

# The Green Paradox of Thrift

Using the Economic Crisis to Move  
Towards a Sustainable Economy

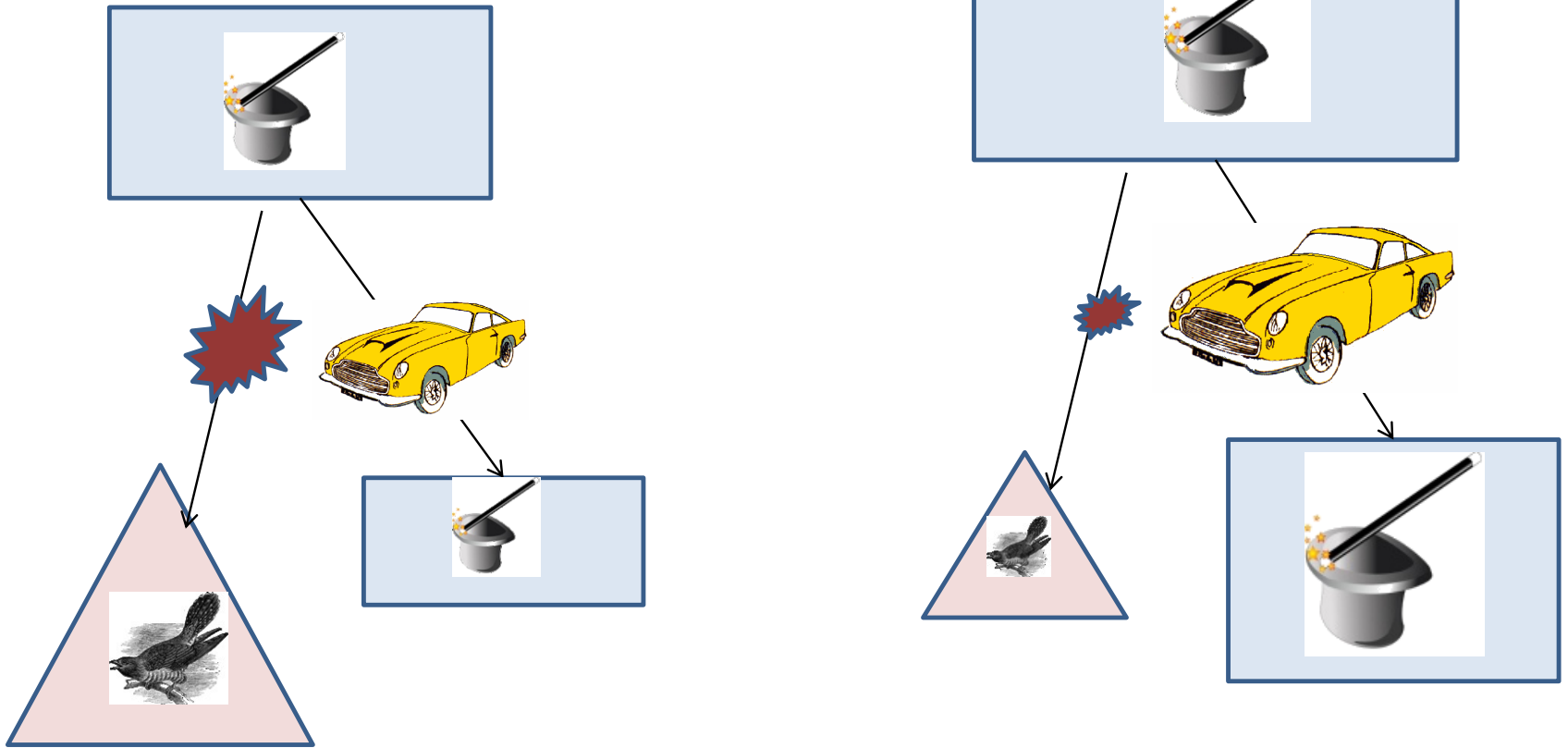


# The Last Great Depression



- Failure of aggregate demand
- Repayment of debts
- Failure of lending and borrowing
- Recessionary spiral: 'the death spiral'

# The Linear View



= wealth creation



= private sector



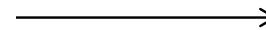
= public sector



= taxation

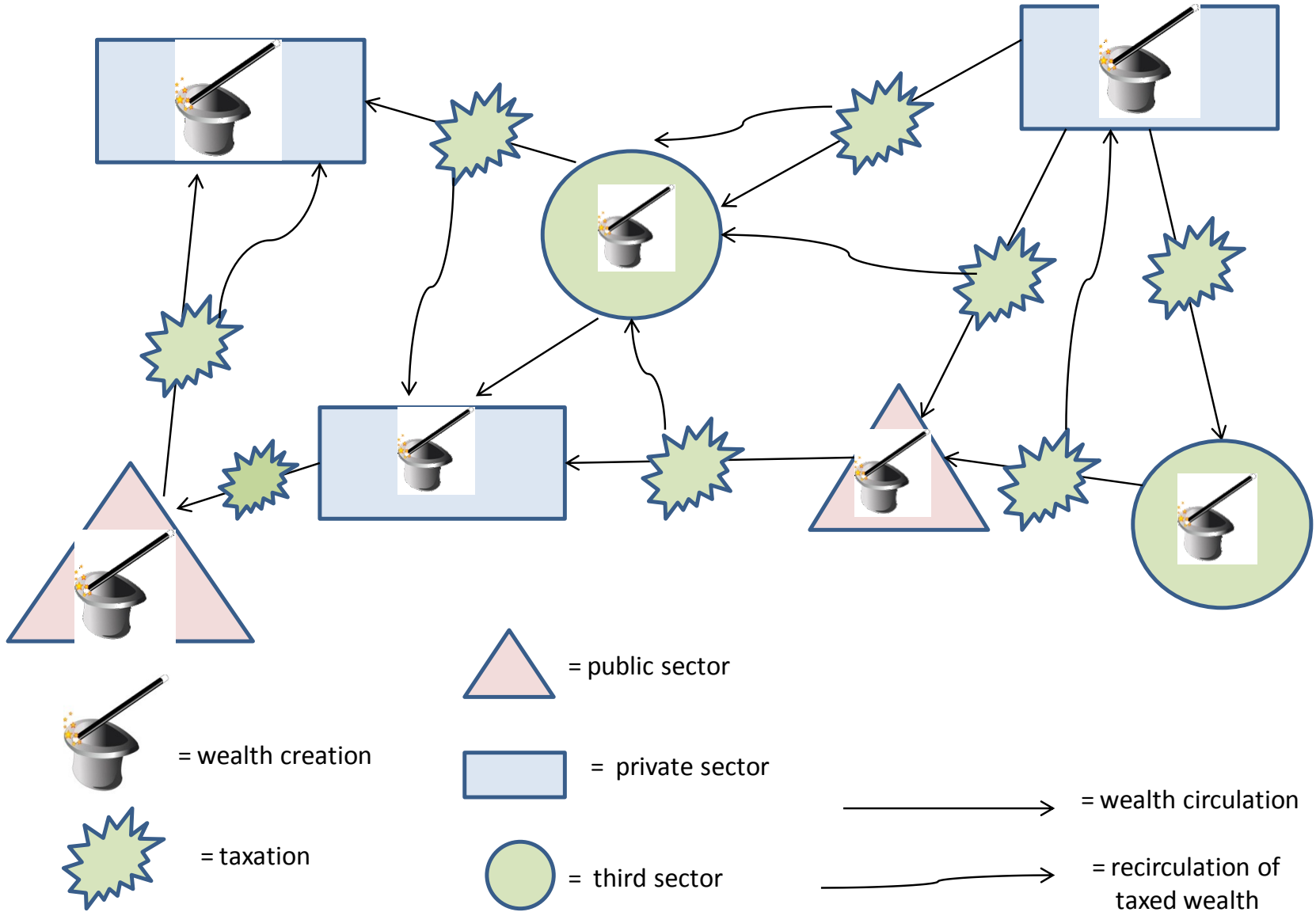


= consumption



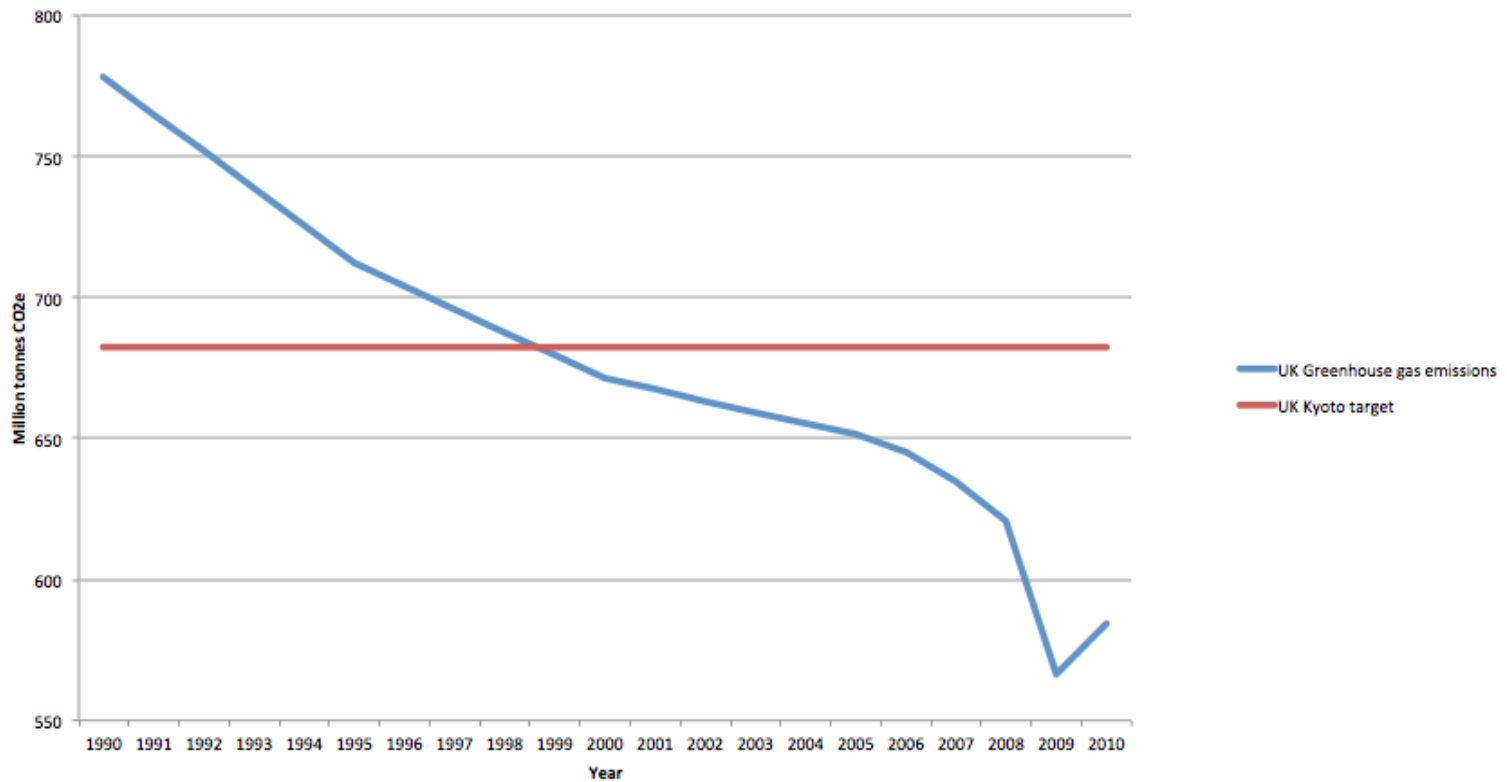
= wealth circulation

# The Systems View

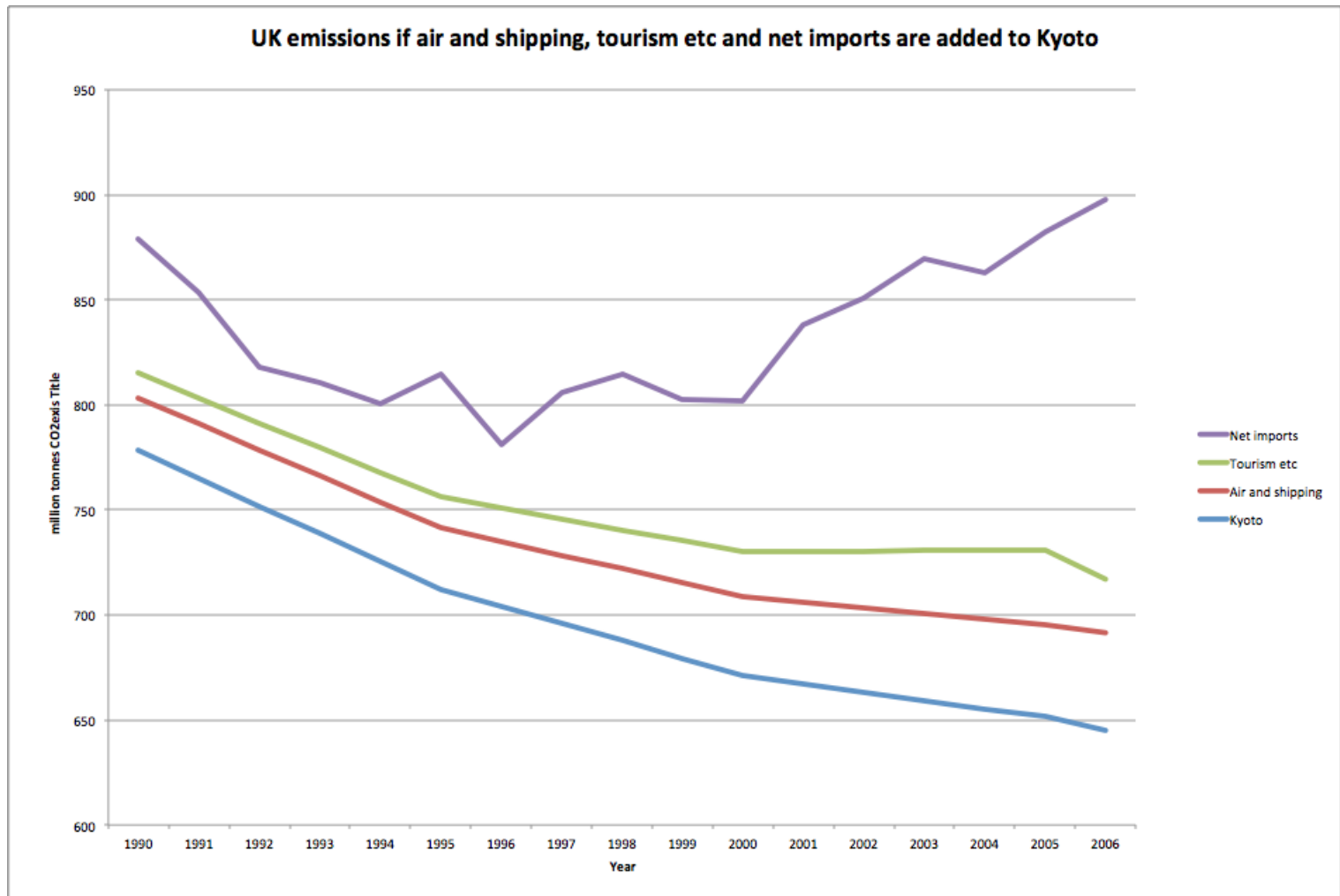


# The view from No. 10

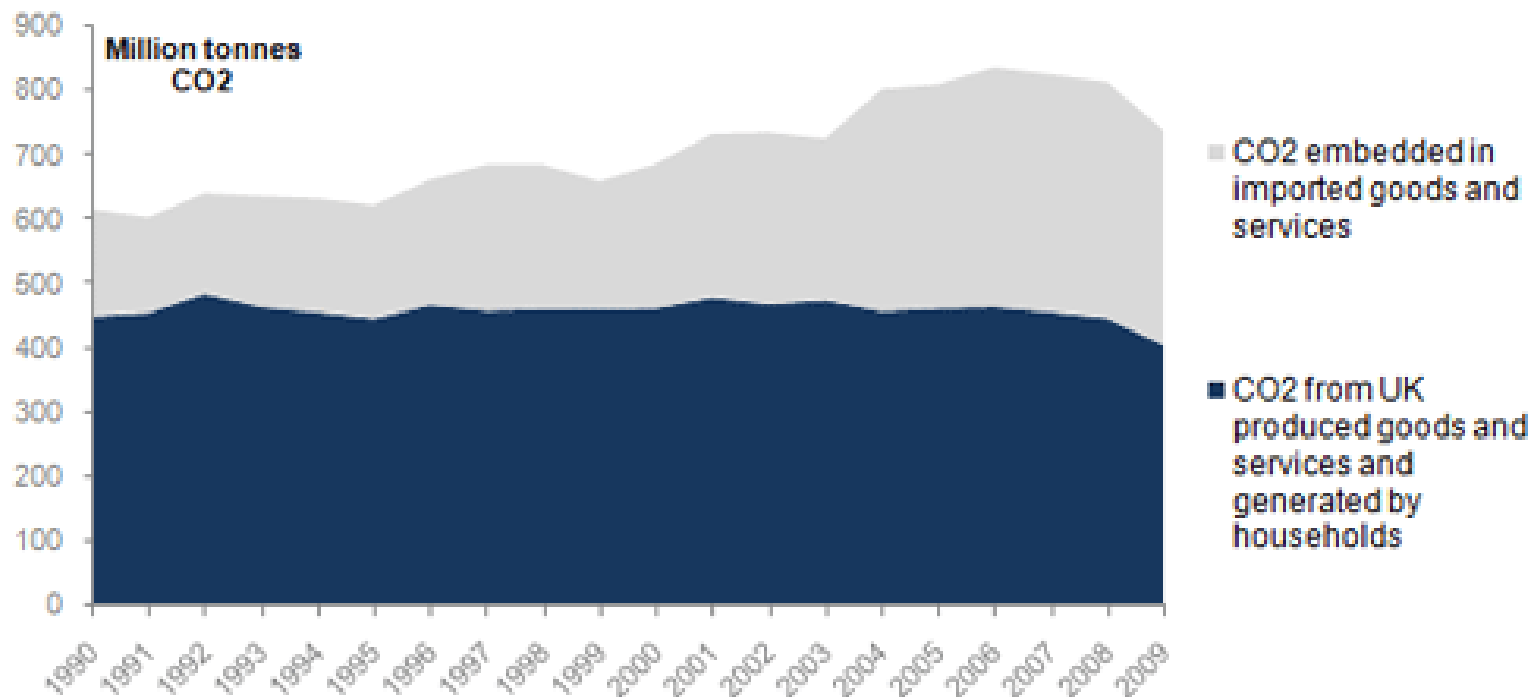
UK performance against the Kyoto target for greenhouse gas emissions



# The full picture



# CO2 emissions associated with UK consumption 1990 to 2009 (Defra)



Source: University of Leeds and Centre for Sustainable Accounting

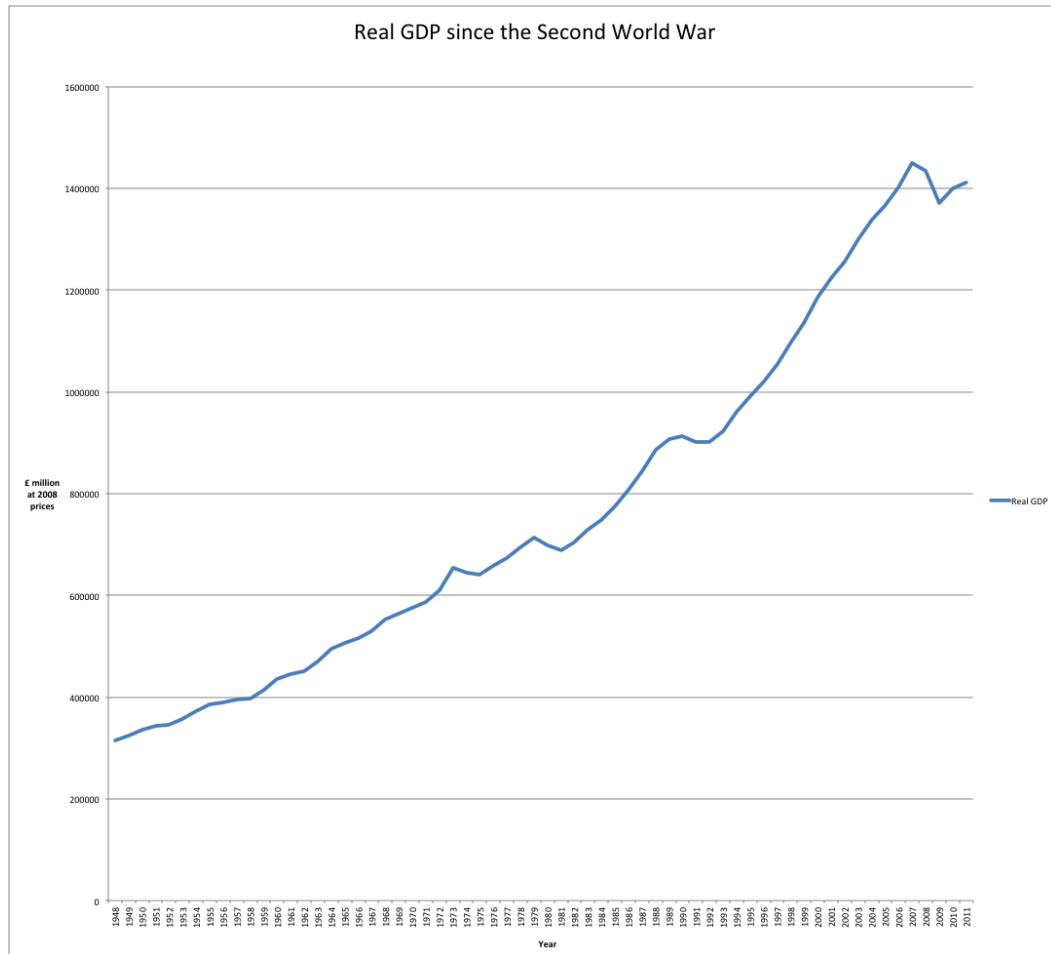


'STILL NOT HAPPY'



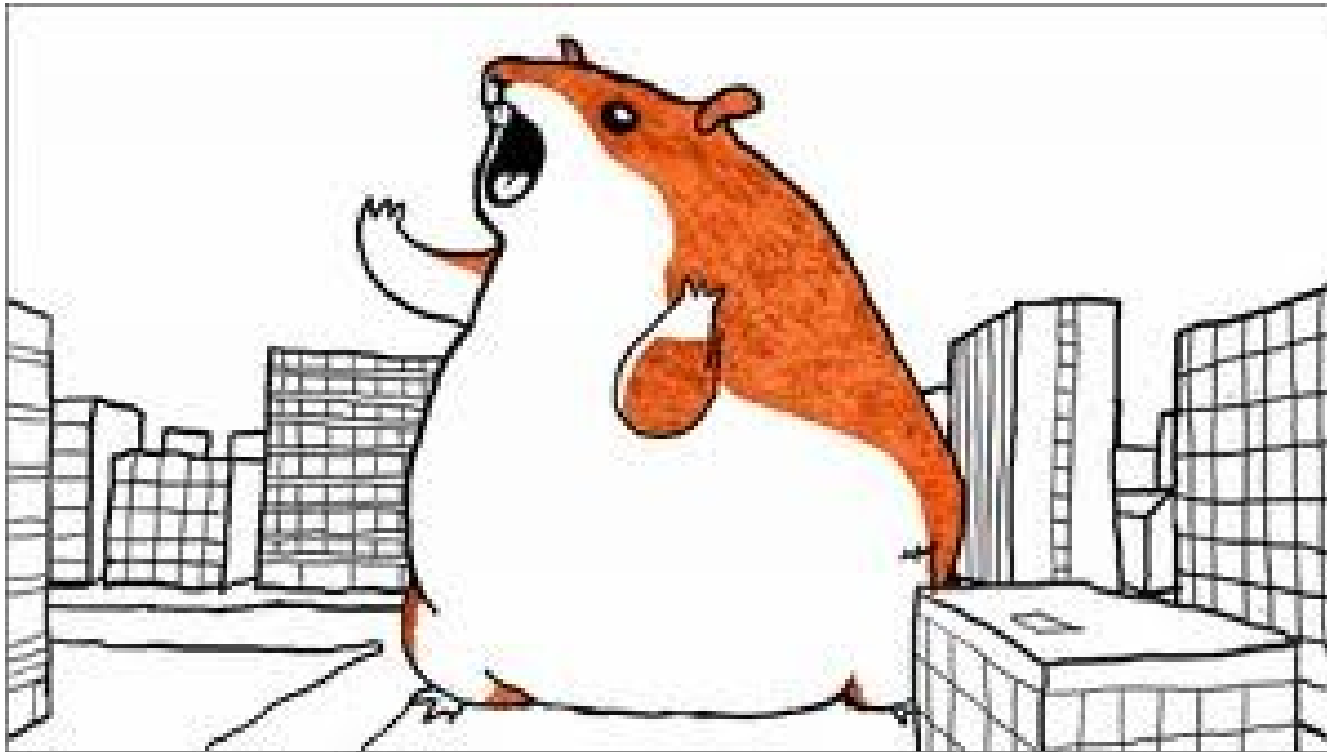


# But perhaps a rest from growth isn't such a bad thing . . . ?



# The Impossible Hamster

<http://vimeo.com/8947526>



# Questions



- Why do economies grow?
- Is it only capitalist economies that grow?
- In your country is there such a persistent focus on growth?
- Are the benefits of growth fairly shared?

# Can we have 'green growth'?

- 'Green growth can cut emissions, help insulate against oil price shocks and bolster the fast-growing market for green goods and services – providing jobs, growth and prosperity'.
- Chris Huhne, Energy and Climate Change Secretary (DECC 2011)



# Definitions I: OCED definition

- Green growth is economic growth which does not impede on our natural capital (OECD 2011:4):  
‘We need to make growth greener, to make our economic and environmental policies more compatible and even mutually-reinforcing. This is not just a matter of new technologies or new sources of renewable, safe energy. It is about how we all behave every day of our lives, what we eat, what we drink, what we recycle, re-use, repair, how we produce and how we consume.’

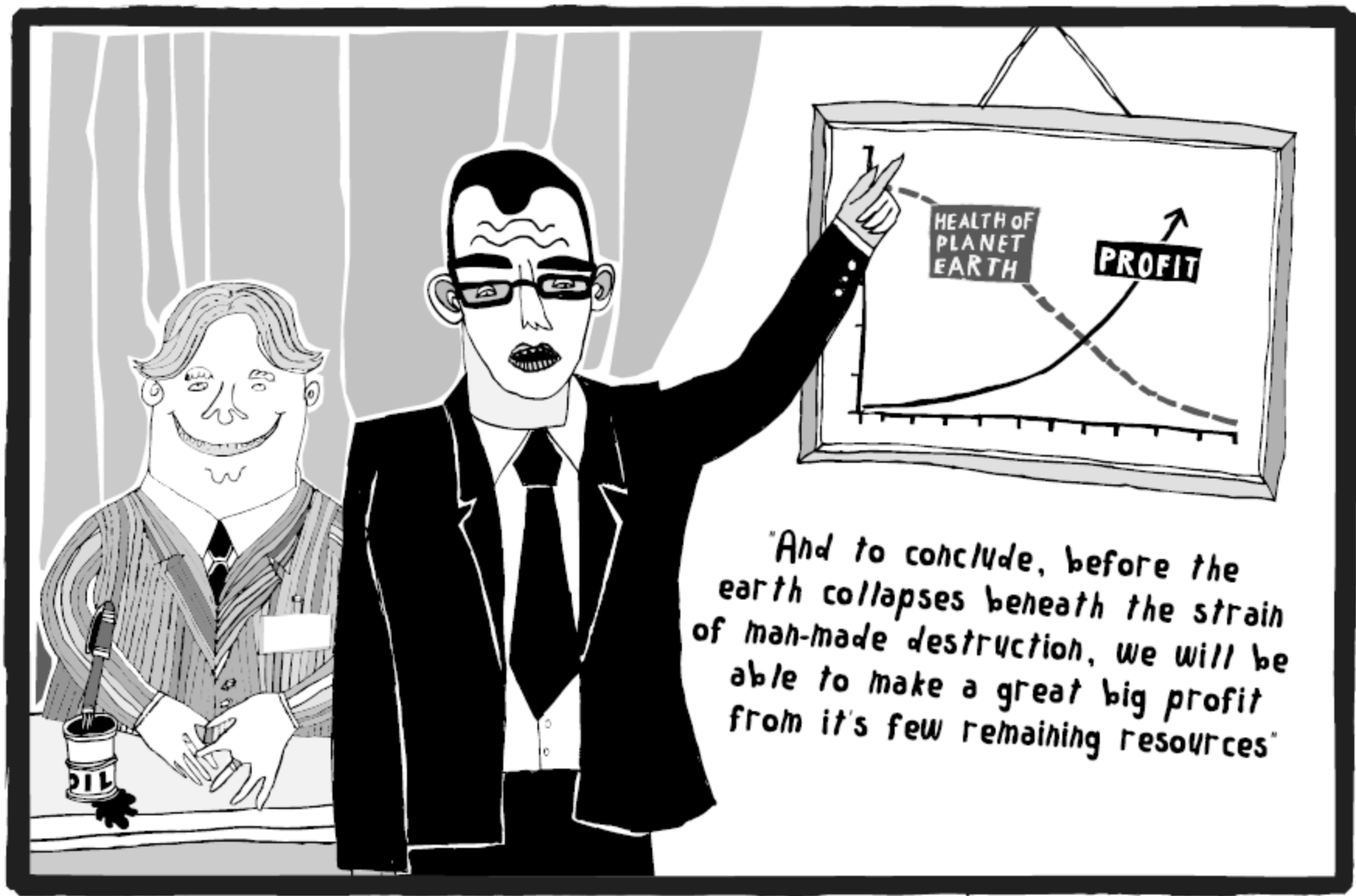
# ILO definition

- ILO's definition says that all jobs which promote sustainable development are green jobs; points out that the definition includes, **firstly**, jobs which directly reduce consumption of energy and resources, protect ecosystems and biodiversity and minimize waste production and air pollution and, **secondly**, all jobs which reduce the environmental footprint; recognizes that, owing to the relative nature of the definition, the job potential cannot be definitively determined.

# Definitions II: UNEP

- Green and decent?

‘In addition to quantities of jobs, there is a range of qualitative questions, relating to occupational profiles and work skills, wage levels, and the degree to which worker representation (unionization) and workplace involvement (empowerment) are advanced or not. To fully identify, adopt, and implement green opportunities in the workplace, the active involvement of workers and unions is essential.’



*"And to conclude, before the earth collapses beneath the strain of man-made destruction, we will be able to make a great big profit from it's few remaining resources"*



# Definitions III: Shades of Green

	Deep Green	Mid Green	Light Green
<i>Mode</i>	Proactive	integrative	reactive
<i>Scope</i>	long term	Intermediate term	short term
<i>Nature</i>	transforming	reforming	conforming
<i>Objective</i>	redefine growth	‘ecologise’ growth	enhance growth
<i>Operation</i>	rejectionist	reinventionist	accommodationist
<i>Aim</i>	ecological sustainability	ecological modernity	sustainable development
<i>Jobs</i>	preserving nature	greening industry	remedying ecological decline

# Farewell to Thrift

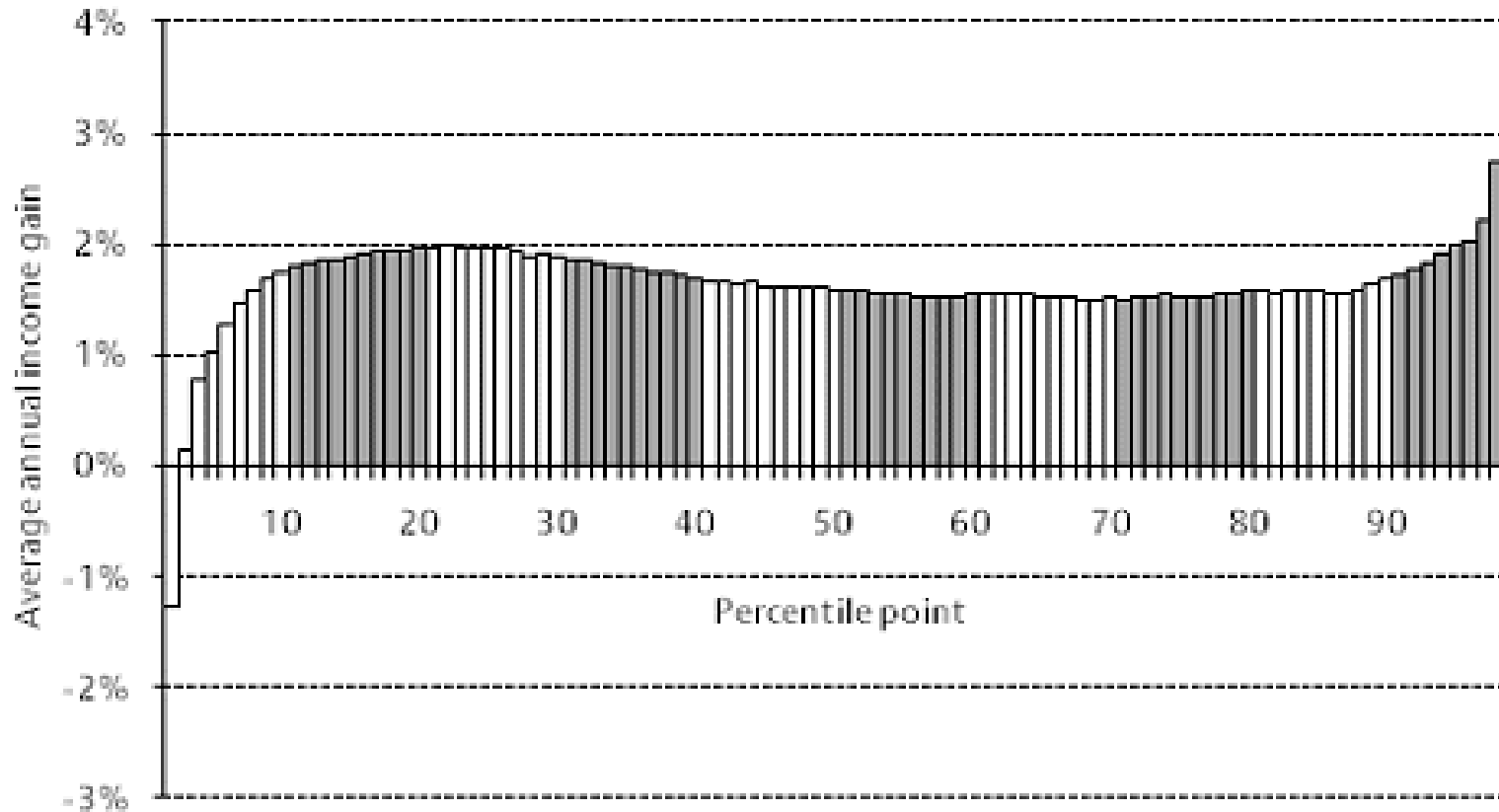
- ‘the whole system of an increasing productivity, plus inflation, plus a rising standard of material living, plus high-pressure advertising and salesmanship, plus mass communications, plus cultural democracy and the creation of the mass mind, the mass man’
  - J. B. Priestley, 1955

# Built-in obsolescence

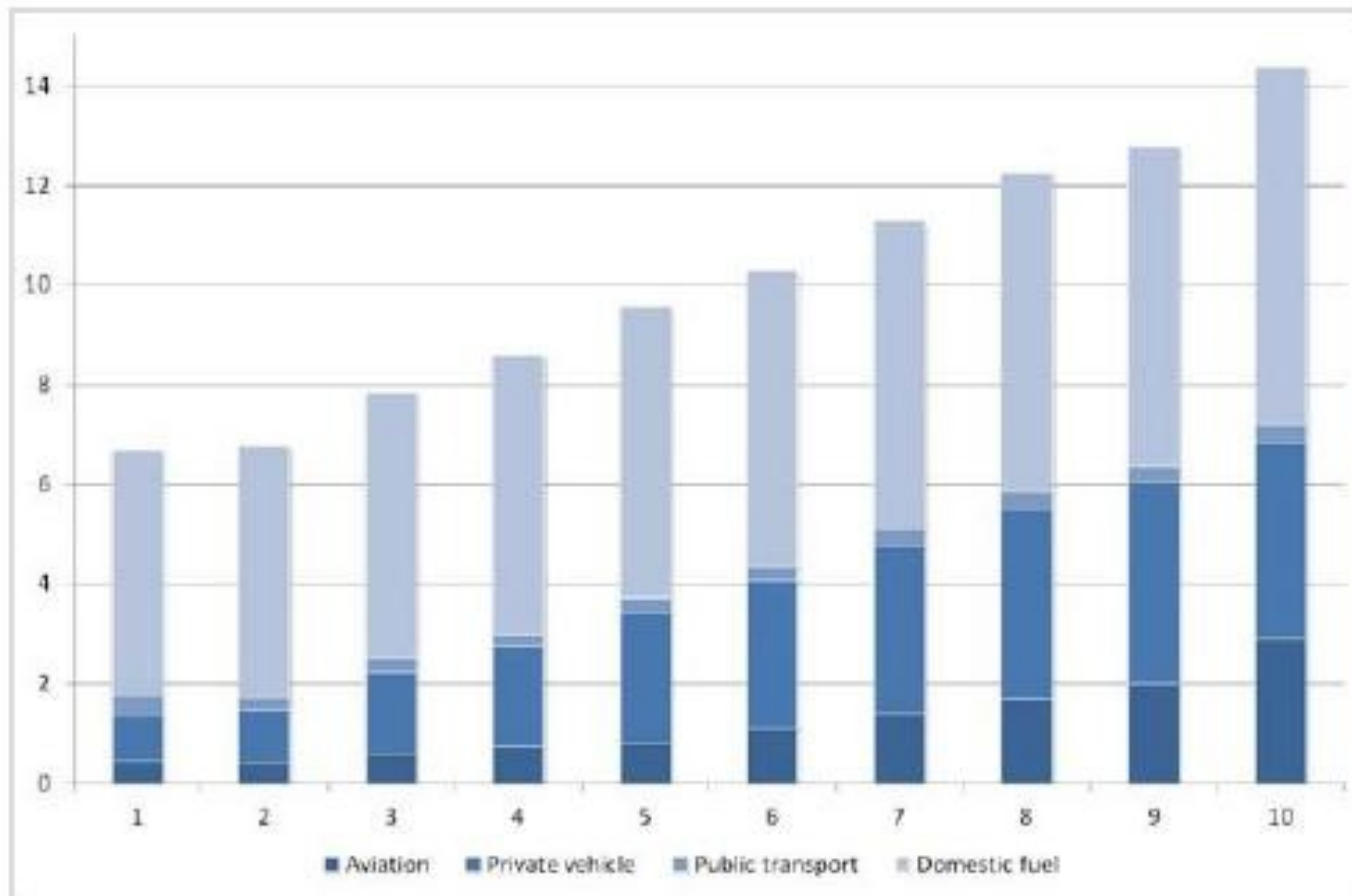
- Phoebus Cartel
- World's leading light-bulb manufacturers agreed to reduce the maximum life of a light-bulb to 1000 hours from the 2500 hours that Edison had already managed.
- The oldest light-bulb in the world is still in place at the Livermore Fire Station in California: it is 110 years old.



# Growing Inequality



# Climate change is a class issue



# Max Neef needs matrix



# Ecological citizenship

- ‘*environmentalism* argues for a managerial approach to environmental problems, secure in the belief that they can be solved without fundamental changes in present values or patterns of production and consumption. ... *ecologism* holds that a sustainable and fulfilling existence presupposes radical changes in our relationship with the non-human natural world, and in our mode of social and political life.’
- ‘there is a consensus over the need for active ecological citizenship because of the recognition that the transition to a sustainable society requires more than institutional restructuring; it also needs a transformation in the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of individuals’