

Intergenerational Equity

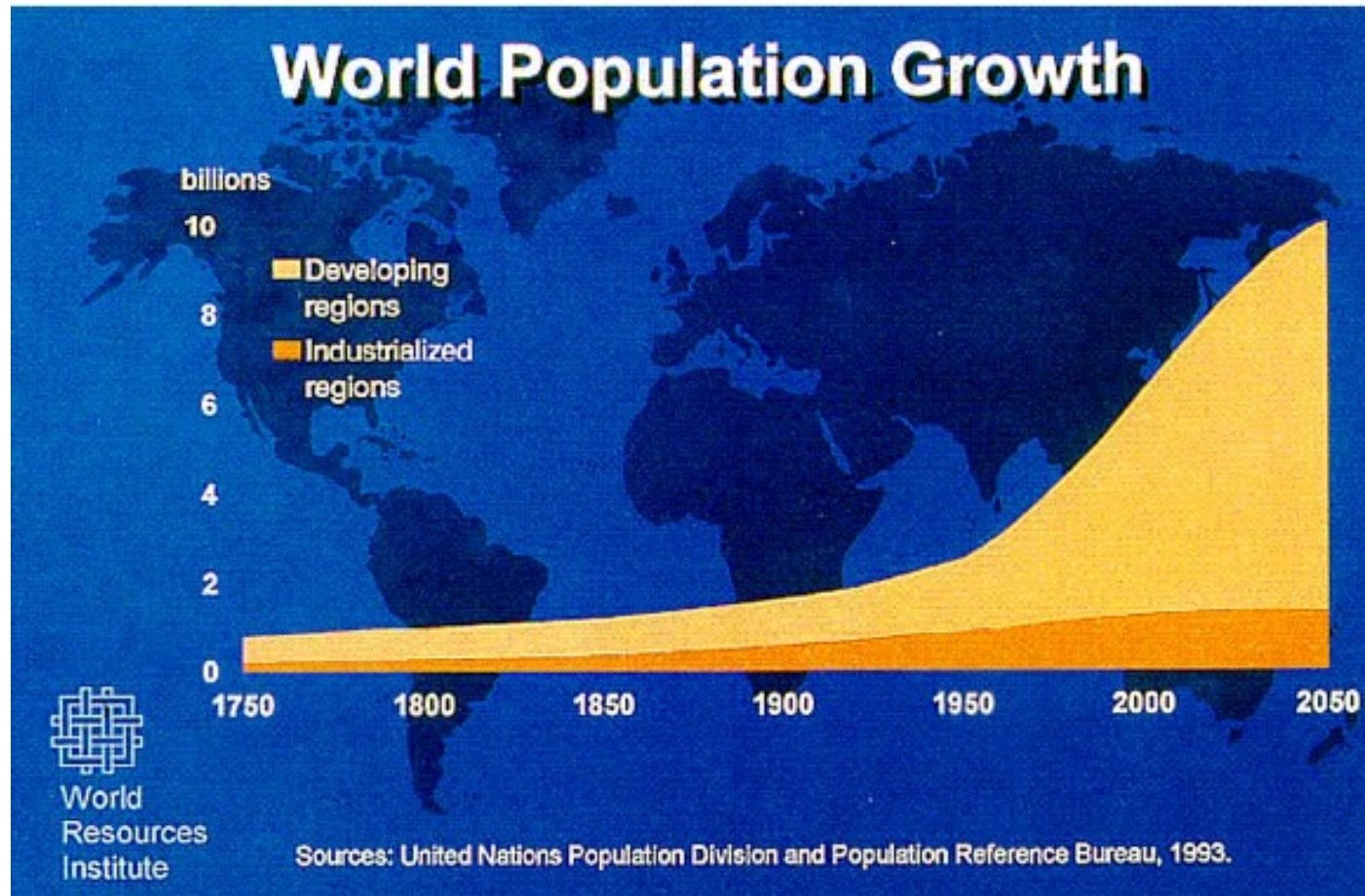
What
current
generations
owe to
future
generations



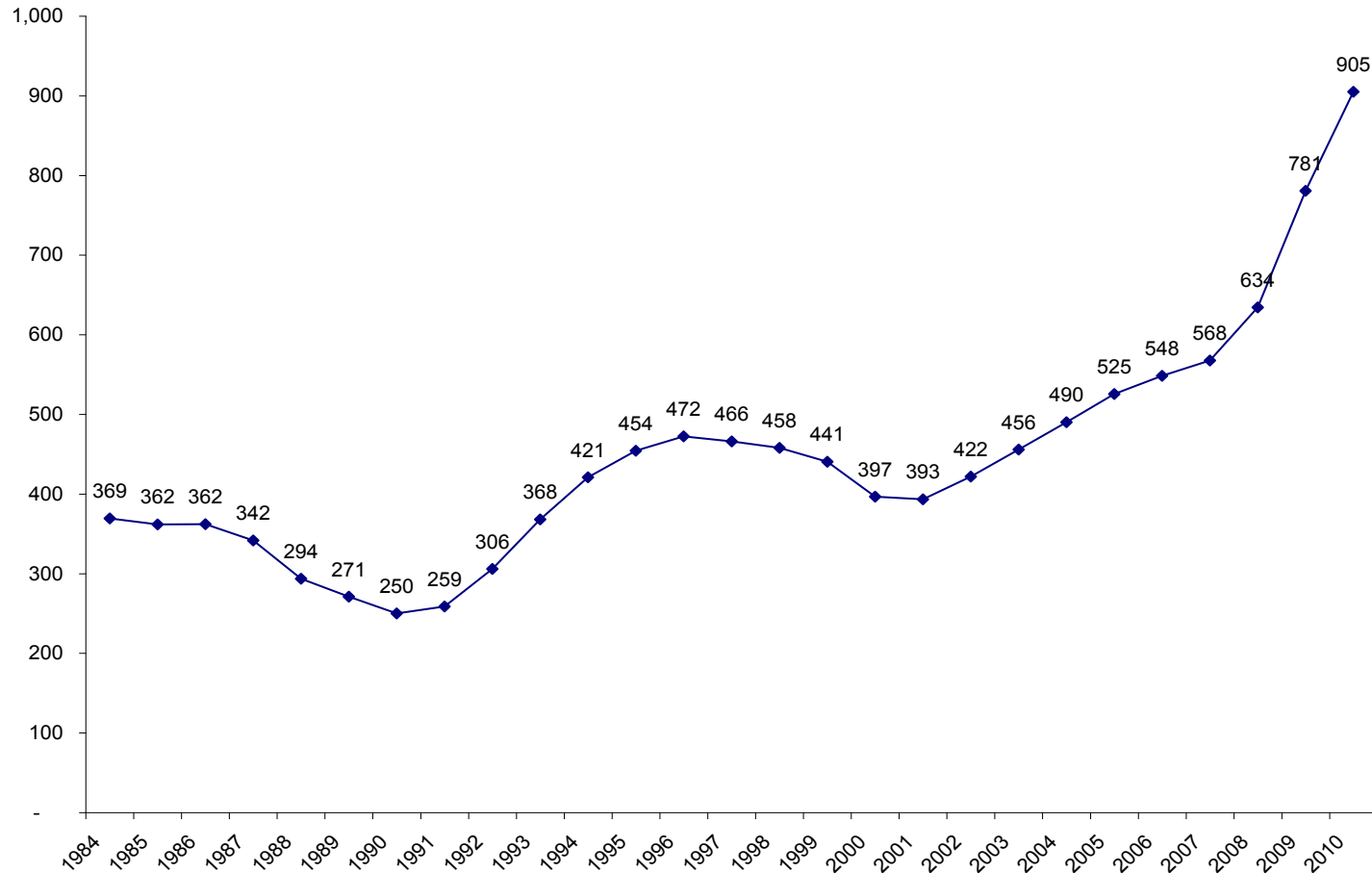
Sustainable Development

- Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:
 - the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
 - the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

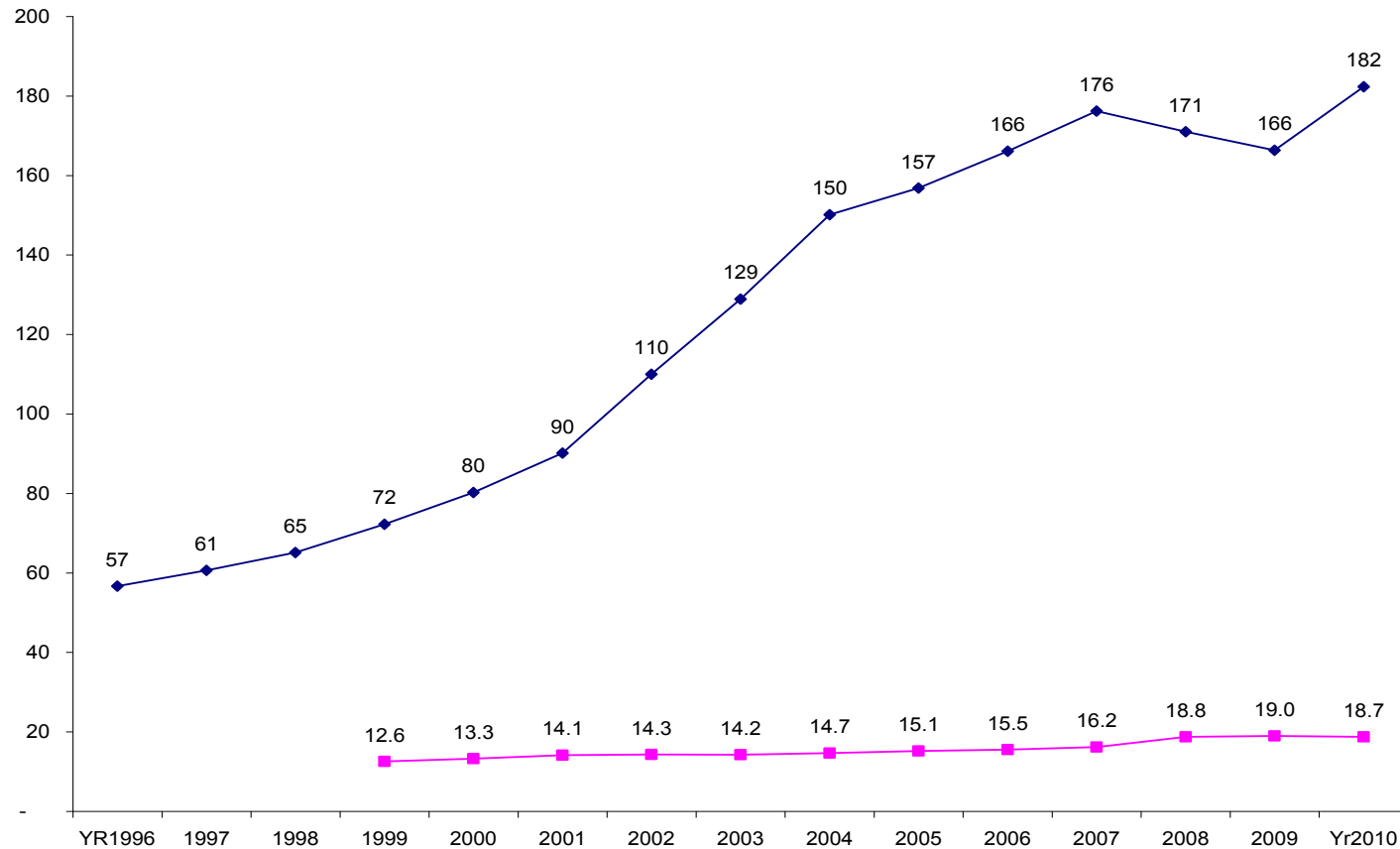
Population Increase



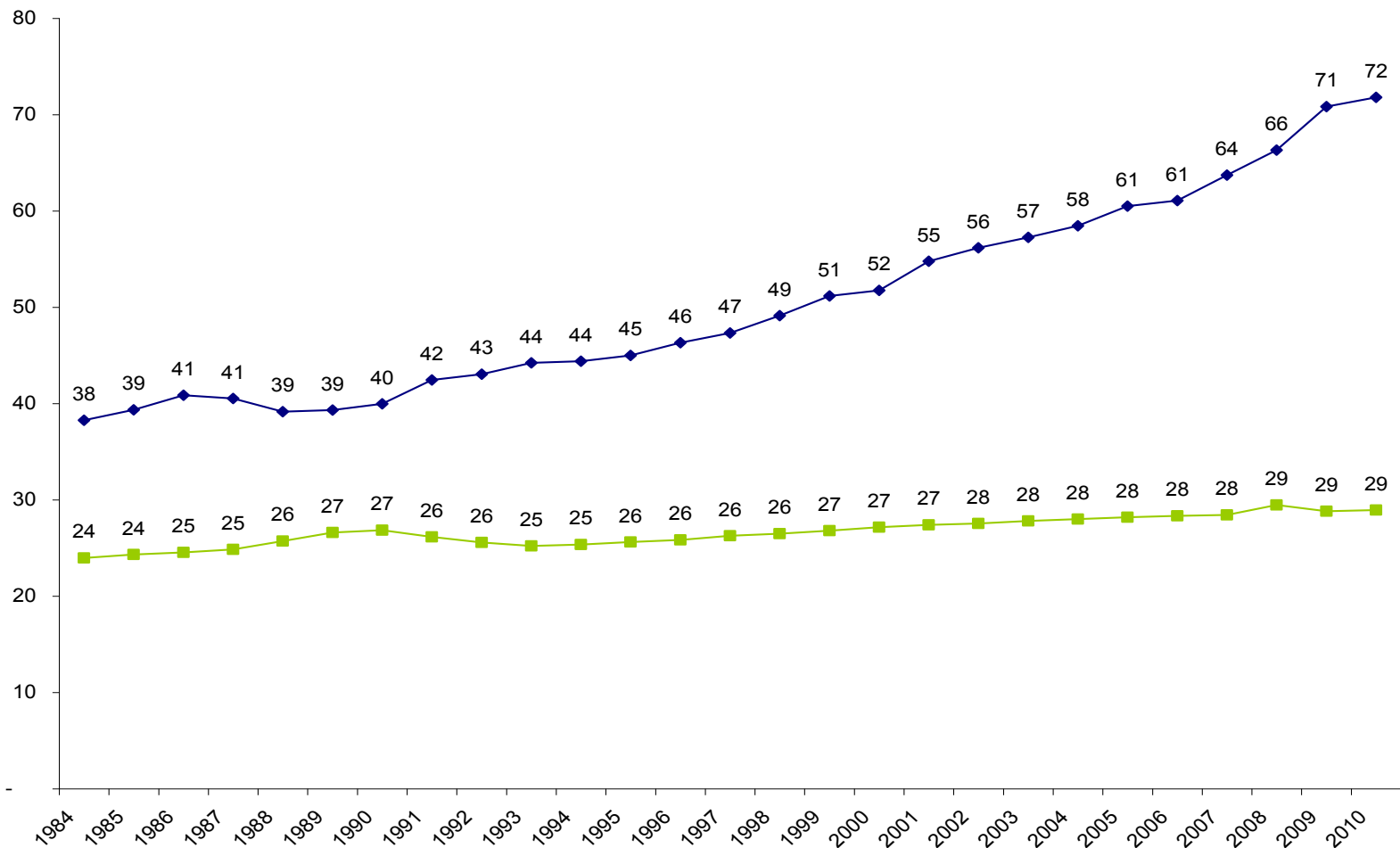
Levels of Government Debt (public sector net debt, £bn)



Median Income of those aged 20 to 29 (£000s) (red line) compared to median house prices (£000s) (blue line)



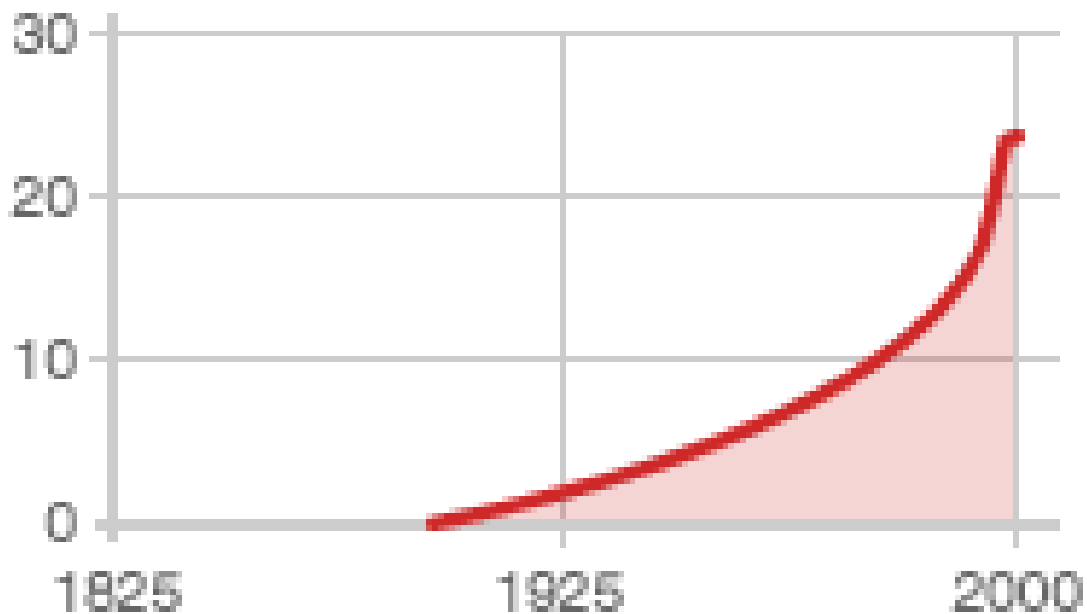
Size of the UK employed workforce (millions) (green line) compared to total cost of state pension (£ billions – real terms, 2011/12 Prices (blue line)



Species Loss

SPECIES EXTINCTIONS

Thousands



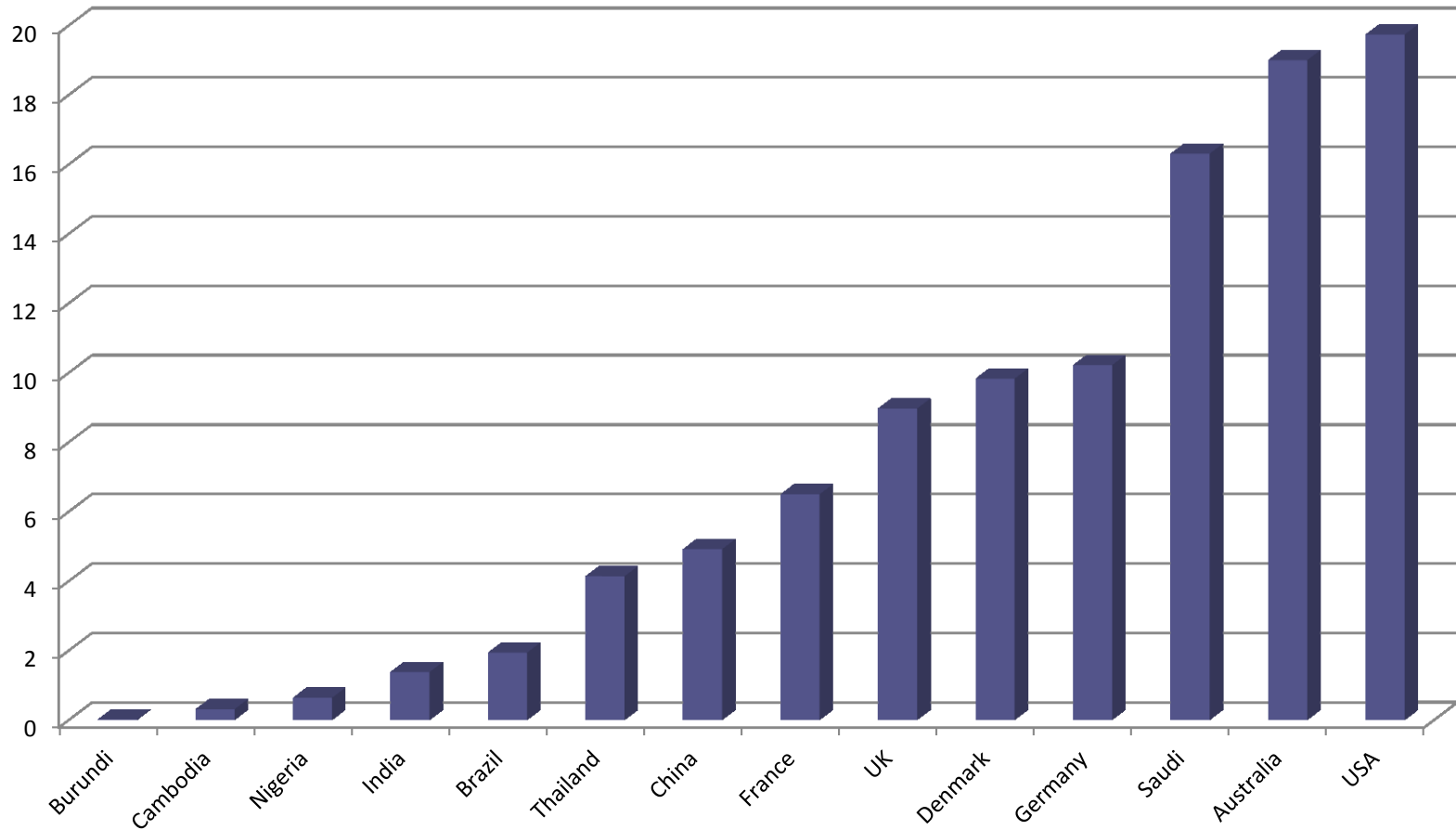
SOURCE: IGBP (Steffen et al 2004)

Comparisons of annual consumption

	USA	Europe	China	India	Africa	World
Cars	750	240	7	6	9	91
Fuel	1624	286	33	9	36	174
Energy	8520	3546	896	515	580	1640
Meat	125	74	52	5	13	40
Water	430	159	135	174	47	173
Popn.	293	730	1306	1080	887	6500
Children	2.08	1.56	1.72	2.78	4.82	2.55

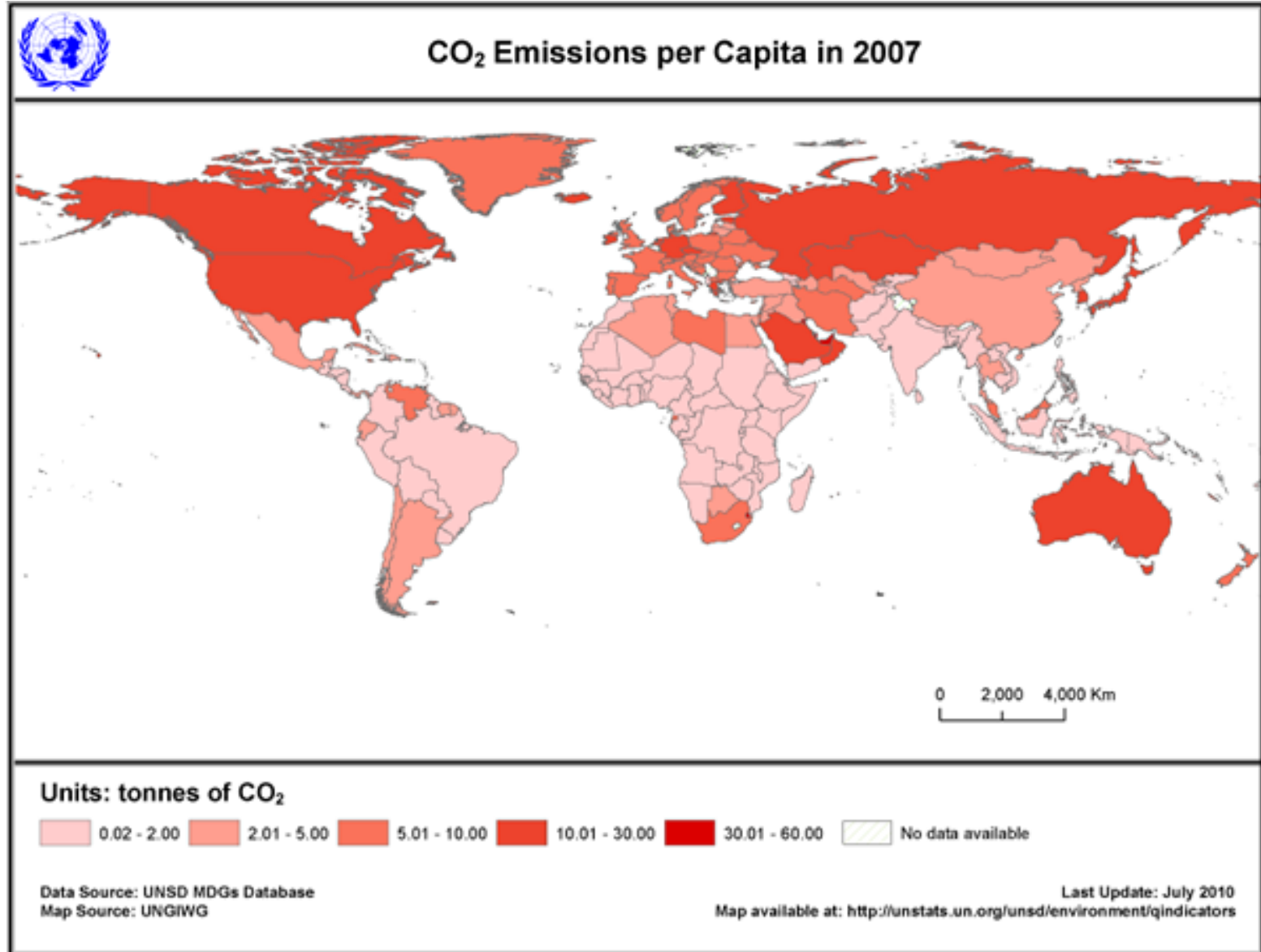
Data for 2004/5 from Pretty, J. (2007), *The Earth Only Endures: On Reconnecting with Nature and our Place in it* (London: Earthscan).

Emissions per capita for a range of countries in 2007 (tonnes of CO₂ per capita)



□ Source: UN Statistics Division

CO₂ Emissions Per Capita



Carbon dioxide emissions per capita, 1990-2007

	1990	2000	2004	2007
Burundi	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.02
Cambodia	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.31
Nigeria	0.48	0.72	0.83	0.64
India	0.79	1.1	1.2	1.4
Brazil	1.4	1.9	1.8	1.9
China	2.1	2.7	3.8	4.9
France	6.4	6.0	6.2	6.5
UK	10.1	9.9	9.8	8.97
Saudi	15.7	13.1	13.4	16.3
USA	18.8	20.9	20.4	19.7

Attitudes towards Future Generations

Question 1. Which one of the following generation's needs, if any, should have priority when thinking about using the earth's resources?

Options	%
All future generations	63.9%
My children's generation	13.2%
My generation	13.1%
My grandchildren's generation	7.7%
Don't know / None of these	2.1%
Total	100%

Question 3. Which one of the following, if any, do you think is most important to hand down to future generations?

Options	%
A healthy planet	45.4%
The technologies and skills to ensure mankind's survival	16.1%
Safety and security	15.9%
A thriving economy	8.7%
Thriving communities	8.4%
An unspoilt countryside	3.8%
Don't know / None of these	1.7%
Total	100%

Question 4. What best describes your opinion of how well the UK government considers future generations in decisions it makes today?

Options	%
It considers future generations far too little	28.2%
It considers future generations too little	38.7%
It considers future generations the right amount	24.1%
It considers future generations far too much	3.1%
It considers future generations far too much	1.5%
Don't know / None of these	4.4%
Total	100%
Total - Too Little	66.8%
Total - Too Much	4.6%

The Politics of Intergenerational Equity

- “It [the state] becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.” Edmund Burke, 1789



An Ombudsman?

- “Our ancestors were able to live in peace with nature and with their past and future generations. We have to learn it again and to recreate these functions and institutions that serve our survival. This is our only chance – we should not miss it.” Sandor Fulop, Hungarian Ombudsman for Future Generations

Guardians of the Future?

- ‘Democracy’ means ‘government by the people’; but who are ‘the people’?
- The interests of future generations should
- Creation of a new legislative structure – Guardians of Future Generations
- The members of this body would be selected by
- Sortition
- The Guardians would have a power of veto over legislation

The Debate

- You are one of the following generations:
 - Current over-60s
 - Current mid-40s
 - Current under-25s
 - The next generation
- How do you approach the following policies:
 - Long-term care for the elderly
 - Nuclear power
 - Climate change
 - The financial crisis