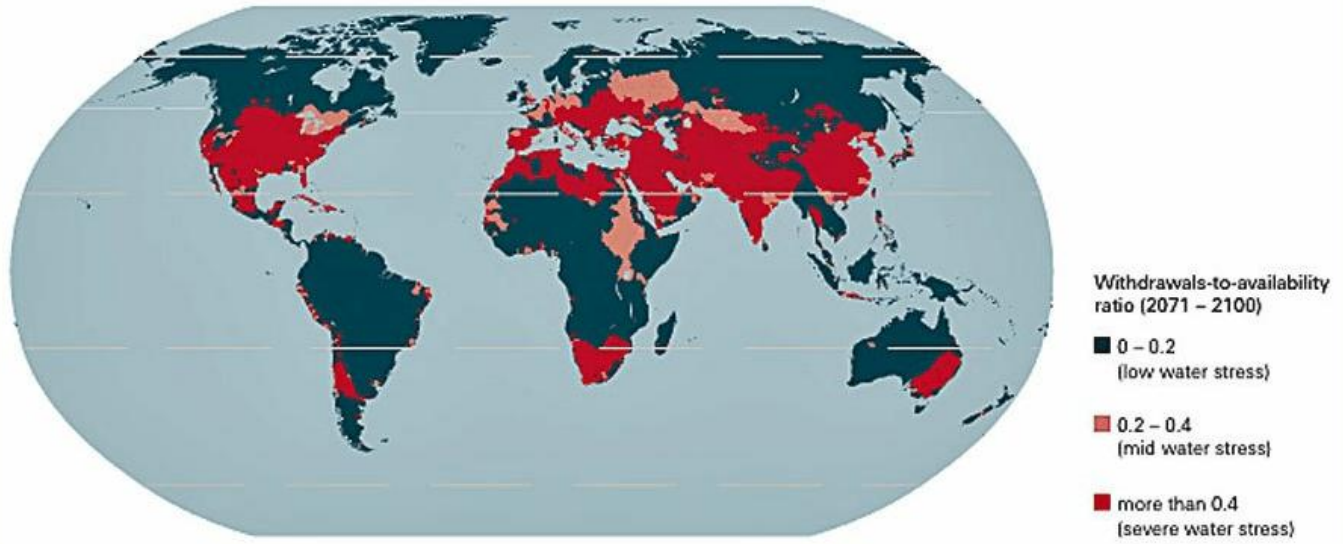
WATER SCARCITY: The FAO recently reported that by 2025 two-thirds of the world's population could be living under water-stressed conditions

Figure 16.11 Water withdrawals under conventional world and sustainable world scenarios, 2005–2050



By the end of the century, almost everyone will searching for consistent sources of clean water

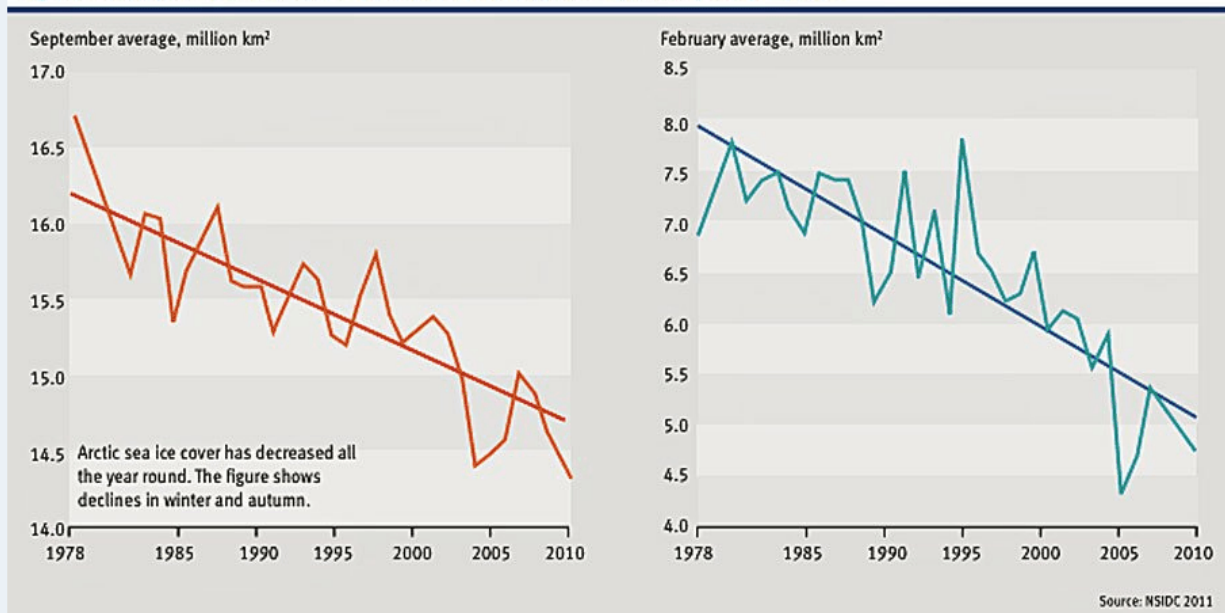
Water Stress ECHAM5 – A2 (2071 - 2100)



WWF

CLIMATE CHANGE: The WWF reported that the current rate of climate change exceeds the rate during the end of the last Ice Age (12,000 years ago)

Figure 2.4 Trends in Arctic sea ice extent in winter and autumn, 1979–2010



UN

[In 40 Years We Could Face An Ocean Without Fish >](#)



REPORT CARD

UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

MAIN ASSIGNMENT

STABILIZE GREENHOUSE-GAS EMISSIONS

F

OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

TRACK GREENHOUSE-GAS EMISSIONS AND SINKS

The climate convention has helped to create national inventories of greenhouse-gas emissions, land-use trends and carbon uptake by forests.

A

PROMOTE AND DISPERSE CLIMATE-FRIENDLY TECHNOLOGIES

The Clean Development Mechanism allows industrialized countries to offset their emissions by paying for clean energy and other projects in developing countries, but the programme has been limited in both reach and effectiveness.

D

REPORT CARD

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

MAIN ASSIGNMENT

REDUCE THE RATE OF BIODIVERSITY LOSS

F

OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

DEVELOP BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

Nations have only just started to establish focused targets for biodiversity and ways to assess it.

D

PROTECT ECOSYSTEMS

At least 10% of the world's ecologically valuable regions on land was protected by 2010, but only about 1% of those in the oceans.

C

SHARE GENE WINDFALL

The Nagoya Protocol on the sharing of commercial benefits derived from the collection and use of genetic material has been signed by 92 countries, but is not yet in force. Only a few companies so far have shared such benefits with the source country.

E