

# Sustainability

## Lecture Part 2

SOC165

Spring 2010



# *In Part 2*

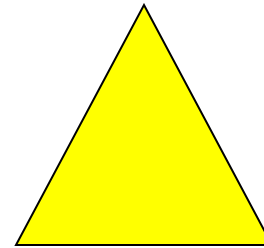
- Social and ecological dimensions of sustainability



# Dimensions of Sustainability

Worldwatch article: 4 dimensions of sustainable development

1. Human survival
2. Biological diversity
3. Social equity
4. Quality of life



Similar to  
Maslow's  
hierarchy?



# Human Survival

- The survival of homo sapiens as a species is not threatened
- But risks do threaten individuals, and whole populations



# Biological Diversity

Values of biodiversity:

- Intrinsic value of nature
  - Vandana Shiva: ecosystem stability & health
- Utilitarian – use by humans
  - Vandana Shiva: food security





# Threats to Biodiversity

- Economic globalization
  - ToP: corporations and governments conspire to use resources

Examples:

- Bio-piracy
- “Beerodiversity”



# Threats to Biodiversity

- Agricultural monoculture
  - GMO corn & soybeans; forestry
- Pesticides
  - Destroy natural systems for pest control
  - Kill wildlife
  - Increase human cancer rates



# Social Equity

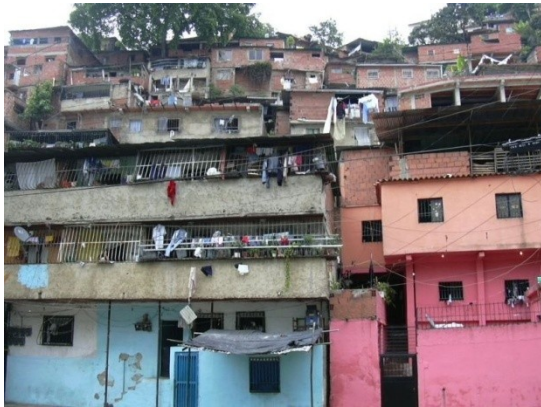
- Inequity can lead to social destabilization:
  - Epidemics – AIDS in Africa, bird flu pandemic is hard to stop in poor countries
  - Exploitation: unhealthy mining practices & bad labor conditions in mines
  - More natural disasters – landslides in Honduras after hurricane Mitch
  - Wars for resources & terrorism resulting from anger over exploitation





# Social Equity

- Environmental problems result from social problems – and cause social problems
- Today income inequality is growing – between Global North & South, and within nations



# Social Equity

- Redefine “national security” to include global environmental and economic justice, not simply military protection



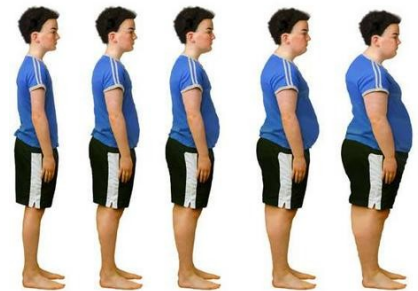
# Quality of Life

- There is more to life than material well-being
- GDP cannot measure the true level of material well-being



# Quality of Life

- Overconsumption has become a problem in many developed nations
- Lifestyle diseases: obesity, diabetes
- Economists: The hedonic treadmill may not make us happy





# Prescriptions for Sustainable Development

For global sustainability, the economy must harmonize with the earth's natural systems

- Seek new energy sources
- Protect habitat
- Control consumption
- Control human population



# The Big Social Risk

- Threat to modern society from damaged environment
- Social suicide through overexploitation of nature





# End of Part 2

Continue to Part 3.



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# Citations used in this lecture

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