

24th LCA Discussion Forum
Life Cycle Approaches for Sustainable Consumption
Lausanne, 2 December, 2004



Sustainable Consumption

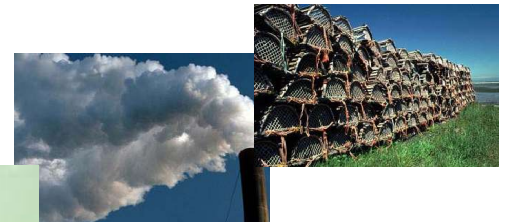
- the UNEP vision -

by Guido Sonnmann
UNEP DTIE

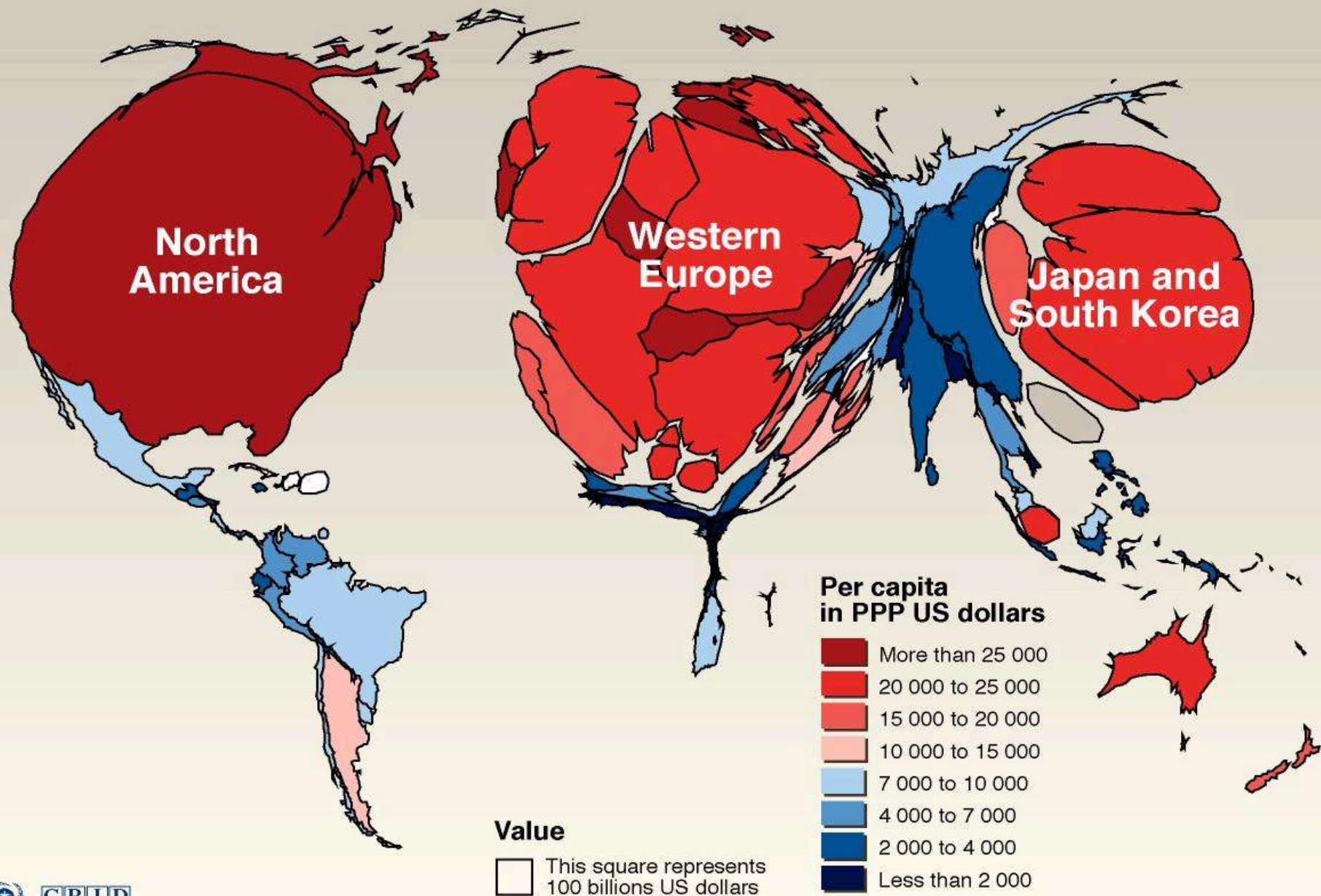


Overview

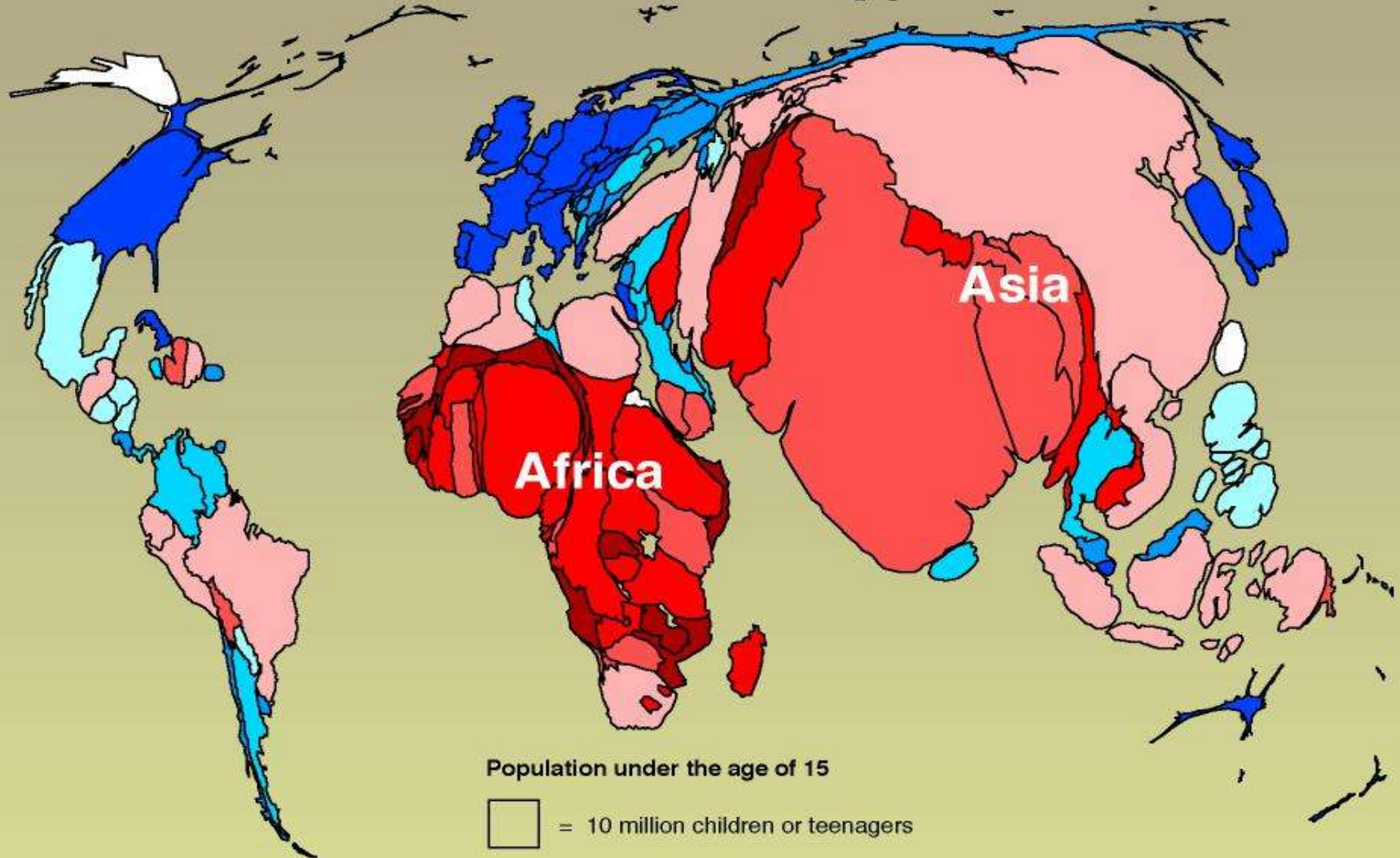
- ✓ *UNEP – who we are and what we do*
- ✓ *Introduction to policy issues on sustainable consumption on the international level*
- ✓ *10-year framework of programmes*
- ✓ *UNEP – our activities on sustainable consumption*



Gross Domestic Product



Population under the age of 15



Infant mortality rate (infant deaths per 1 000 live birth)



UNEP - Mission

To provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

‘Environment for Development’

UNEP – 3 roles

- Assess the State of the World's Environment & Understand Env. Challenges (GEO);
- Stimulate solutions to environmental problems
 - ✓ Promoting International Environmental Law
 - ✓ Voluntary Initiatives
- Build capacity and networks to enable implementing solutions

Current situation: a quick assessment

- Productivity/efficiency gains being overtaken by production increases (rebound effects)
- Problems of production process understood but those of the use and disposal of a product still largely unknown
- New emerging sectors posing increasing threats
- Environmental concerns not integrated into economic and social programmes
- De-linking of economic growth from environmental damage needed

SC during last 10 years

Increasing reference to the need for sustainable consumption policies:

- 1992 - Agenda 21 with its chapter 4 on sustainable consumption and production.
- 1999 – UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection which gives governments a comprehensive framework for policy setting for more sustainable consumption and production.

World Summit on Sustainable Development

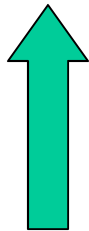
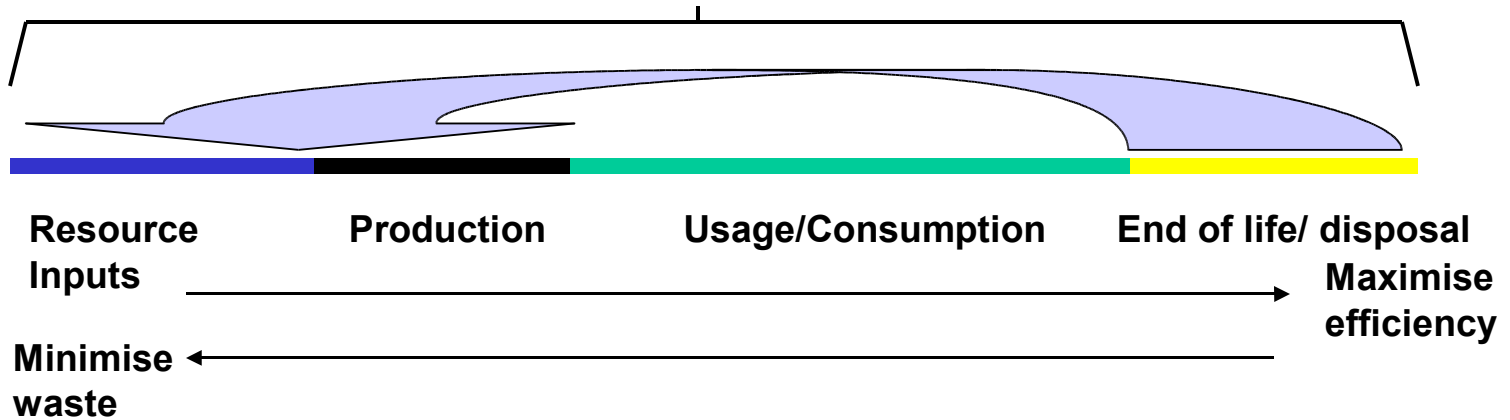
- Plan of Implementation
- Chapter 3:
Encourage and promote development of **10-year framework of programmes** to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Regional and national initiatives

Main lessons learnt

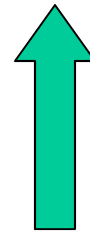
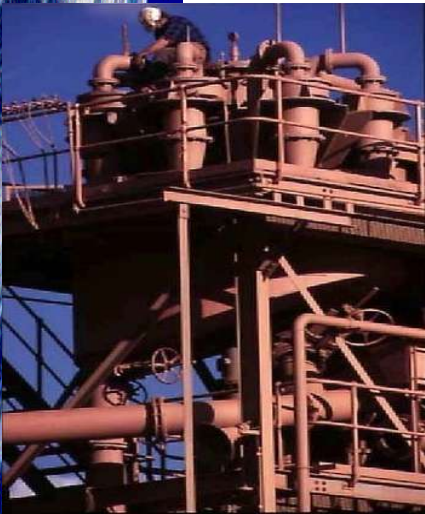
Needs in developing SC policies:

- Instruments (regulatory framework, voluntary measures and economic instruments).
- Tools to promote changes in the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production.
- Sectoral approach and integration of environmental considerations into sectoral policies.

“Life cycle view” of policy



Traditional
focus of
governments



Traditional
focus of
governments



Lessons learnt for consumption policies from integrated approach

Recent awareness-raising initiatives have focused on waste, and comparatively marginal environmental impacts such as the Irish tax on carrier bags or the German deposit on some one-way drink packaging. Consumers need to be informed about the more significant impacts of their consumption of energy and materials so they can make more meaningful changes.

EU 6th Environmental Action programme, Towards a thematic strategy on natural resources: "Pathways through Society", WG2 – Use of Resources, Final report, October 2004

10-yr framework of programmes: **Marrakech process**

International bottom-up process to promote sustainable consumption and production worldwide:

- 1st International SCP Meeting in Marrakech, Morocco, 16-19 June 2003 organised by UN DESA and UNEP
- Regular global and regional meetings
- Integration of economic, environmental and social aspects
- Worldwide implementation of IPP through initiatives like Life Cycle Initiative

Areas of work under the 10-year framework

A. **General Policy Instruments and Analytical Tools**

- UNEP/SETAC Life Cycle Initiative

B. **Changing Consumption Patterns**

- UNEP/DTIE - YouthXchange
- UNEP/DTIE - Advertising and Communication Forum
- UNEP/DTIE - Sustainable procurement

C. **Changing Production Patterns**

- UNEP/DTIE - Sustainable Products and Services (Eco-design and Product-Service-Systems)
- UNEP/DTIE – Cleaner Production (CP) Activities
- UNEP/DTIE - National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPC)
- DESA/ DSD - Expert Group on Environmental Management Accounting (EMA)
- DESA/ DSD - National Cleaner Technology Strategies (NCTS)

D. **Sectoral Issues**

Elements of a meaningful framework of programmes

- Identify **national and regional** initiatives
- Design a practical and transparent **framework**
- Show linkages, gaps and **priorities** to address
- Identify the agenda for **substantive support**, including:
 - Indicators, benchmarks, targets
 - Information and training on implementation
 - Reporting
- **Support** the process on all levels

Meetings to develop regional strategies

- **Latin America and Caribbean**
(Argentina, Nicaragua)
- **Asia Pacific**
(Indonesia, Republic of Korea)
- West Asia, Africa and Europe

The implementation challenge

Not simply series of meetings, but:

- Focus on “global consumer class” and meeting basic needs of the poor
- Assist governments in implementing projects in areas such as water, energy and housing
- Strengthen existing work on Life Cycle Initiative, economic instruments and communication/capacity building (SME's)
- Promote resource efficiency in key industry sectors

So what are we talking about?

Consuming and producing **more efficiently** and differently ...



... and **sharing resources** between the rich and the poor.

UNEP: Influencing consumption and production patterns ...

- examine underlying **drivers** for consumption;
- identify obstacles and **opportunities** for change
- improve processes, products and services -> **business**
- modernize infrastructure and policy frameworks -> **governments**
- awareness, dialogue and reflection -> **consumer groups**

... in order to create sustainable jobs and “space for consumption” for all

UNEP Sustainable Consumption Programme

- **UN Guidelines** on Consumer Protection; national indicators;
- Sustainable **procurement**;
- **Eco-design** of products and services;
- **Life-Cycle Initiative**, life cycle information
- Consumer support, civil society;
- **Awareness** raising (youth, advertising, media);
- Capacity building, **training** and technology transfer.



Function-based approach

“Human needs should be met by products and services that are aimed at specific ‘functions’ such as food, shelter and mobility, and that are provided through optimized consumption and production systems that do not exceed the capacity of the ecosystem.”

*Life Cycle Initiative Brochure,
UNEP / SETAC, ‘International
Partnership’, 2003.*



Make change happen

Using life cycle information for:

- Sustainable innovation of products and services (supply)
- Sustainable procurement (demand)

→ **Transform the market place**

In summary – UNEP seek to

- Contribute to decoupling economic growth and environmental degradation – diminish rebound effects.
- Promote sustainable procurement and strengthen the necessary consumer information tools.
- Help improve eco-efficiency (production and consumption) in all countries.
- Foster scientific work that is easily applicable within government and industry.
- Encourage life cycle thinking in government and business decision making processes.
- Establish platforms for all stakeholders to report on experiences with sustainable consumption.

Connect world-wide to our newsletter SC.net

- Regional programmes in:
 - Latin America and Caribbean -> UNEP ROLAC
 - Europe (SCOPE) -> UNEP ROE
 - Northern American -> UNEP RONA
 - Asia Pacific -> UNEP ROAP
 - Africa -> UNEP ROA

Write to sc@unep.fr or visit
<http://www.uneptie.org/sustain>
<http://www.uneptie.org/cp>

