

Building a Sustainable and Desirable Economy-in-Society-in- Nature

By

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Key points:

- Growth in material consumption is unsustainable: there are fundamental planetary boundaries.
- Growth in material consumption beyond a threshold already reached by many is undesirable: it has negative effects on social and natural capital and in overdeveloped economies does not increase well-being.
- Viable alternatives exist that are both sustainable and desirable, but they require a fundamental redesign of the entire “regime.”
- To better articulate and communicate the goal, we need to envision the resulting society and how the pieces might fit together.

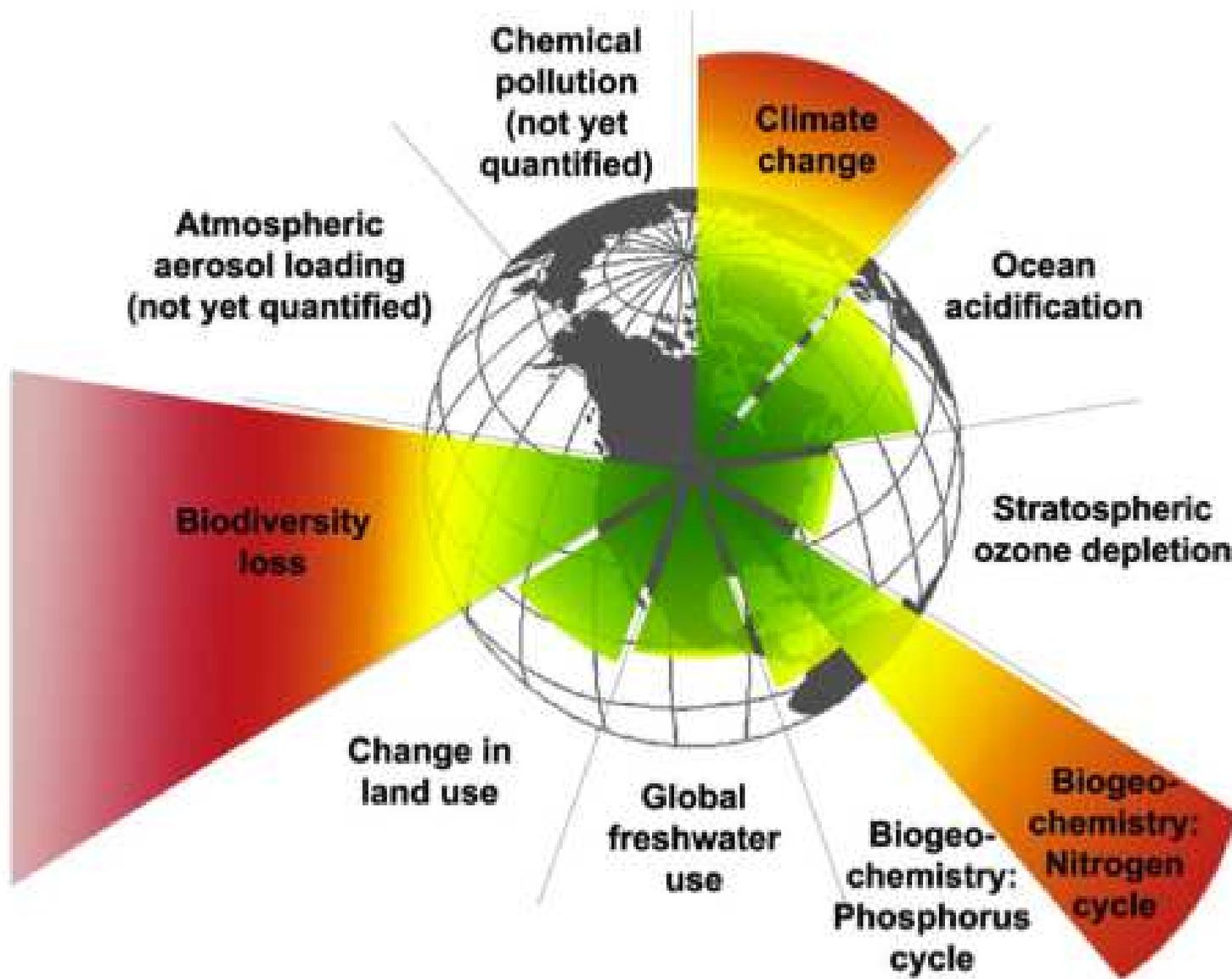


Figure 1: Planetary Boundaries [1,2]

To make the transition to a just and sustainable world will require:

- a fundamental change of worldview to one that recognizes that we live on a finite planet and that sustainable well-being requires far more than material consumption;
- replacing the present goal of limitless growth with goals of material sufficiency, equitable distribution, and sustainable human well-being;
- a complete redesign of the world economy that preserves natural systems essential to life and wellbeing and balances natural, social, human, and built assets.

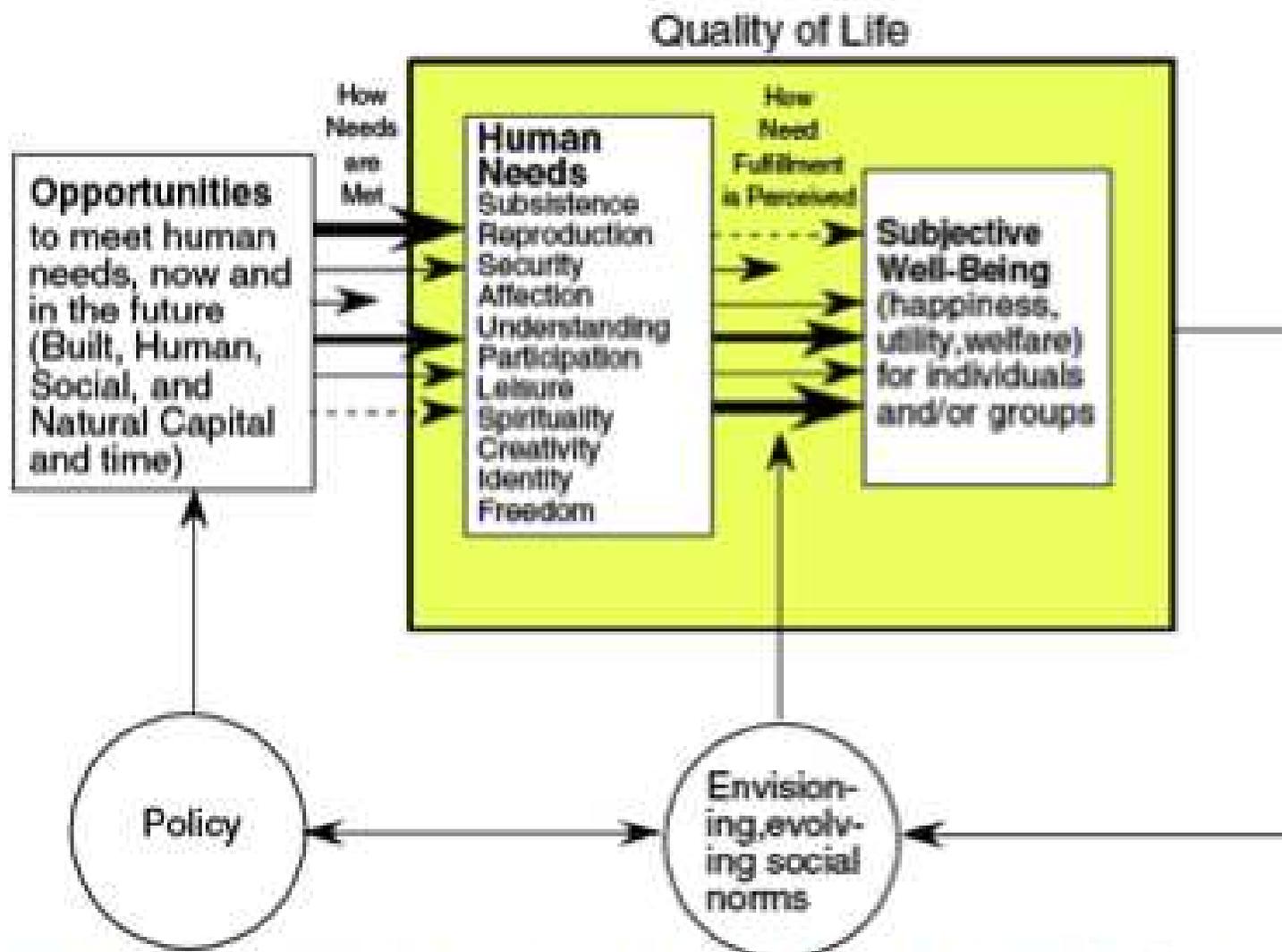


Figure 2: Quality of Life (QoL) as the interaction of human needs and the subjective perception of their fulfillment, as mediated by the opportunities available to meet the needs [23]

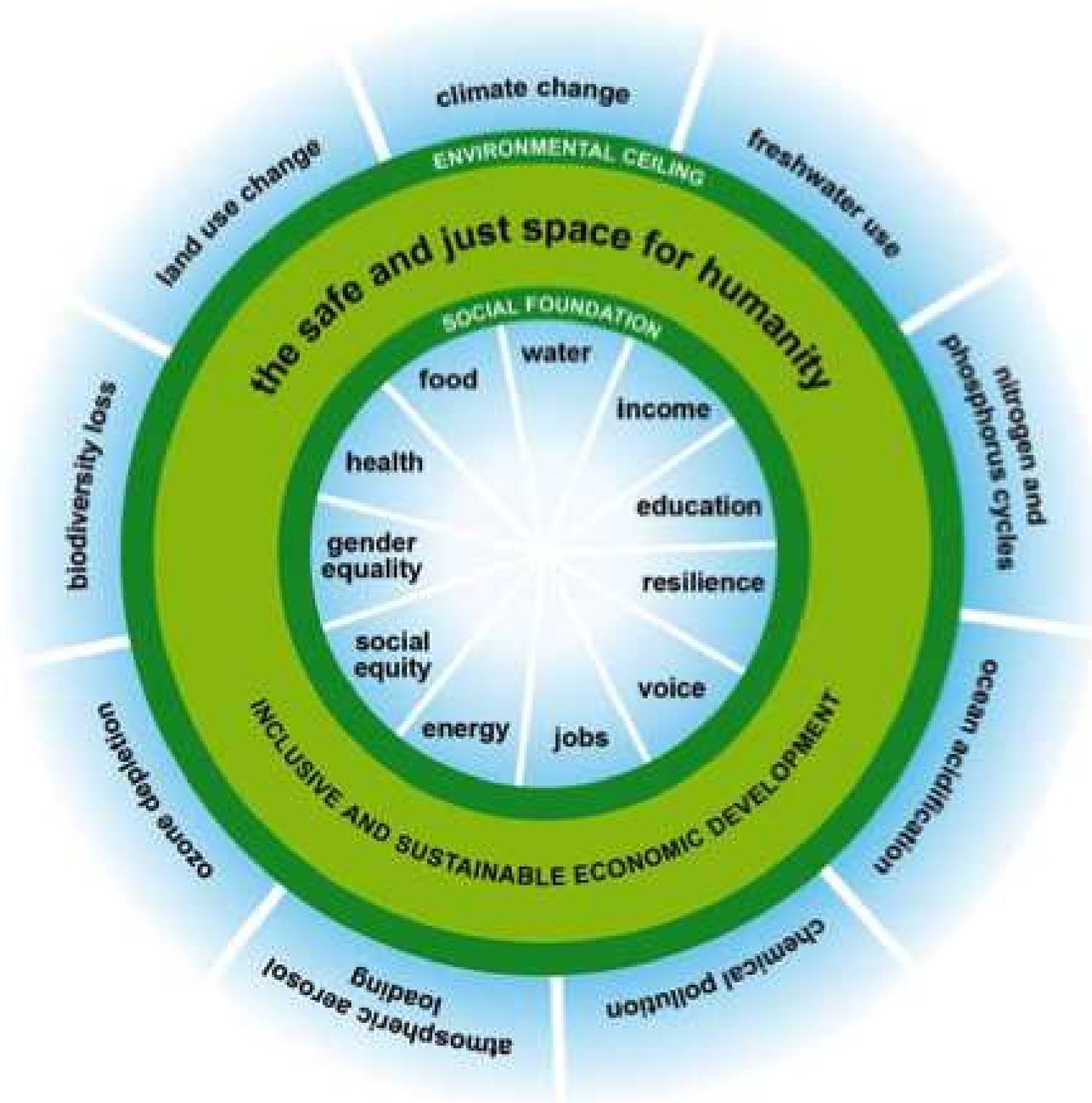


Figure 5. A safe and just space for humanity - the sustainable and desirable doughnut [35]

The dimensions of the new economy include, but are not limited to

A) Sustainable scale: respecting ecological limits

B) Fair distribution: protecting capabilities for flourishing

C) Efficient allocation: building a sustainable macro-economy

Example Policy Reforms

- Reversing Consumerism
- Expanding the Commons
- Systematic Caps on Natural Resources
- Sharing Work Time