



# **Demystifying the Green Economy Concept**

**Regional Youth Green Growth Forum**

**16-18 December 2013**

**Nairobi, Kenya**

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## The outline

1. Why Green Economy?
2. What is Green Economy?
3. Africa and Green Economy?



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### 3. Africa and Green Economy?

# 1. Why Green Economy?

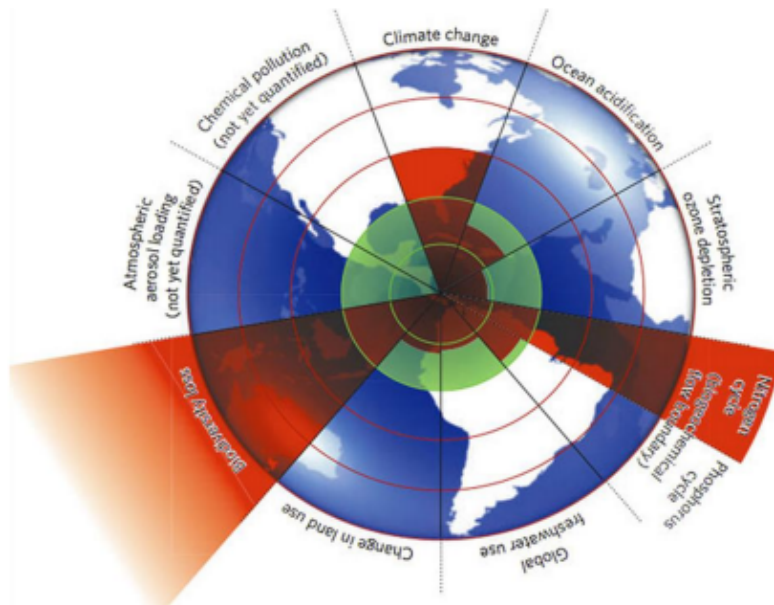
State of the global environment (GEO-5, 2012)

- ▶ Forest area has decreased by an area of 300 million ha since 1990
- ▶ Water Scarcity – 80% of the world live in areas with high water security threats
- ▶ Population of vertebrate species have declined on average by 30 per cent since 1970
- ▶ 169 costal zones are considered hypoxic - killing fish and creating dead zones
- ▶ Coral reefs condition has declined globally by 38 per cent since 1980
- ▶ E-waste is the fastest-growing waste stream in the world, estimated at 20–50 million tonnes per year.

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# 1. Why Green Economy?

## Planetary boundaries: driving new paradigm



The inner green shading represents the proposed safe operating space for nine planetary systems.

The red wedges represent an estimate of the current position for each variable.

The boundaries in three systems (rate of biodiversity loss, climate change and human interference with the nitrogen cycle) have already been exceeded.

Blue water consumption = 4,000-6,000 cu km per year (danger zone)

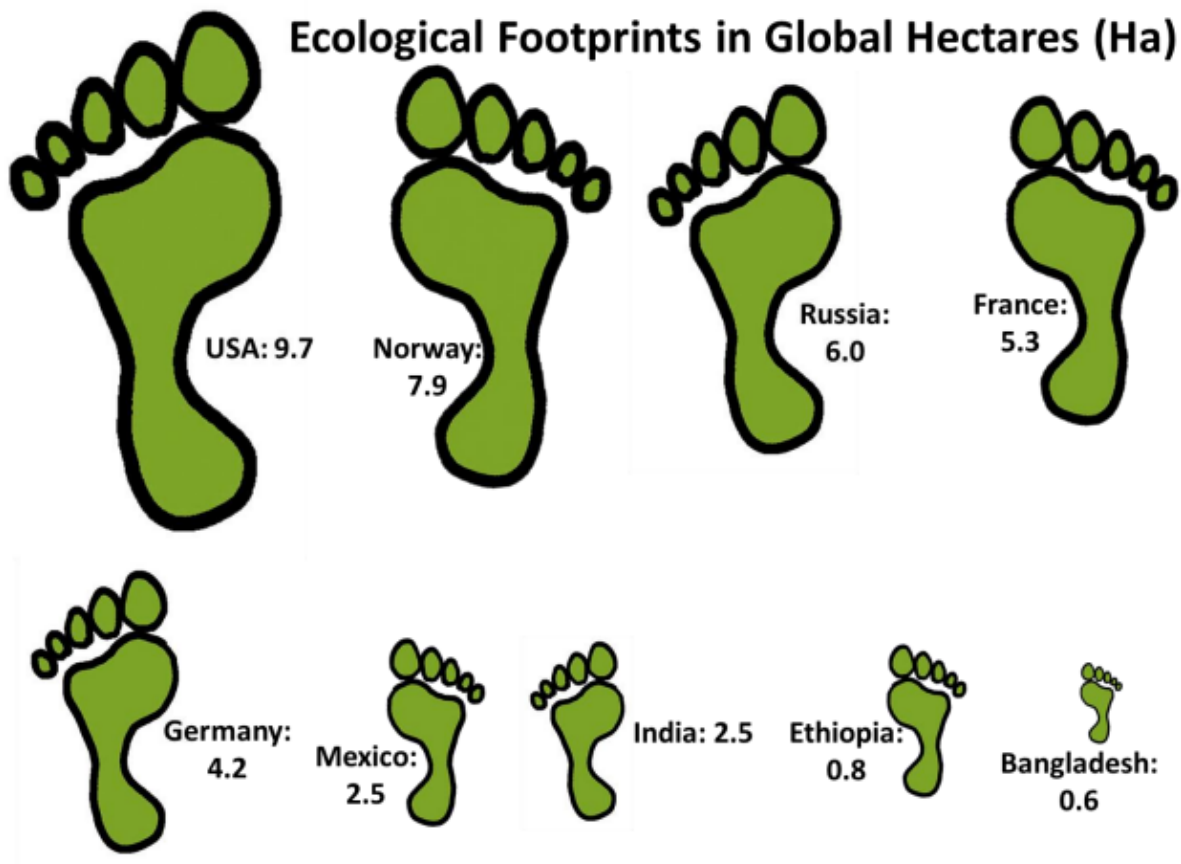
Current consumptive water use = 2,600 cu km per year

Sources: [www.nature.com/news/specials/planetaryboundaries/index.html](http://www.nature.com/news/specials/planetaryboundaries/index.html); **Regional office for Africa - UNEP**

16/12/2013

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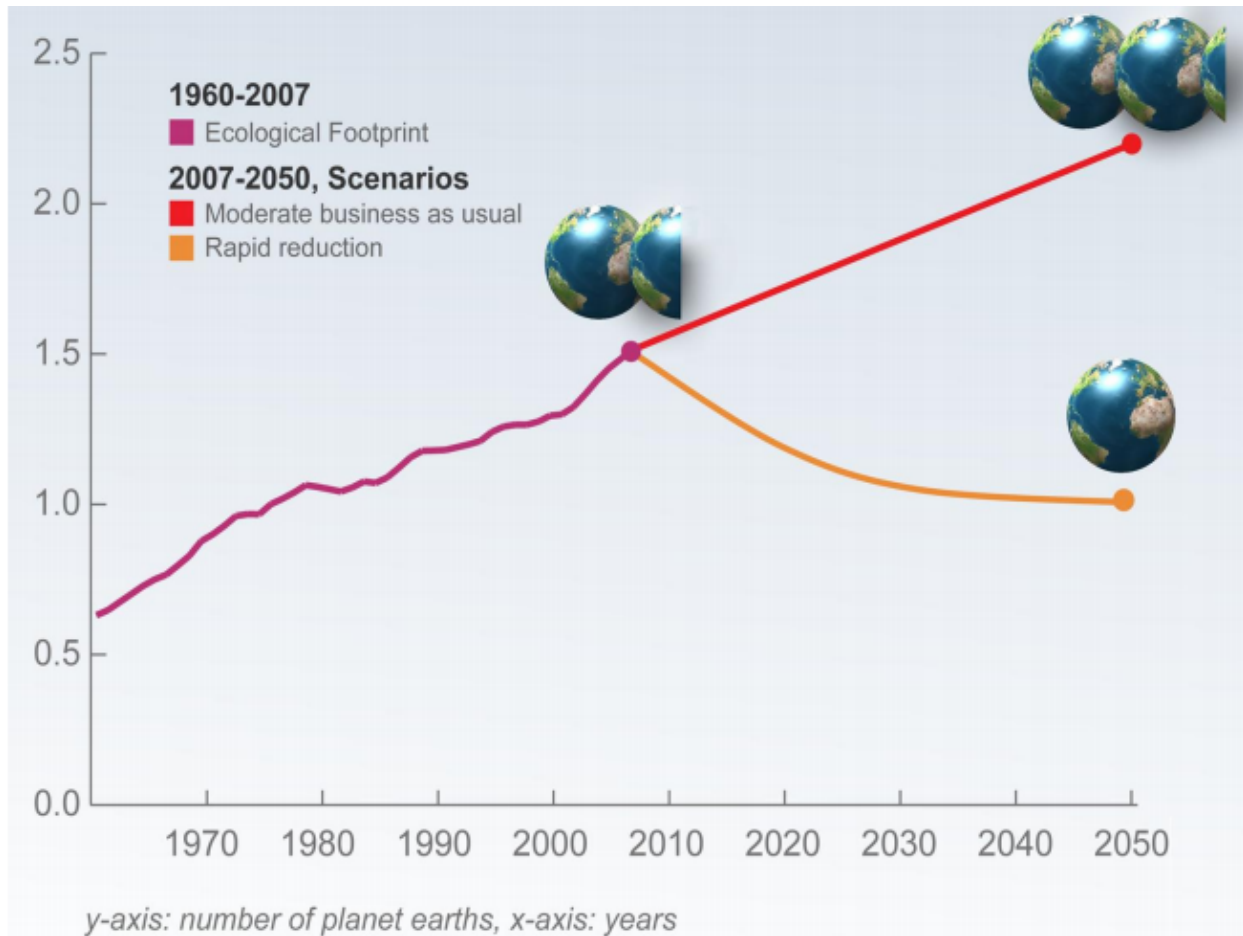
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USA: 9.7

f/Germany:

4.2

Bangladesh: 0.6



2.5

2.0

1.5

1.0

0.5

0.0

1960-2007 | Ecological Footprint

2007-2050, Scenarios

| Moderate business as usual | Rapid reduction

1970 1980 1990 2000 2010

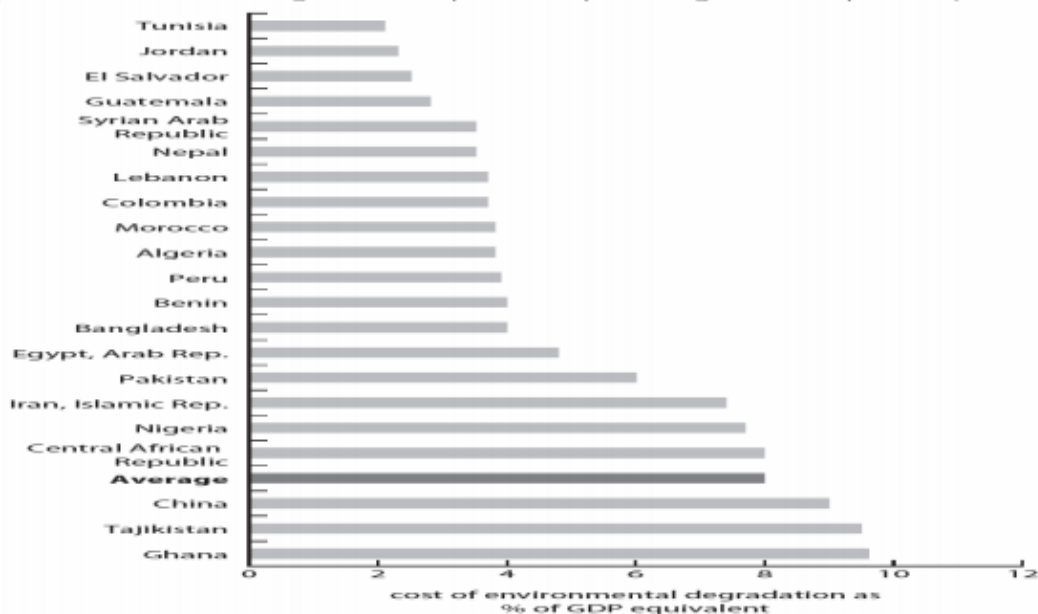
y-axis: number of planet earths, x-axis: years

2020 2030 2040 2050

## Cost of Environmental Degradation as % of GDP

(Source: World Bank, 2012, Inclusive Green Growth)

**FIGURE O.6 Reducing environmental degradation would provide substantial economic benefits**  
(cost of environmental degradation expressed as percentage of GDP equivalent)



Source: World Bank 2004, 2005a, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006d, 2006e, 2006f, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2011a, World Bank and DRC 2012.

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Cost of Environmental Degradation as % of GDP (Source: World Bank, 2012, Inclusive Green Growth)



## The rational for Green Economy

- A business-as-usual approach is *no longer feasible*: planetary boundaries constrain economic growth as traditionally conceived.
- Science tells us we are approaching and *crossing bio-physical tipping points*: environmental degradation threatens to undermine our collective well being.
- Threat exacerbated by a *mounting social crisis*, with growing unemployment and a daunting challenge to provide for new jobs and income opportunities, especially for youth.
- This calls for bold action to *find new pathways* for creating prosperity, decent work and income within a resource-constrained world.

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## 2. What is Green Economy?

- A Green Economy can be defined as one that results in increased human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities (UNEP 2011).
- Green economy ***is a vehicle*** to achieve sustainable development and eradicate poverty.
- Green Economy ***provides an operational framework*** for effectively addressing the challenges of climate change.
- For Africa, ***green economy is an agenda for growth***, poverty reduction and employment creation.



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## Moving away from two myths

- Economic growth OR environmental protection
- Green economy is a luxury for developing countries



*Harnessing the ecological foundation of national economies through Green Economy approach is a fundamental prerequisite for ensuring food security in the region.*



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