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# Global climate justice and the international regime

**I-SEE Lecture**

**30 April 2024**

# The Main Argument



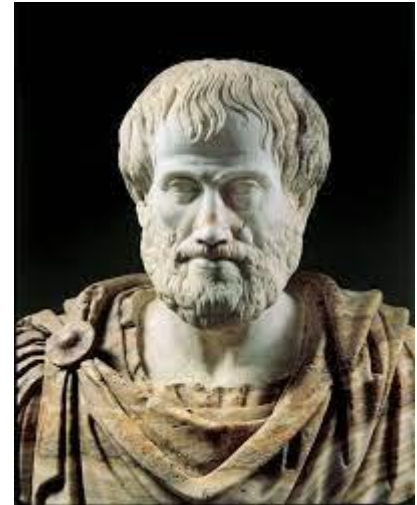
# International climate justice



- To what extent do justice questions apply in IR/global politics?
- What forms do they take?
- How serious are they?
- Efforts to address them?
- Why is it difficult to address justice questions in the international climate regime?
- The erosion of fairness in climate regime

# Centrality of justice in society

- a unique position as the ultimate moral guide to political actions
- ‘the greatest of all virtues’ (Aristotle 1847/1998)
- ‘the most important virtue of political institutions’ (Hulme)
- ‘the chief part, and incomparably the most binding part of all morality’ (Mill 1973: 465).



# International Justice?



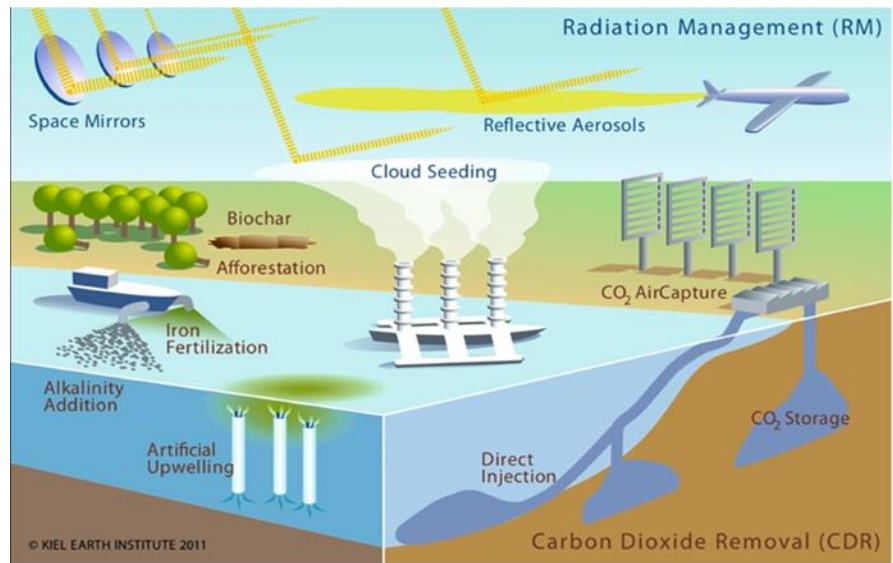
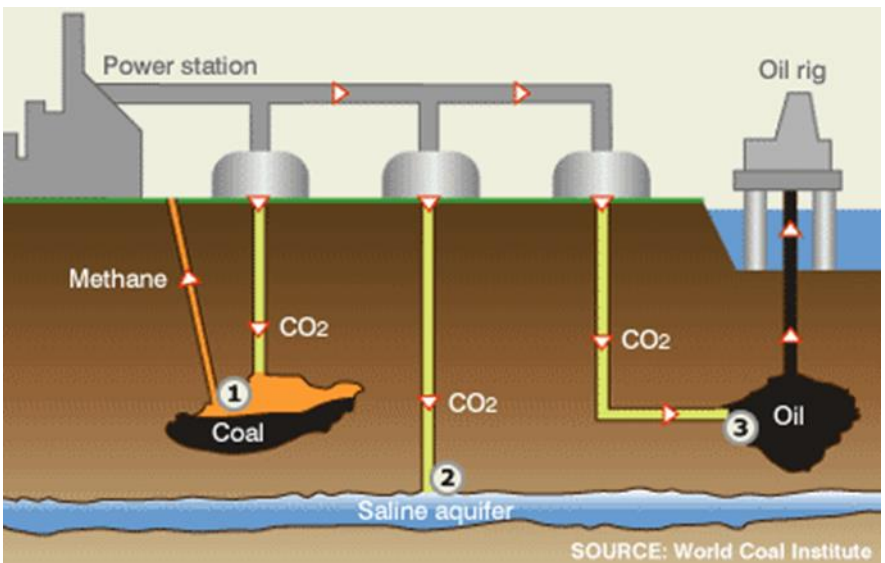
“the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.”

# Inapplicability of Justice in Regimes



- Regimes as a 'set of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge' – - Keohane and Nye
- Norms in a deontic sense
- Justice is a meaningless concept and an Oxymoron
- It is all about power and interest
- Justice delays action

# Management Approaches



## Emissions Trading

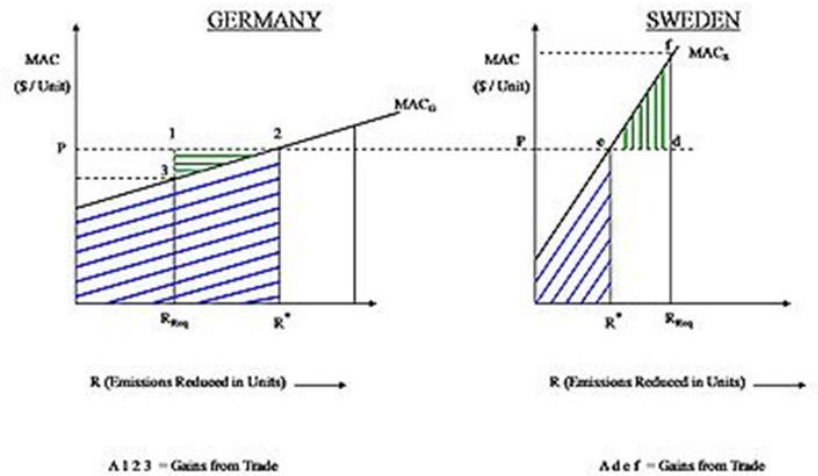
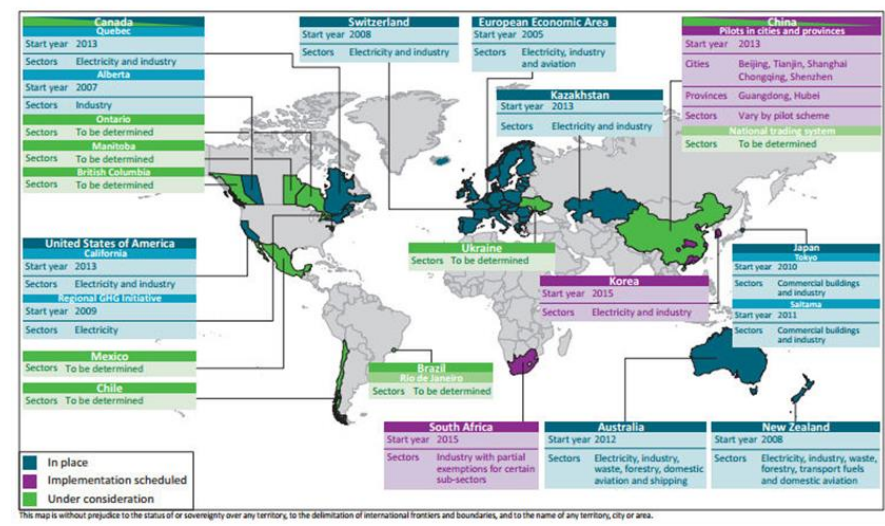


Figure 1.4 - Current and proposed schemes that put a price on carbon



# Environmentalism of the rich







# AFRICA DEMANDS CLIMATE JUSTICE

Putting people not profit at the centre of solving the climate crisis

**Desmond D'Sa**

South Durban Community Environmental Alliance  
Deborah Doane, World Development Movement

**7pm, Monday 10 October**

Brighthelm Centre, North Road, Brighton BN1 1YD



World Development Movement  
Justice for the world's poor

# NOW!



# The Key Justice Connection

1. The Development –Emission link
2. Carbon budget and the imperative of reduction
3. Asymmetry in contribution
4. Asymmetry in impact/harm
5. Asymmetry in capability
6. Asymmetry in voice
7. Historic and abiding systemic injustice



# Climate Justice Dimensions

- International



- National



- Intergenerational

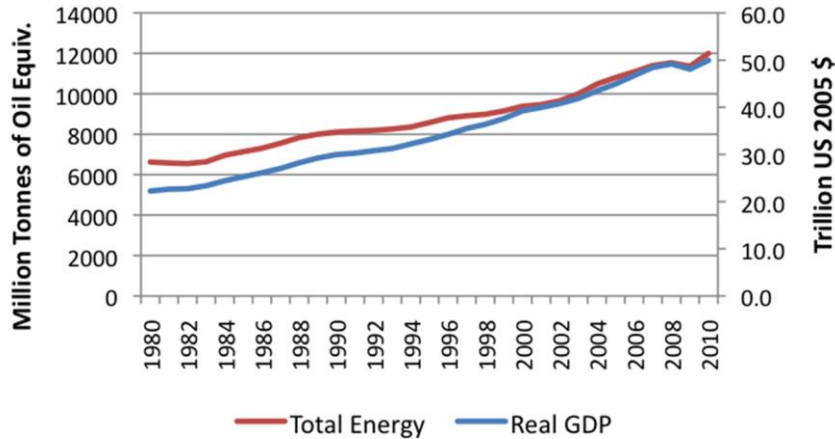


- Gender

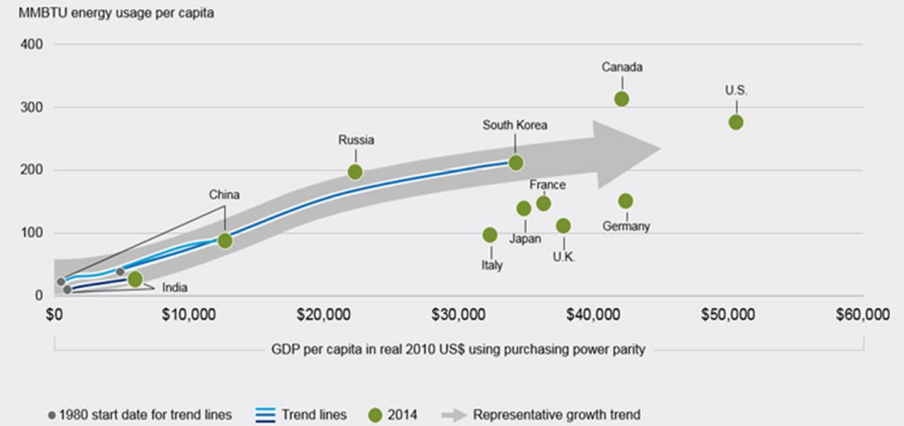


# The Development Emission Link

World - Total Energy and Real GDP

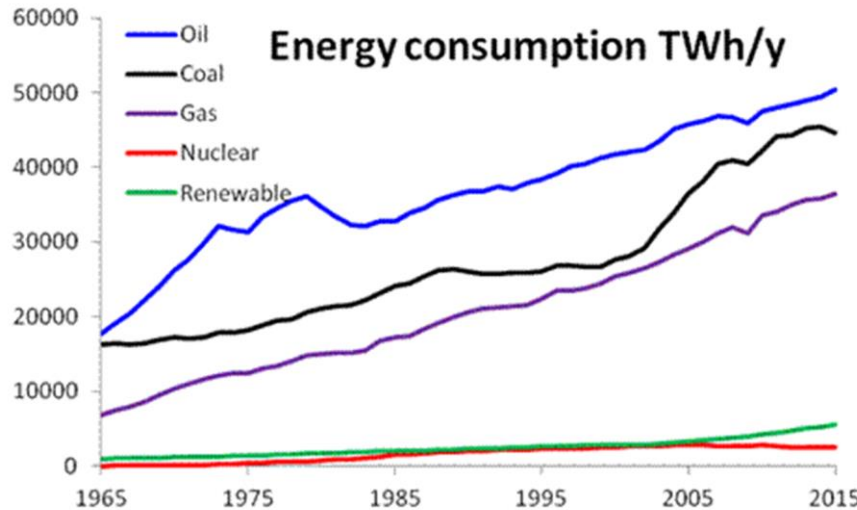


Economic growth versus energy usage per capita

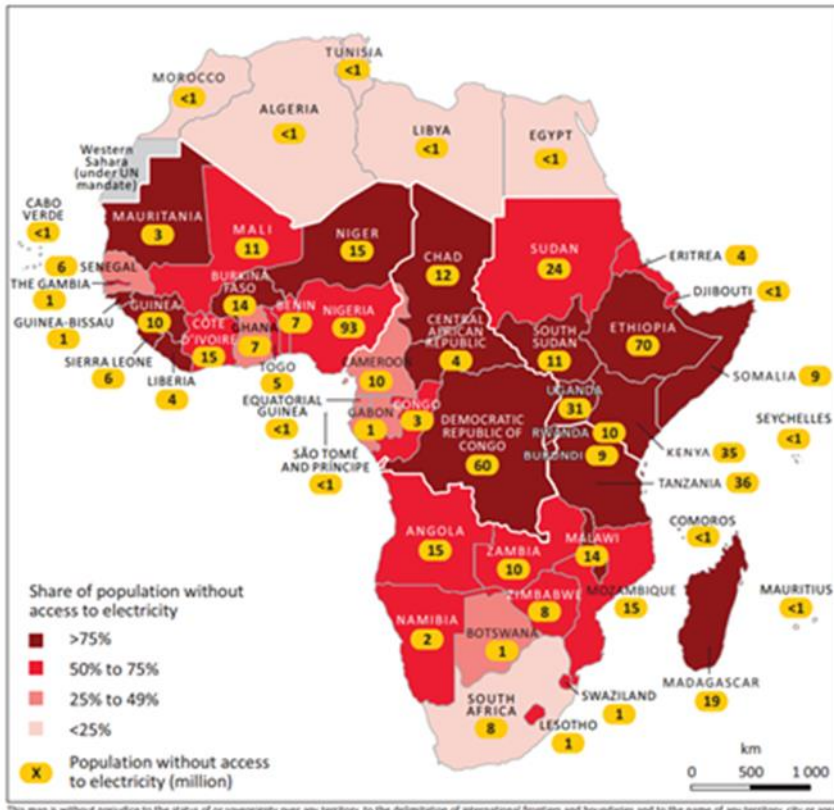


Source: Based on IEA data from Online Data Service © OECD/IEA 2016. www.iea.org/statistics. License: www.iea.org/itc; as modified by Chevron Corporation.

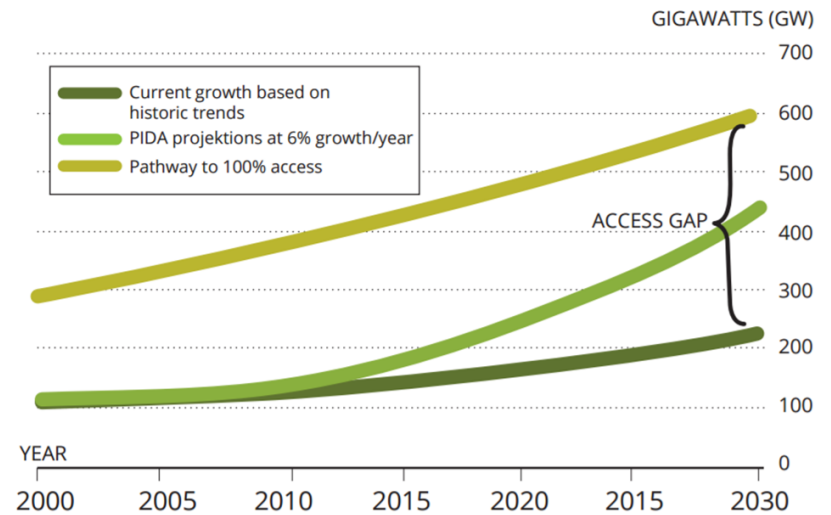
Energy consumption TWh/y



# Development without carbon

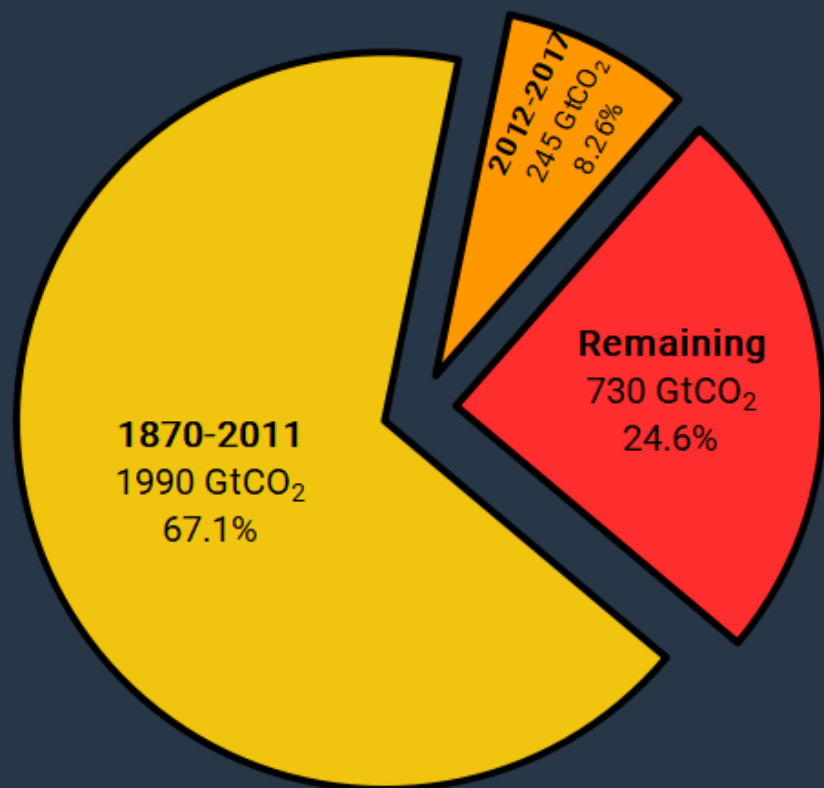


## A HUGE ENERGY ACCESS GAP



This map is without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

# THE GLOBAL CARBON BUDGET



The carbon budget is the total amount of CO<sub>2</sub> we can emit if we want a decent chance of limiting global warming to less than 2°C (3.6°F).

It is estimated to be about 3,000 billion tonnes since the Industrial Revolution (1870).

Given annual emissions of 41 billion tonnes, the carbon budget will be depleted in:

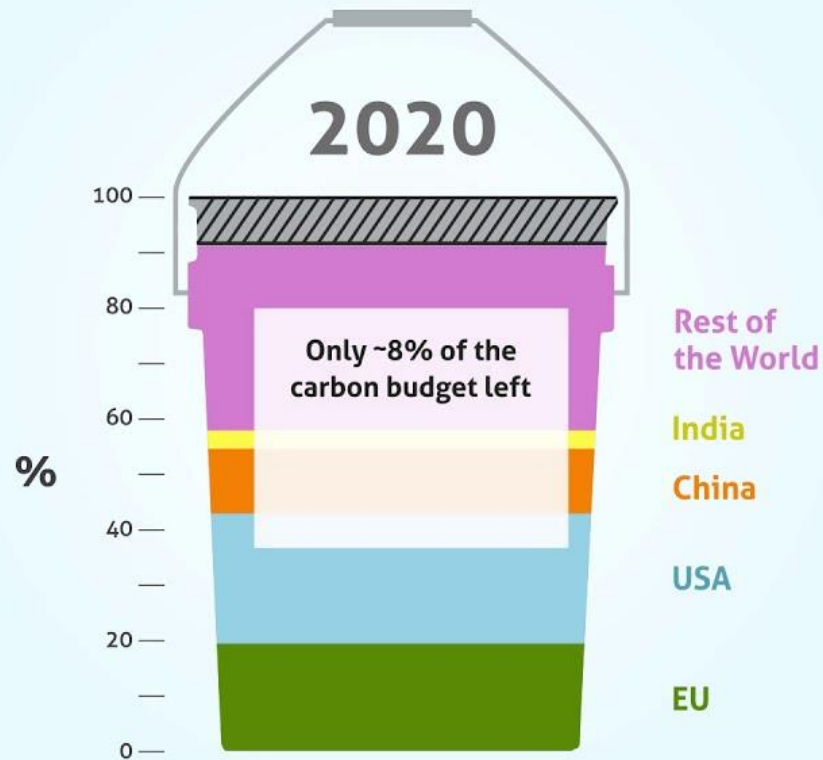
## 17 years

Billion tonnes (gigatonnes) of CO<sub>2</sub>. Data as of January, 2018.  
*Sources: IPCC 2014; The Global Carbon Project 2017*

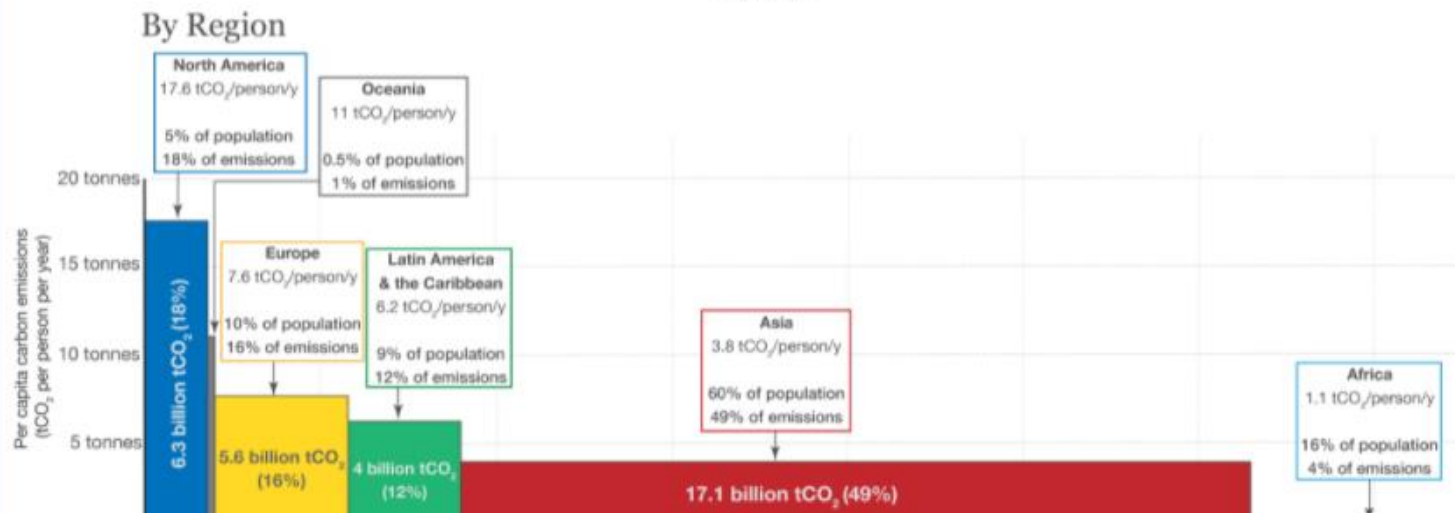
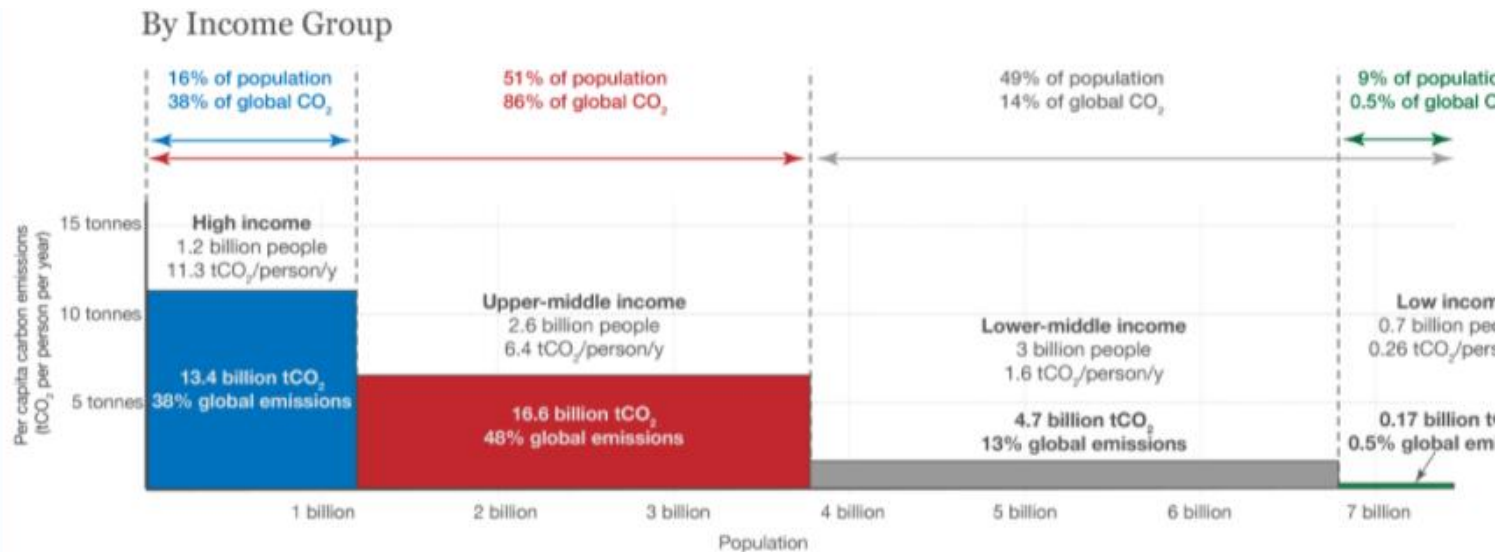
Public Domain License.  
Please share!

# Carbon Budget

The carbon budget for 1.5 degrees

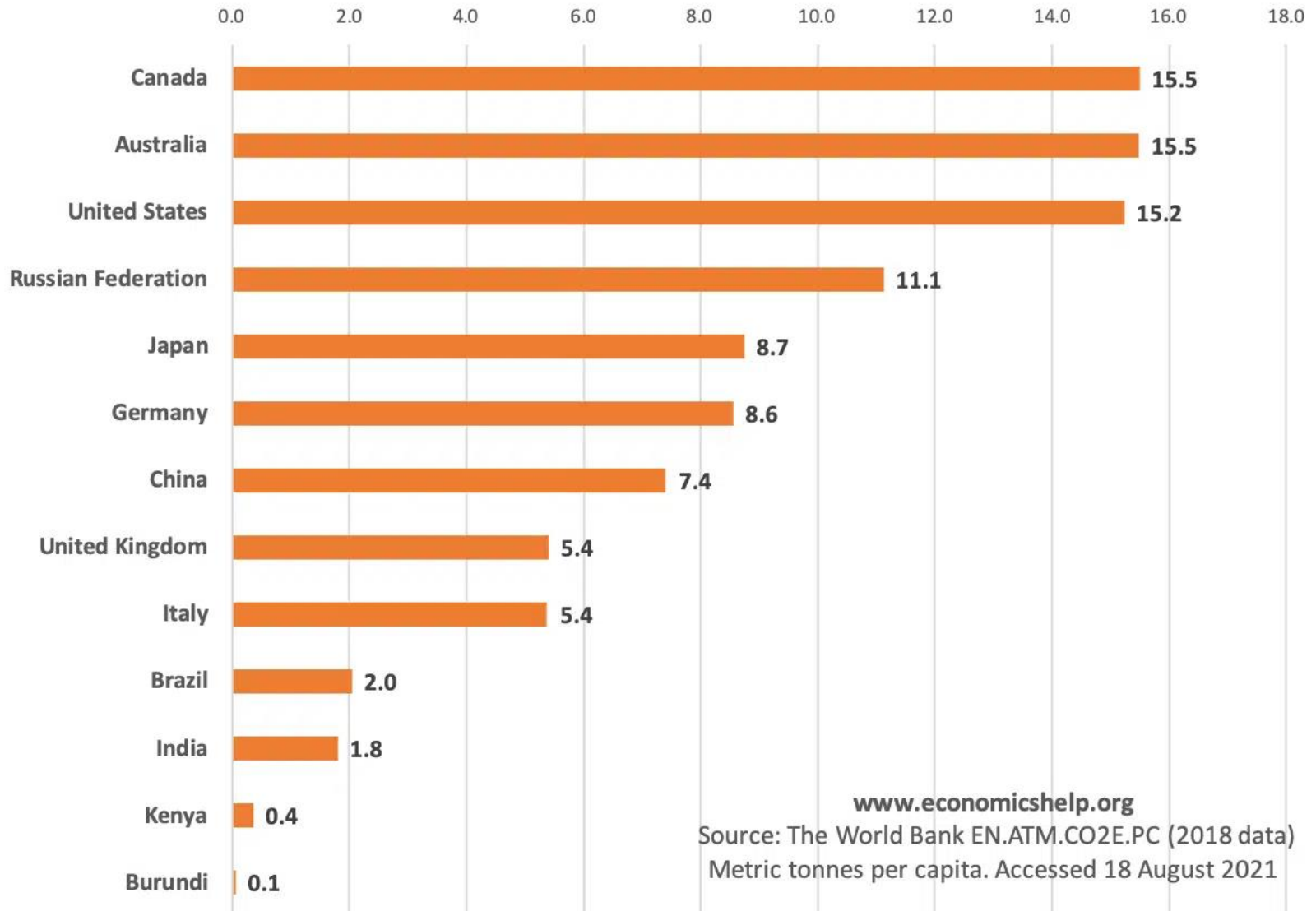


# Asymmetry in Contribution





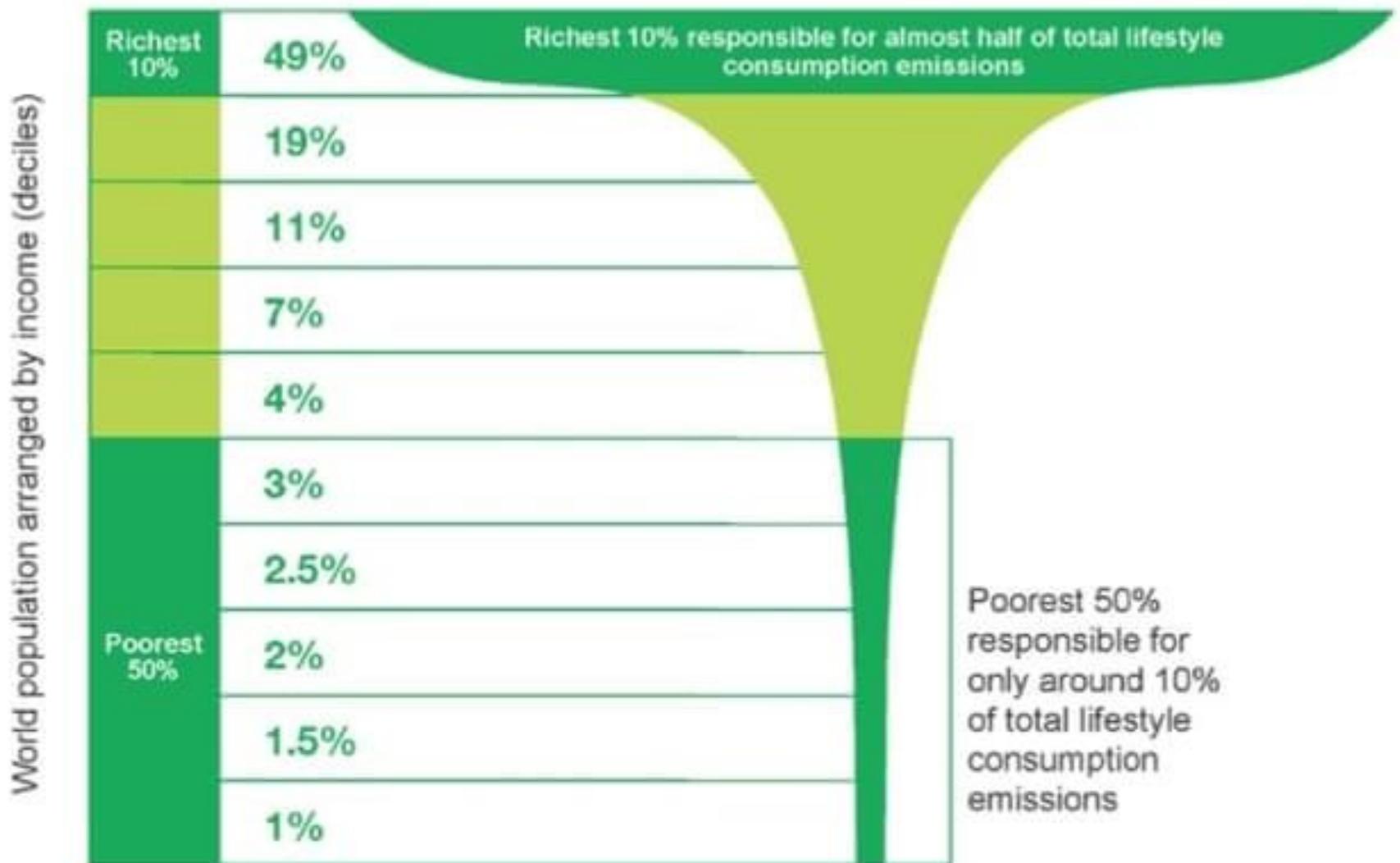
## CO2 Emissions per capita



[www.economicshelp.org](http://www.economicshelp.org)

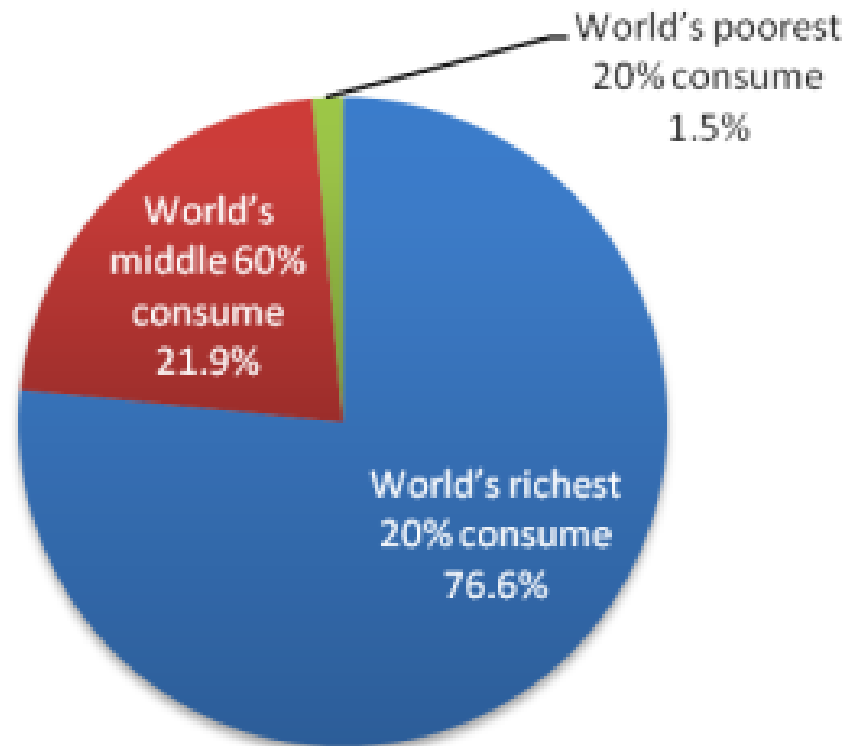
Source: The World Bank EN.ATM.CO2E.PC (2018 data)  
Metric tonnes per capita. Accessed 18 August 2021

## Percentage of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by world population



# The spoilt few...?

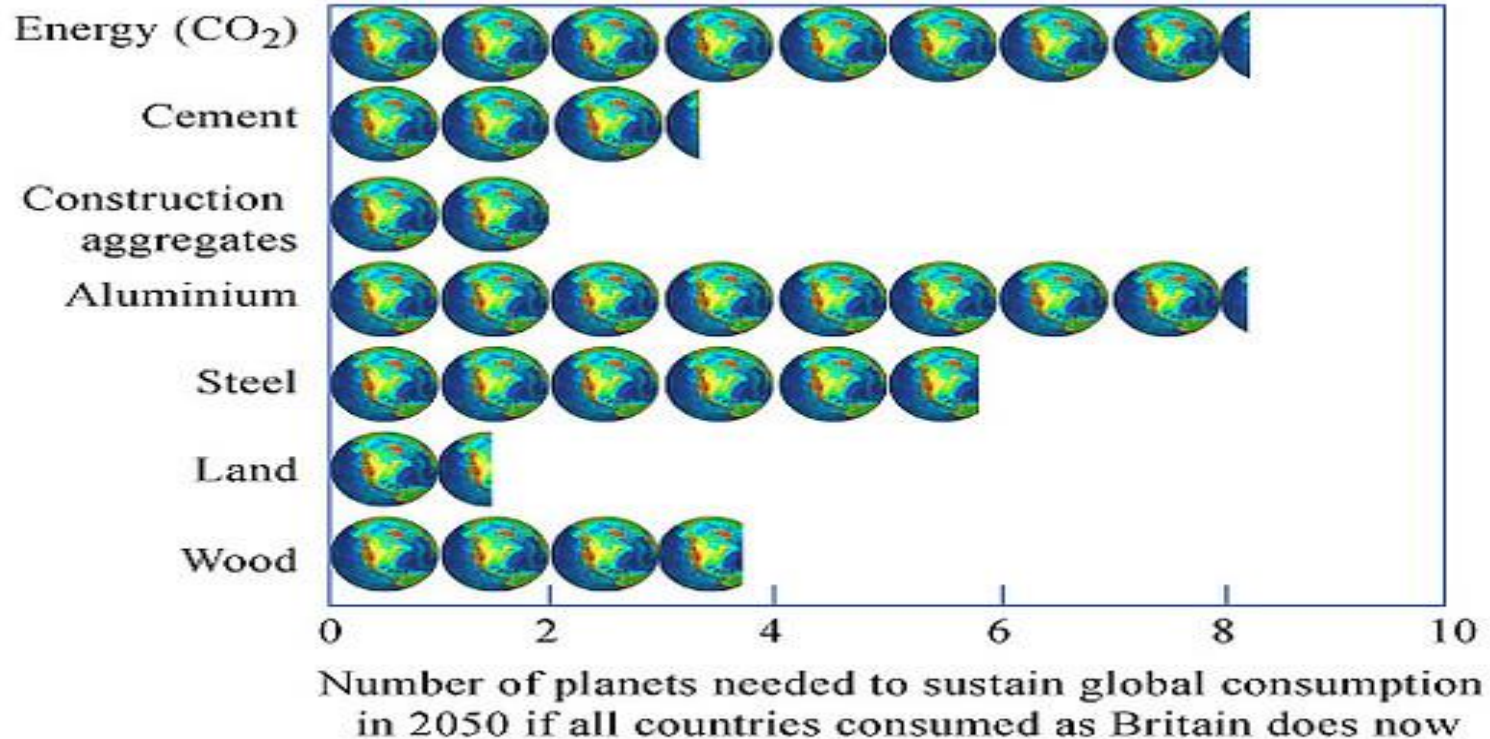
## Share of world's private consumption, 2005



Source: World Bank Development Indicators 2008

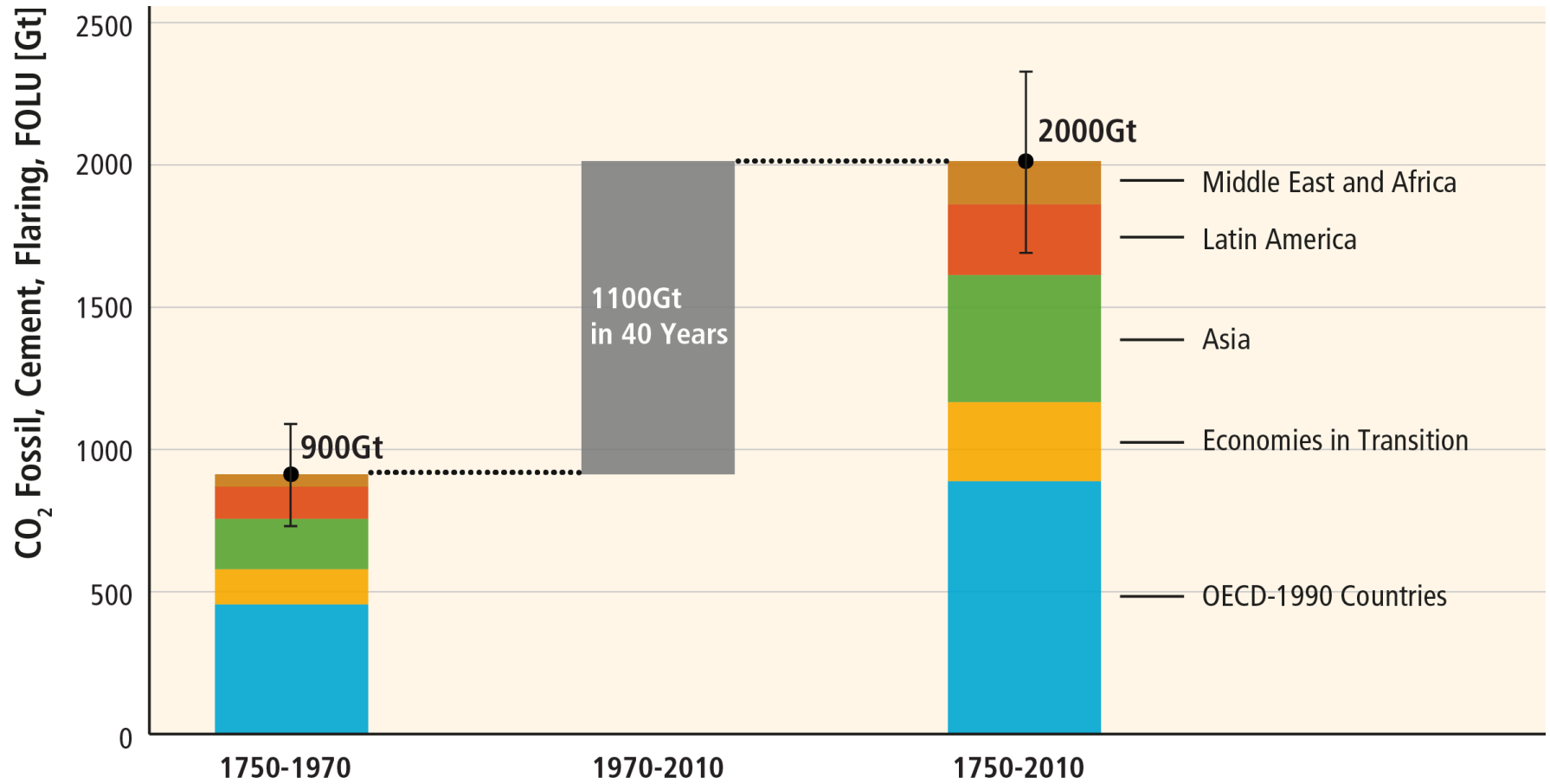
# FOOTPRINTS

## From here to Sustainability



UK Consumption of Resources

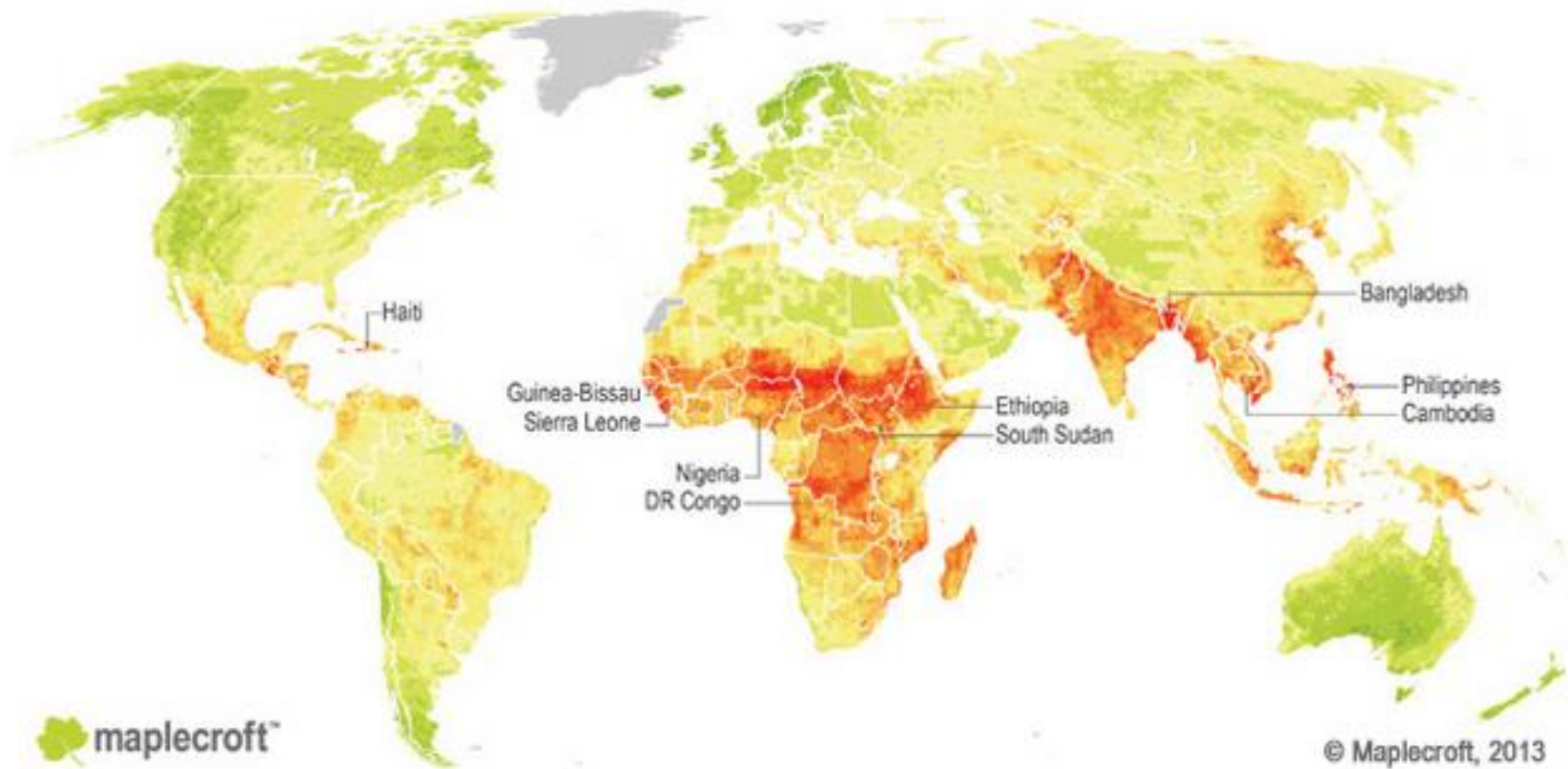
# About half of cumulative anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between 1750 and 2010 have occurred in the last 40 years.



# Asymmetric Impact

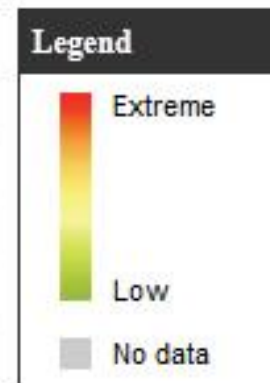


# Asymmetric Impact



Rank	Country	Category
1	Bangladesh	Extreme
2	Guinea-Bissau	Extreme
3	Sierra Leone	Extreme
4	Haiti	Extreme
5	South Sudan	Extreme

Rank	Country	Category
6	Nigeria	Extreme
7	DR Congo	Extreme
8	Cambodia	Extreme
9	Philippines	Extreme
10	Ethiopia	Extreme







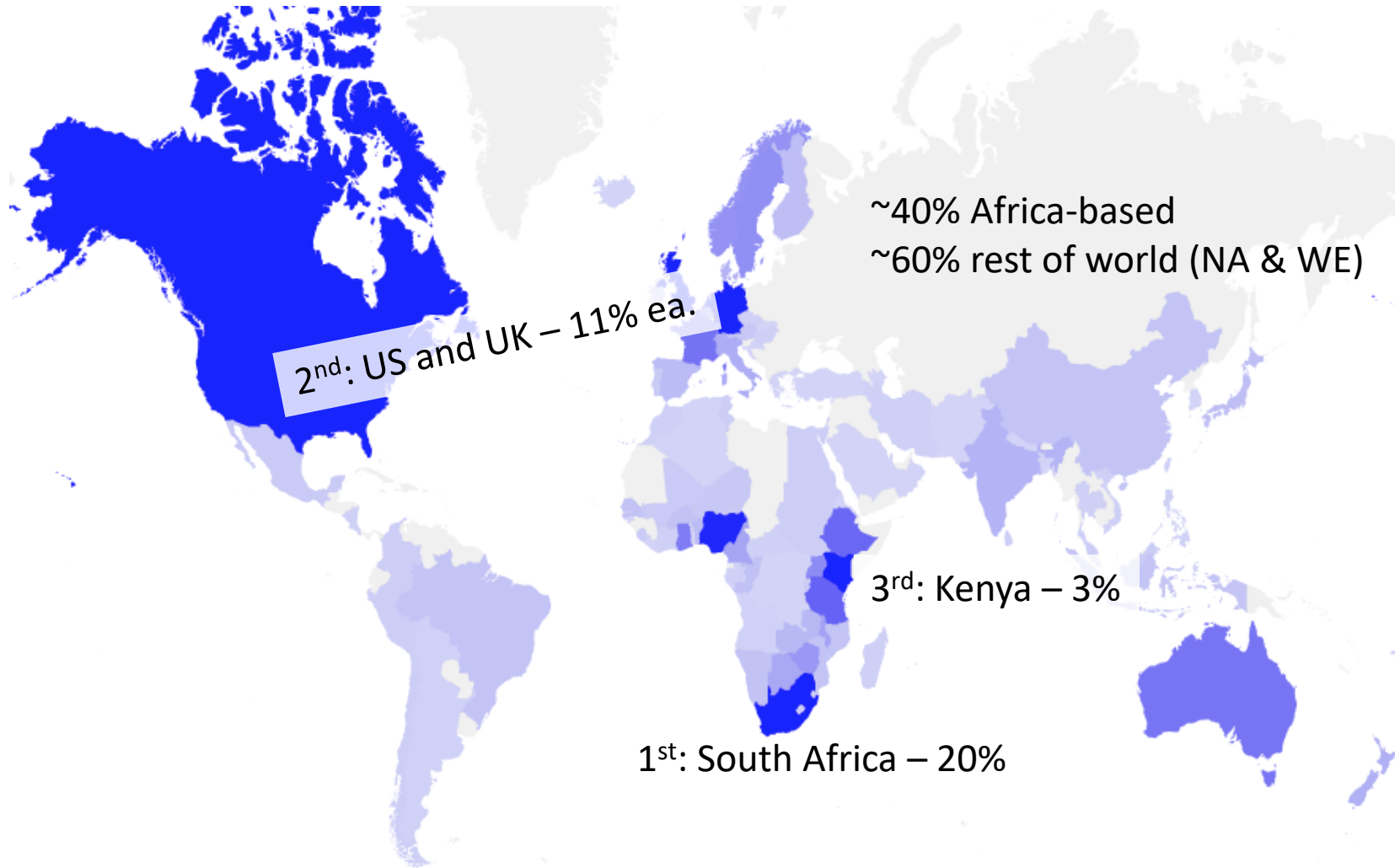
# Asymmetry in Voice

## CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATIONS





# Innovation and Capacity Asymmetry



# Rio to Kyoto



- Internationalism
- Solidarity
- The triumph of equity



# Equity provisions in the UNFCCC

- The Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of **equity** and in accordance with their **common but differentiated responsibilities** and respective capabilities. Accordingly, the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof (Art 3.1)

# Justice principles in the regime

- Equality
- Fault- Based
  - Historical responsibility
  - Polluters pays
  - Harm
  - Contribution
- Benefit
  - Beneficiary principle
- Capability/Ability to Pay
- Need
- Rights
- Procedure



- **common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR +C)**

# Equity Provisions in the UNFCCC

...Per capita emission...

...Historical responsibility...

...Shall provide new and additional funding

...Shall assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable...in meeting costs of adaptation (Art. 4.4)

- ..... ...Shall also assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable...in meeting costs of adaptation (Art. 4.4)

# Equity provisions in the UNFCCC

“...Industrialized countries are required to take all practical steps to promote, facilitate and finance the transfer of technology”  
(Art 2.5.)

Annex 1 and Annex II (QERO)

“..The extent to which developing countries parties will effectively implement their commitments will depend on the effective implementation of the developed country parties of their commitment especially in relation to financial resources and transfer of technology.”



# Equity meets politics



1962

**ENOUGH ENERGY TO MELT 7 MILLION TONS**

petroleum energy Humble supplies—it  
it! To meet the nation's growing needs  
the America's Leading Energy Company,  
in many forms—to help heat our homes,  
of versatile chemicals. Stop at a Humble  
ring? Sign is the World's First Choice!

**HUMBLE**  
OIL & REFINING COMPANY  
America's Leading Energy company

1984

**Lies they tell our children**

"I don't have a future."  
With tears streaming down her face, a 13-  
year-old girl made this bleak assessment to

in the U.S. are less than half what they were  
from 1957 to 1967.  
■ The amount of unhealthy sulfur dioxide

1991

**Who told  
you the earth was  
warming...**

1991

**Doomsday  
is cancelled.**

1993

**Apocalypse no**

or the first half of 1992, America was inun-  
ted by the media with dire predictions of glo-  
warming catastrophes, all of which seemed to  
aimed at heating up the rhetoric from the  
arth Summit in Rio de Janeiro last June.

trations of greenhouse gases. And it arises  
again when climate prediction models are used  
to conclude Earth's temperature will climb dra-  
stically in the next century and—based on such  
models—to propose policy decisions that could

1997

**Science:  
what we know  
and don't know**

As the debate over climate change the past century may bear a "f

# Equity meets politics



Chuck Hagel



Robert Byrd

The US should not sign a climate treaty that would 'mandate new commitments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the Annex I Parties, unless ...[it]... also mandates new specific scheduled commitments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions for Developing Country Parties within the same compliance period',

Vote of 95–0 on 25 July 1997

# George Bush Jnr 2000

- I oppose the Kyoto Protocol because it exempts 80 percent of the world, including major population centers such as China and India, from compliance, and would cause serious harm to the U.S. economy. The Senate's vote, 95-0, shows that there is a clear consensus that the Kyoto Protocol is an unfair...



# Copenhagen – COP2009



# COP2011 - Durban

- INDABA...but
- If Equity's In, We're Out”



# Equity and Justice in Paris



- Voluntarism triumphed, but
- Towards universality and parallelism
- Strong on ambition (well below 2 and pursuing 1.5); but .....
- Wide in scope – SD; rights, gender, energy, but....
- Appears to elevate adaptation –(goal) and loss and damage but....
- Weak on support (finance; capacity tech transfer support)
- Financial Mechanism
- Reporting .....

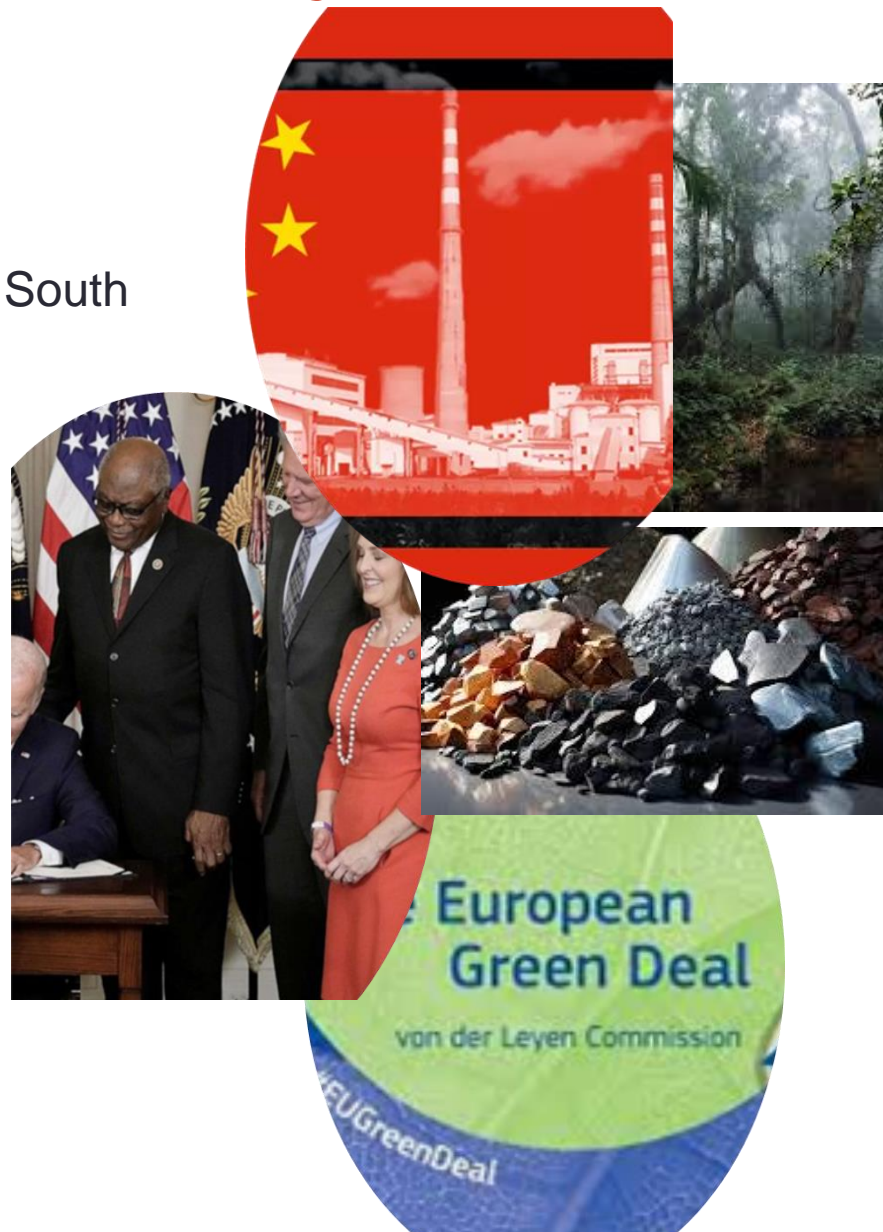
# Trump withdraws US from Paris

- Therefore, in order to fulfill my solemn duty to protect America and its citizens, the U.S. will withdraw from the Paris climate accord. .. But begin negotiations to re-enter either the Paris accord or an entirely new transaction on terms that are **fair** to the U.S...



# New Frontiers of Climate Injustice

- Just Energy Transition Partnerships
- Scramble for the forest in the Global South
- Unilateral Climate Measures
- Critical Minerals
- Gas Diplomacy
- Climate Finance and Debt
- Climate Targets





# Just Energy Transition



FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MENU Current Issue Archive Books & Reviews Anthologies Podcast

## The Divestment Delusion

### Why Banning Fossil Fuel Investments Would Crush Africa

By [Yemi Osinbajo](#) August 31, 2021



World Business Markets Sustainability Legal More

Africa

## Ending gas financing for Africa will be a fatal blow, says Senegal

Reuters

November 29, 2021 3:31 PM GMT+1 · Updated 2 years ago



# Moral norms matter



- Norms have independent causal effects in international politics.
- The outcomes of climate negotiations cannot be explained based on power and material interests alone.
- Regimes intersubjective phenomena which shape and reflect underlying social expectations of the international community
- Statesmen and these other autonomous actors are not 'abstractions or fictitious personalities but individuals who are making choices on behalf of their constituencies;
- Ethics and questions of justice are not intrinsically 'outside' of the international realm but rather intrinsic to existing political practices
- Regimes perform distributive functions

# Climate Justice Vs Neo-liberal Hegemony

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- Tension between the normative essence of global sustainability & a global system rooted in property right and market ideas of justice which favor the powerful players.
- Climate justice approaches represent a challenge to power
- Climate justice issues are not distinguishable but rather interwoven, into the fabric of racial, social and economic (in) justice. 'symptomatic of a broader structural oppression and silencing'



