

# Understanding and Preventing Climate Breakdown

Fabian Dablander

28th July, 2022

# Outline

Part I: The Bigger Picture  
Part II: Climate Emergency

} 25 min

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Part III: Current Climate Policy  
Part IV: Climate Revolution

} 25 min

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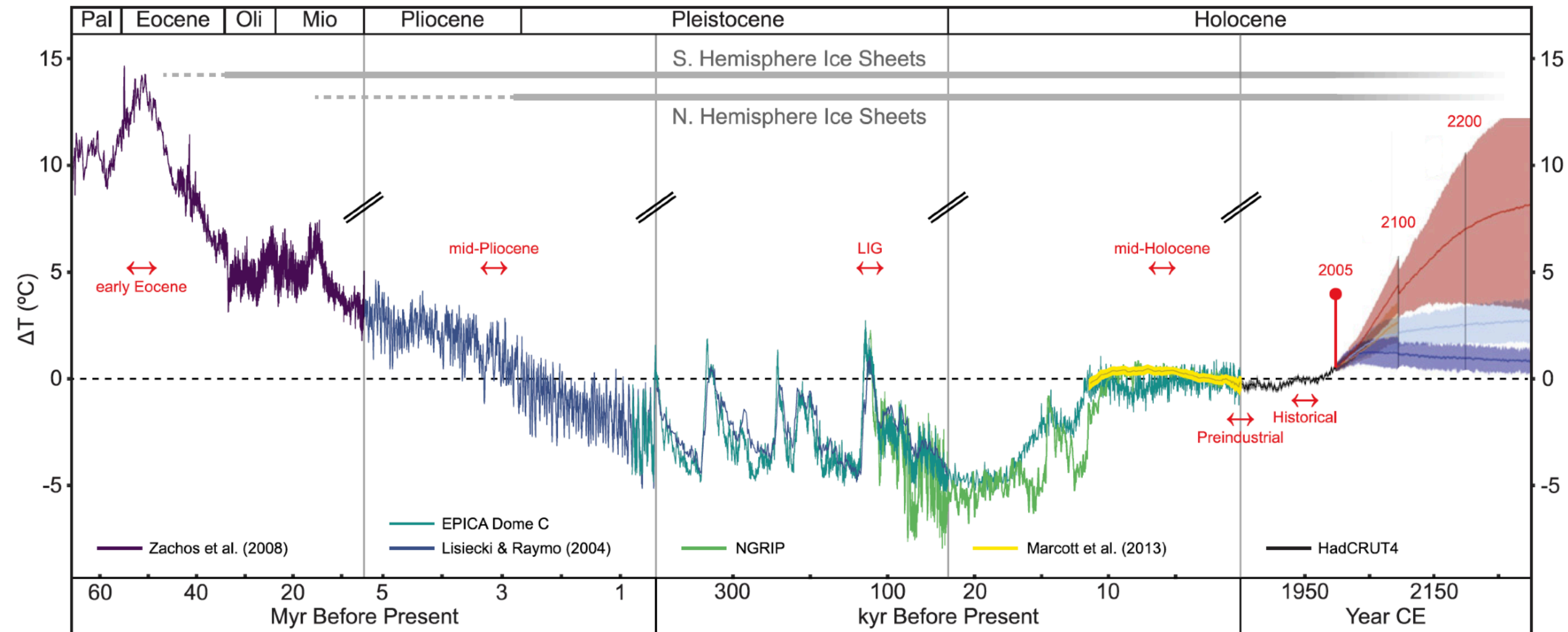
Part V: Discussion



# **Part I:**

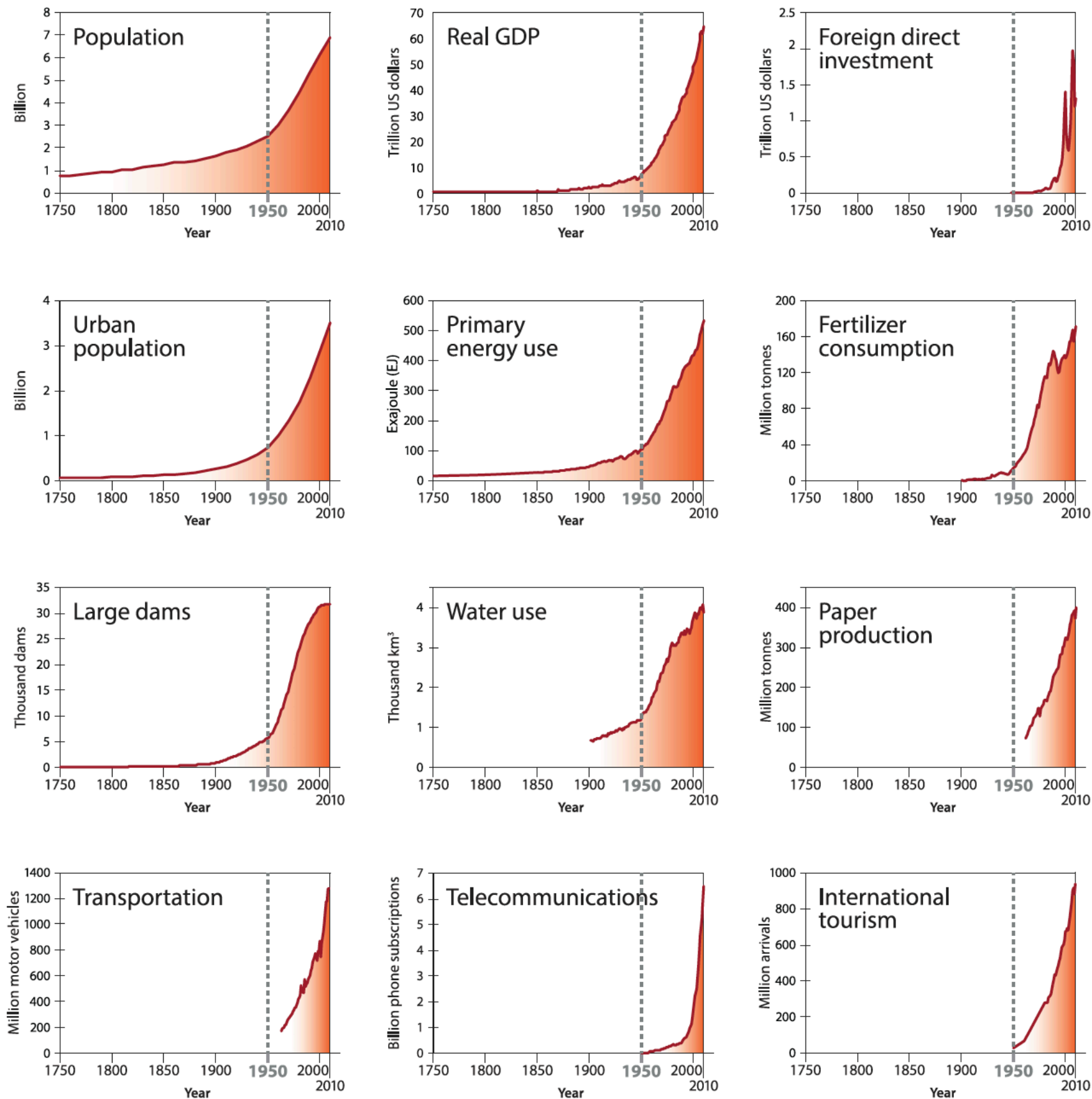
# **The Bigger Picture**





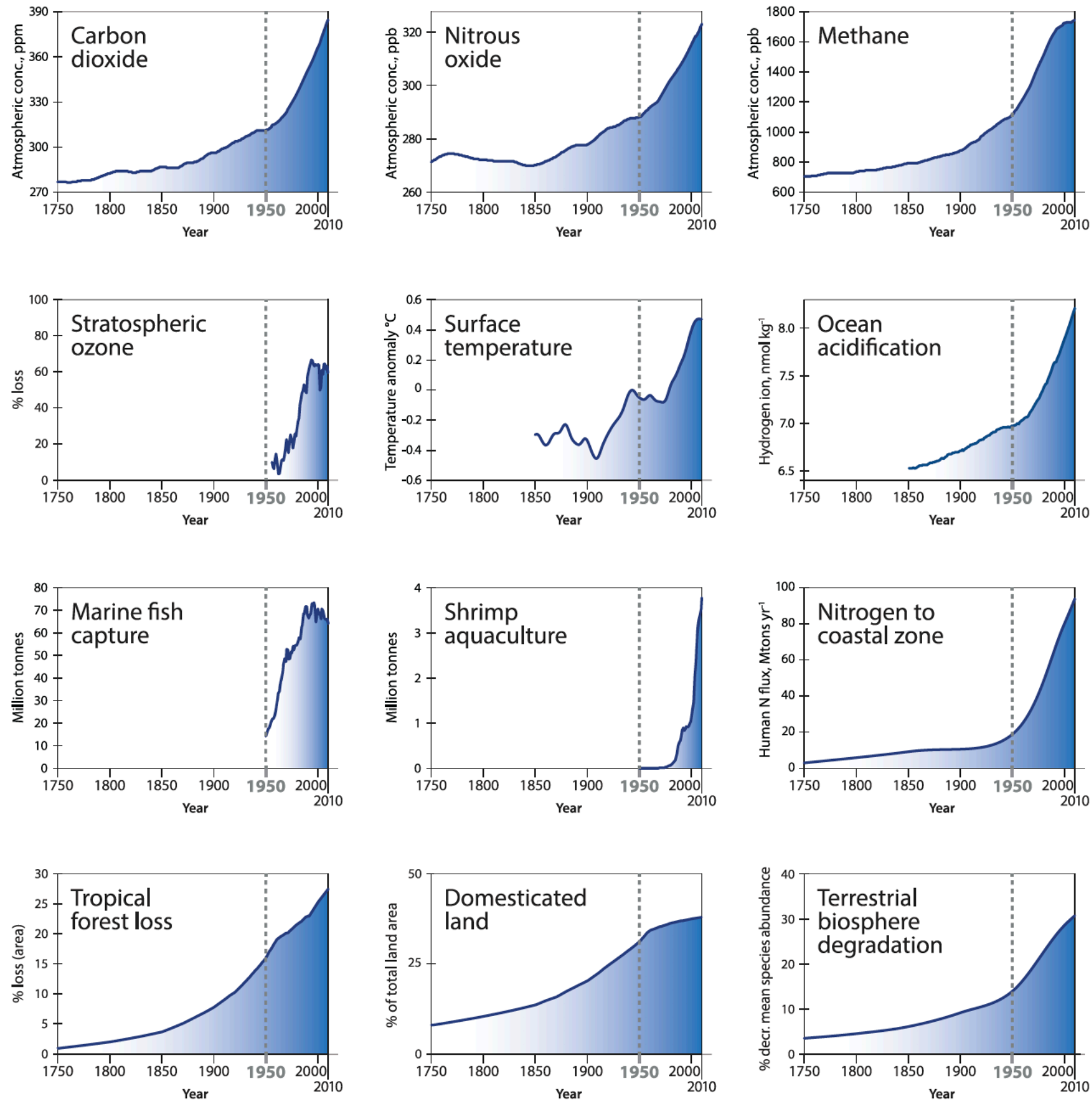
Burke et al. (2018); Brannen (2021); United Nations (2021)

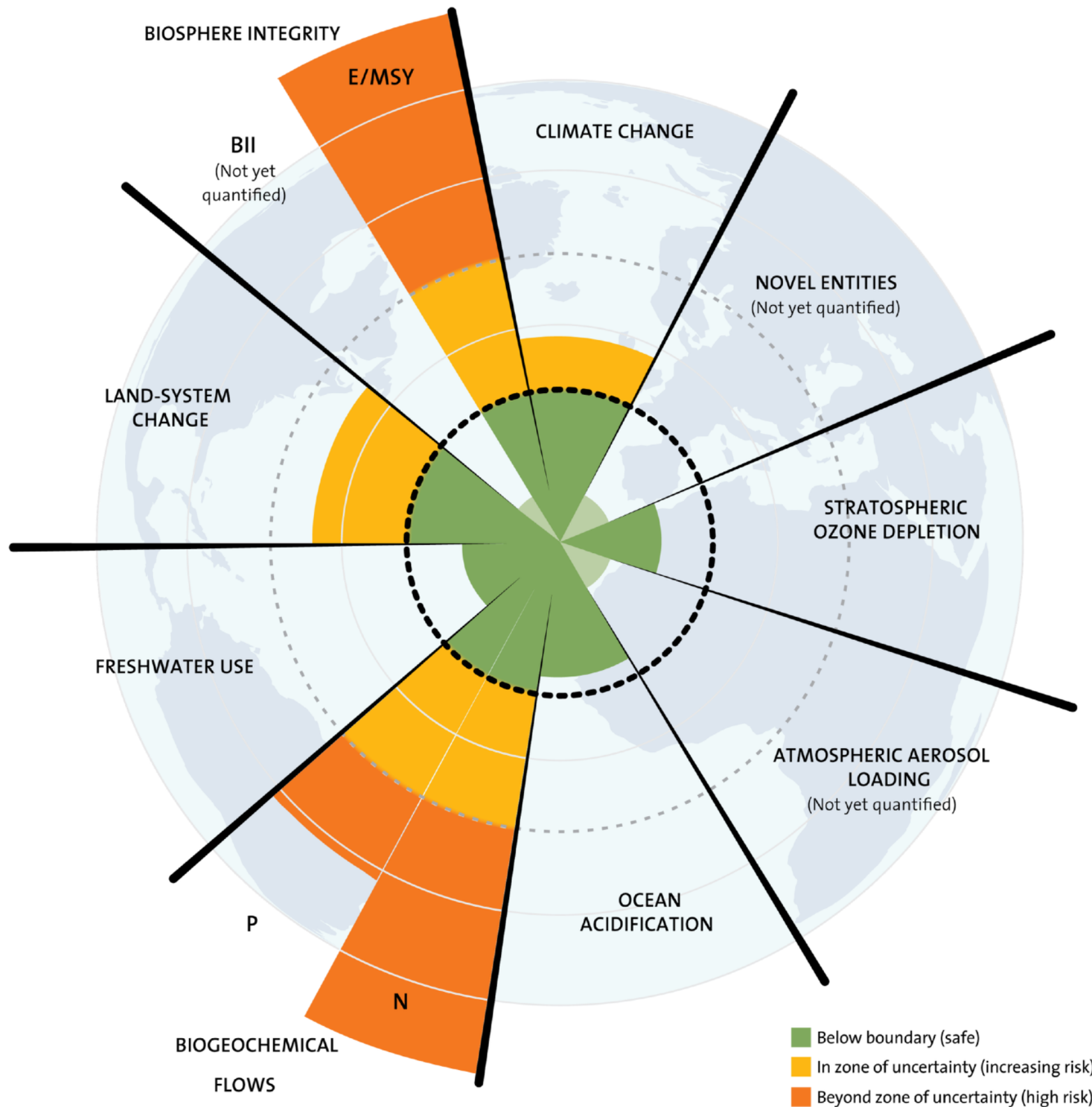
# Socio-economic trends

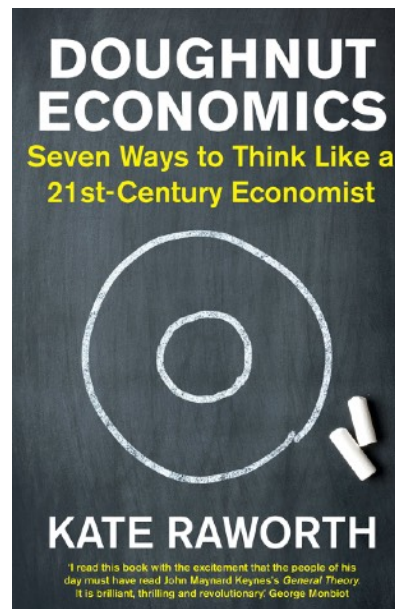
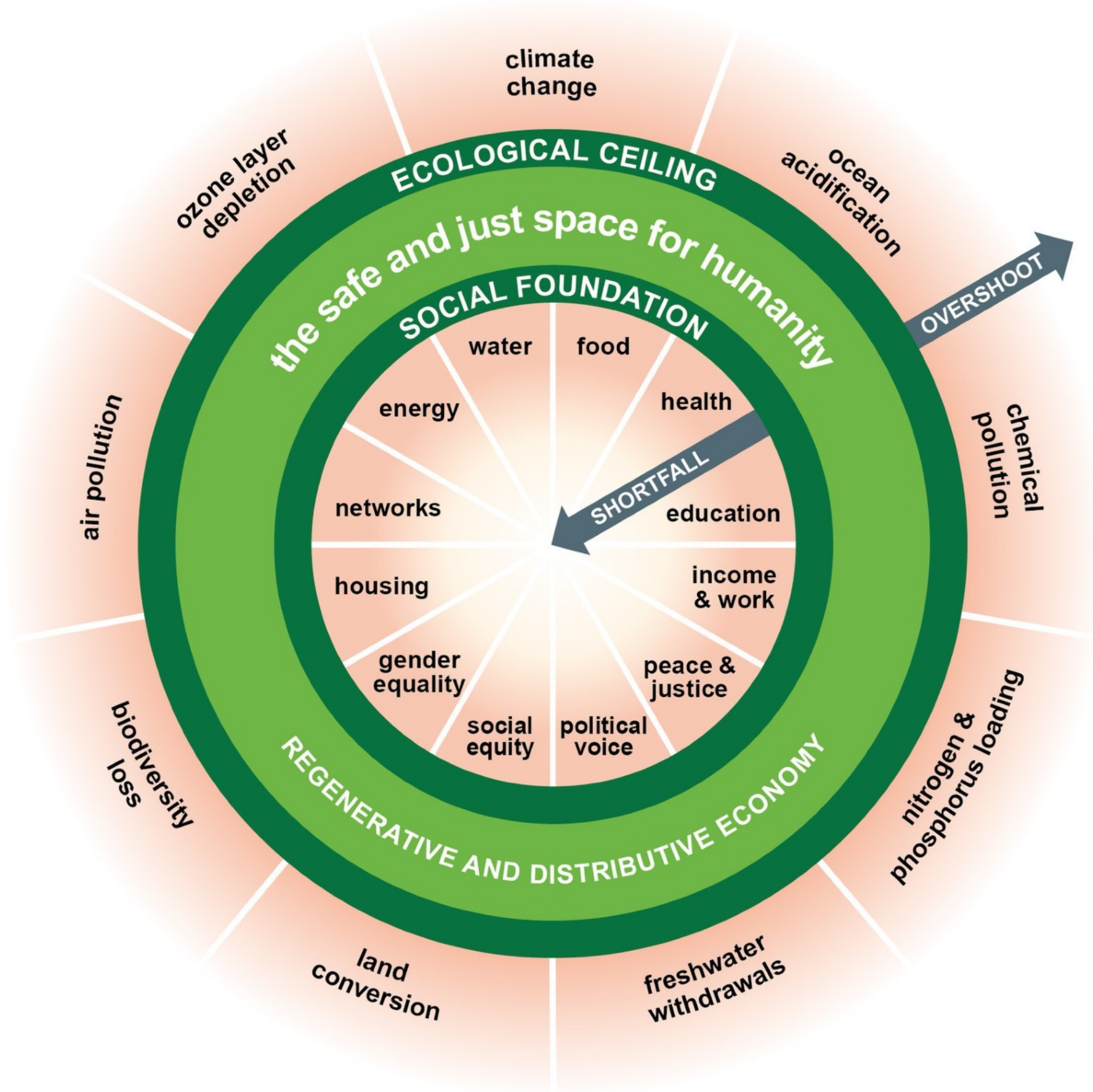




# Earth system trends







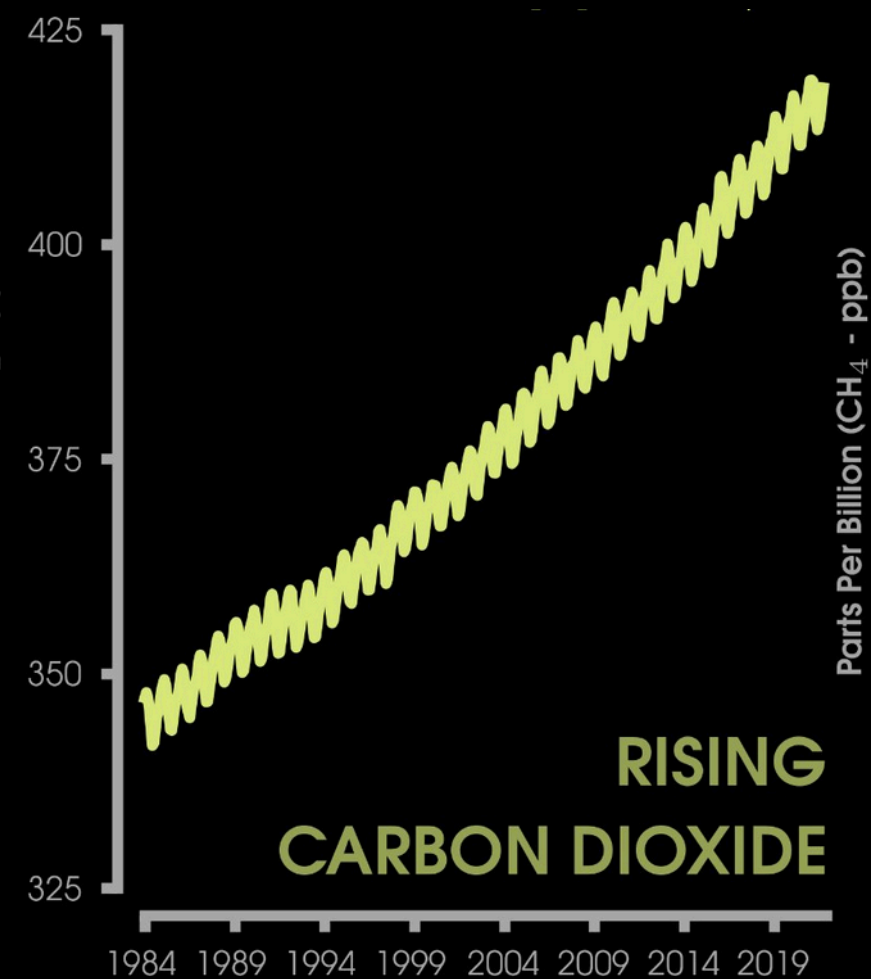






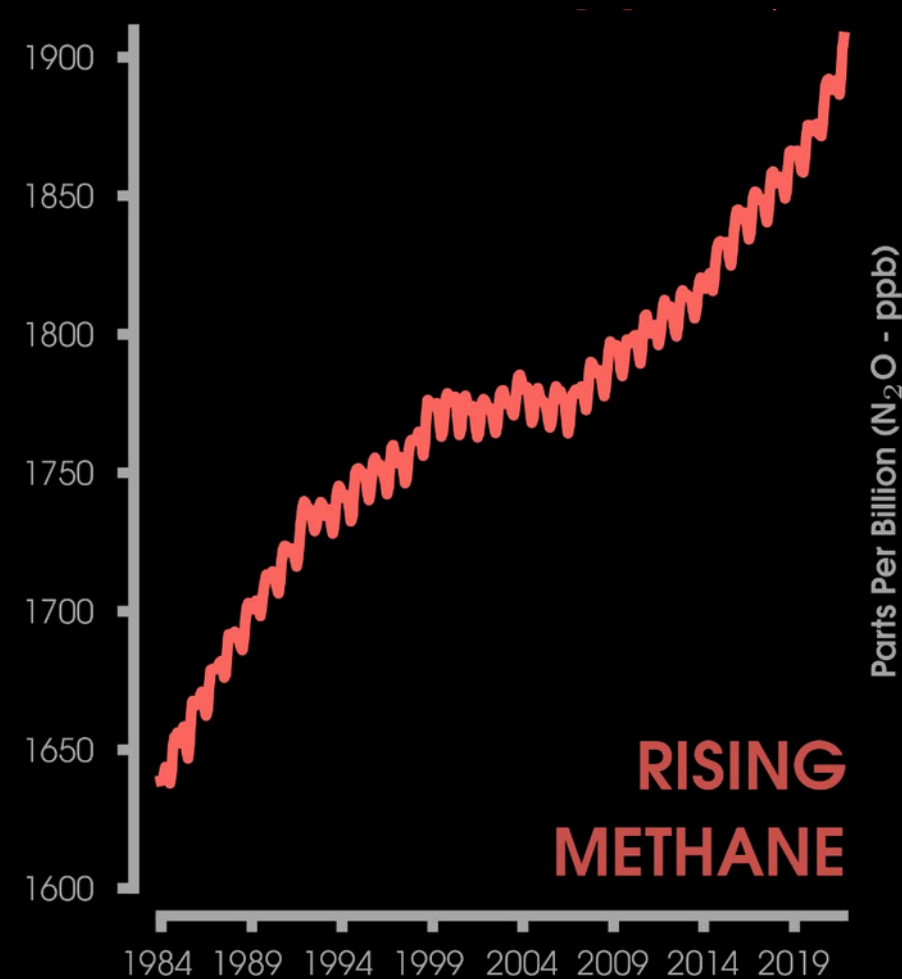
# **Part II:**

# **Climate Emergency**



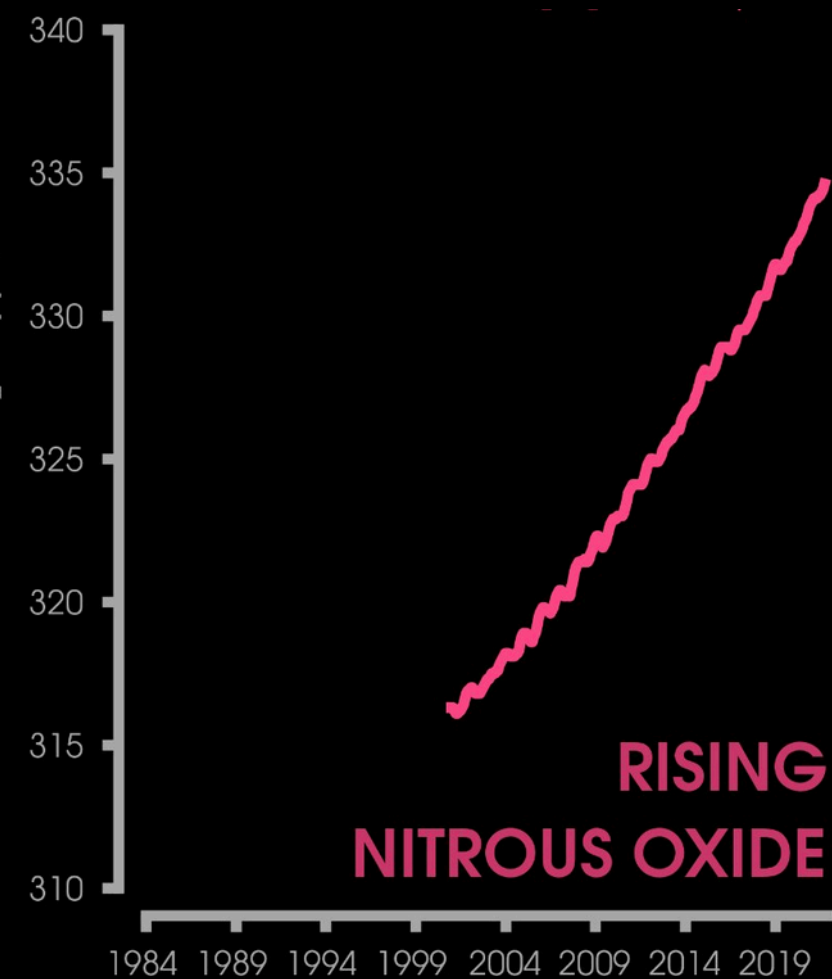
DATA: NOAA ESRL DATA (Keeling Curve) - Mauna Loa, HI  
SOURCE: <https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/ccgg/trends/data.html>

GRAPHIC: Zachary Labe (@ZLabe)  
UPDATE: January 2022



DATA: Ed Dlugokencky, NOAA/ESRL DATA  
SOURCE: <https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/ccgg/trends/ch4/global>

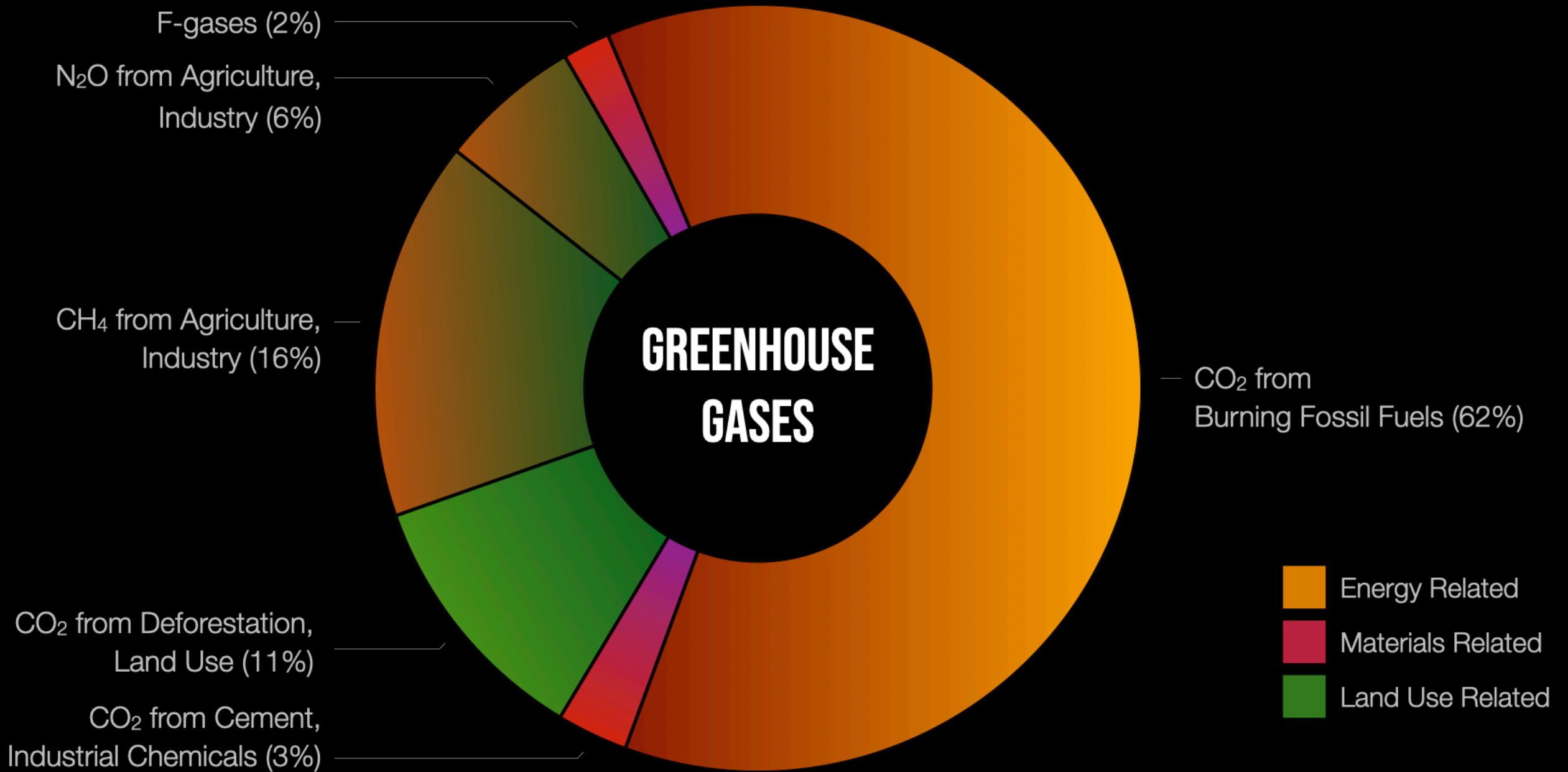
GRAPHIC: Zachary Labe (@ZLabe)  
UPDATE: October 2021



DATA: Ed Dlugokencky, NOAA/GML DATA  
SOURCE: <https://gml.noaa.gov/ccgg/trends/n2o/>

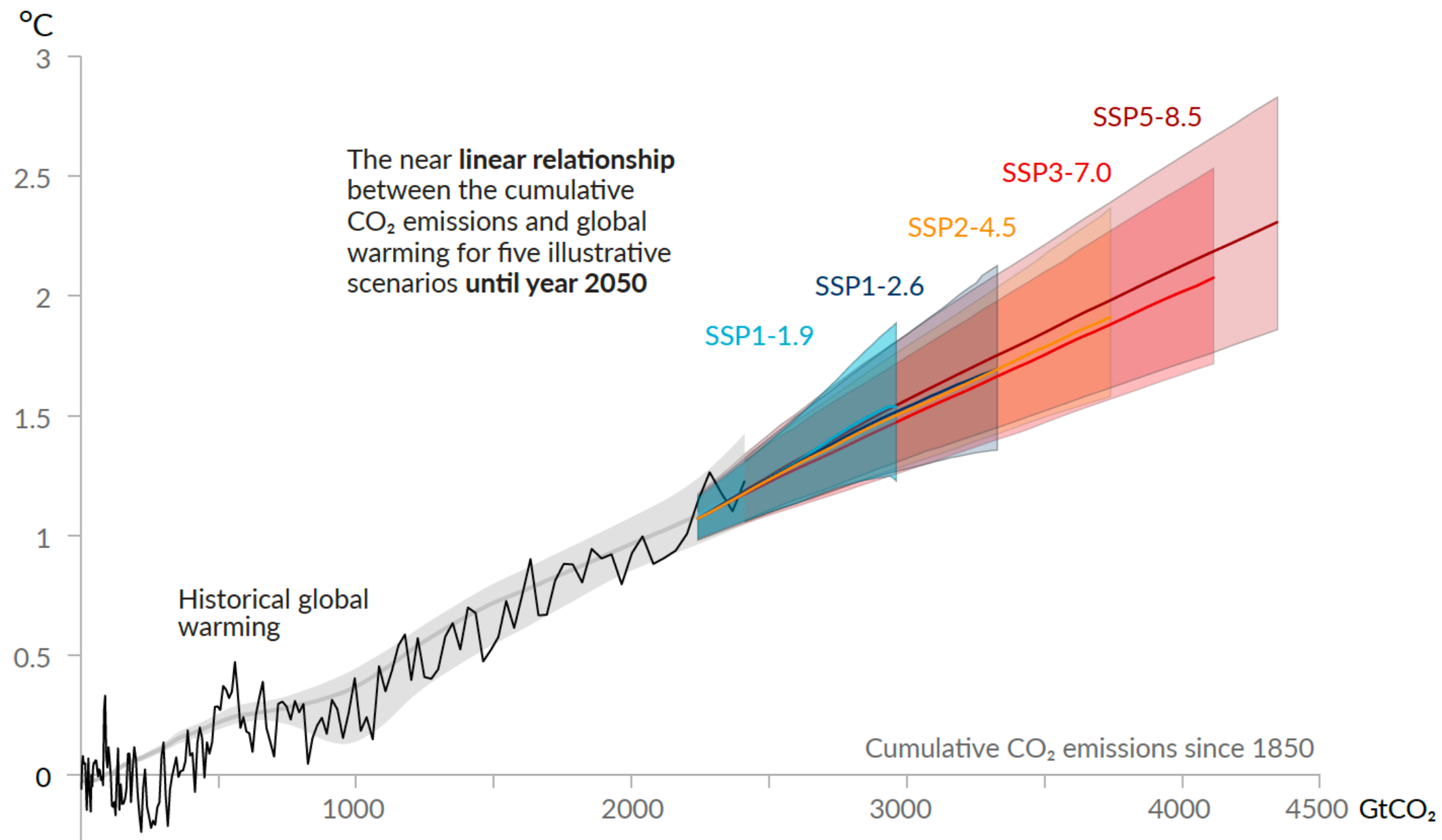
GRAPHIC: Zachary Labe (@ZLabe)  
UPDATE: October 2021

# GREENHOUSE GASES



# Every tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions adds to global warming

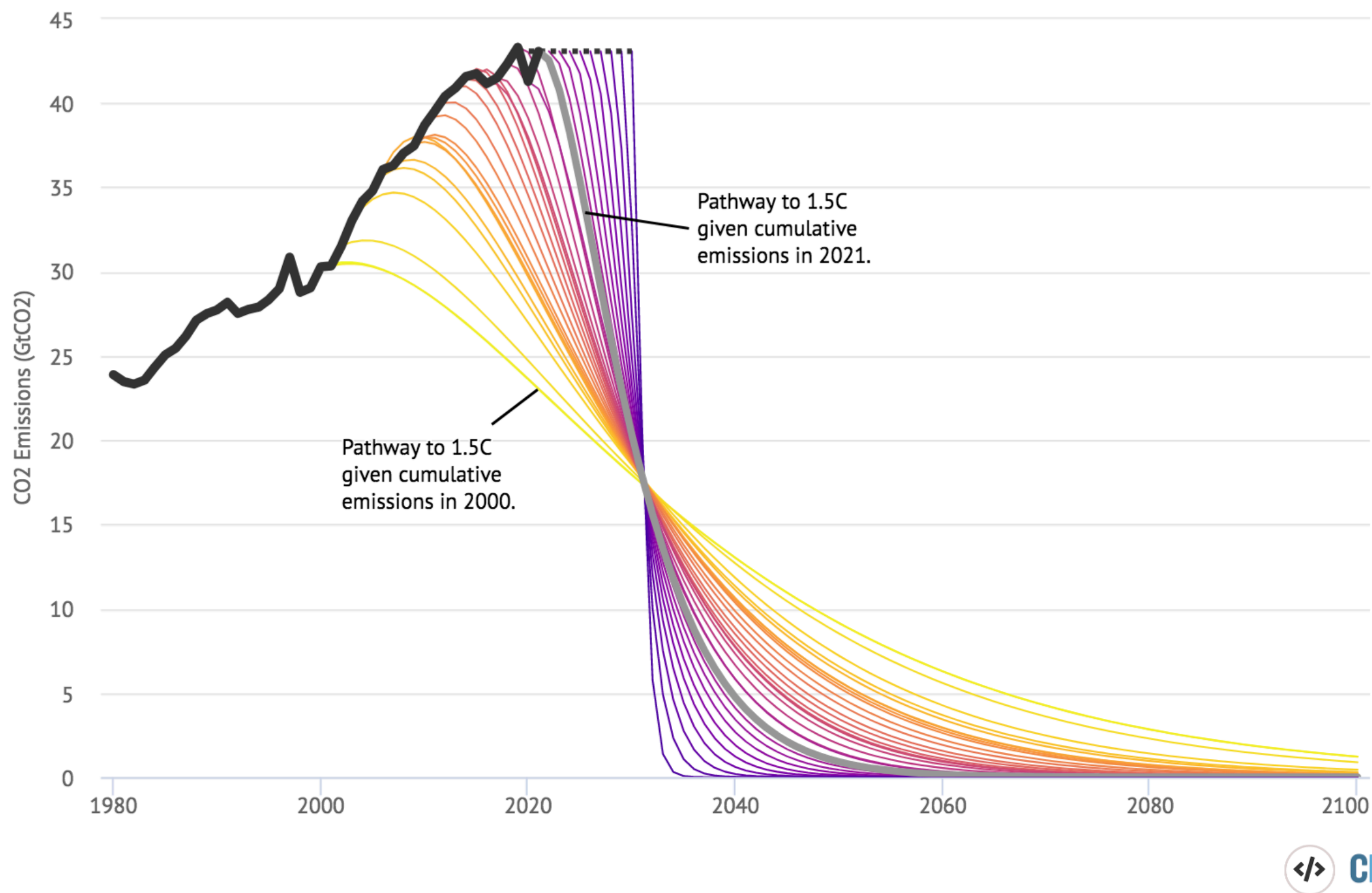
Global surface temperature increase since 1850-1900 (°C) as a function of cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (GtCO<sub>2</sub>)



Global warming between 1850–1900 and 2010–2019 (°C)	Historical cumulative CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from 1850 to 2019 (GtCO <sub>2</sub> )
1.07 (0.8–1.3; <i>likely</i> range)	2390 (± 240; <i>likely</i> range)

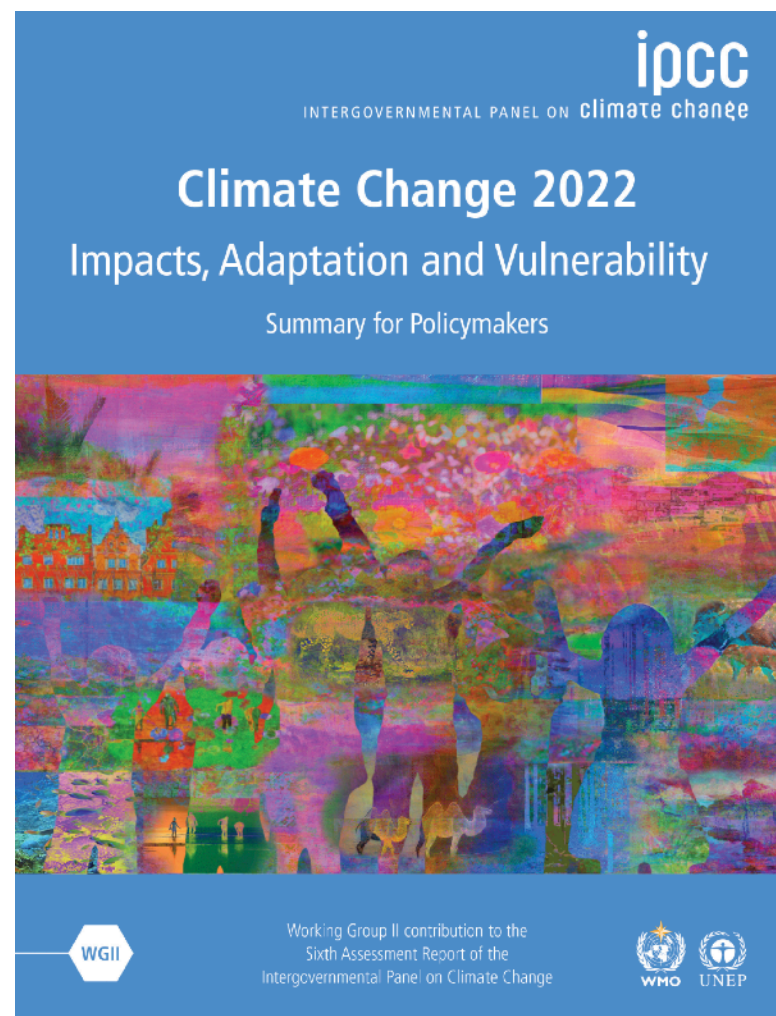
Approximate global warming relative to 1850–1900 until temperature limit (°C)* <sup>(1)</sup>	Additional global warming relative to 2010–2019 until temperature limit (°C)	Estimated remaining carbon budgets from the beginning of 2020 (GtCO <sub>2</sub> )					Variations in reductions in non-CO <sub>2</sub> emissions* <sup>(3)</sup>
		<i>Likelihood of limiting global warming to temperature limit*<sup>(2)</sup></i>					
		17%	33%	50%	67%	83%	
1.5	0.43	900	650	500	400	300	Higher or lower reductions in accompanying non-CO <sub>2</sub> emissions can increase or decrease the values on the left by 220 GtCO <sub>2</sub> or more
1.7	0.63	1450	1050	850	700	550	
2.0	0.93	2300	1700	1350	1150	900	

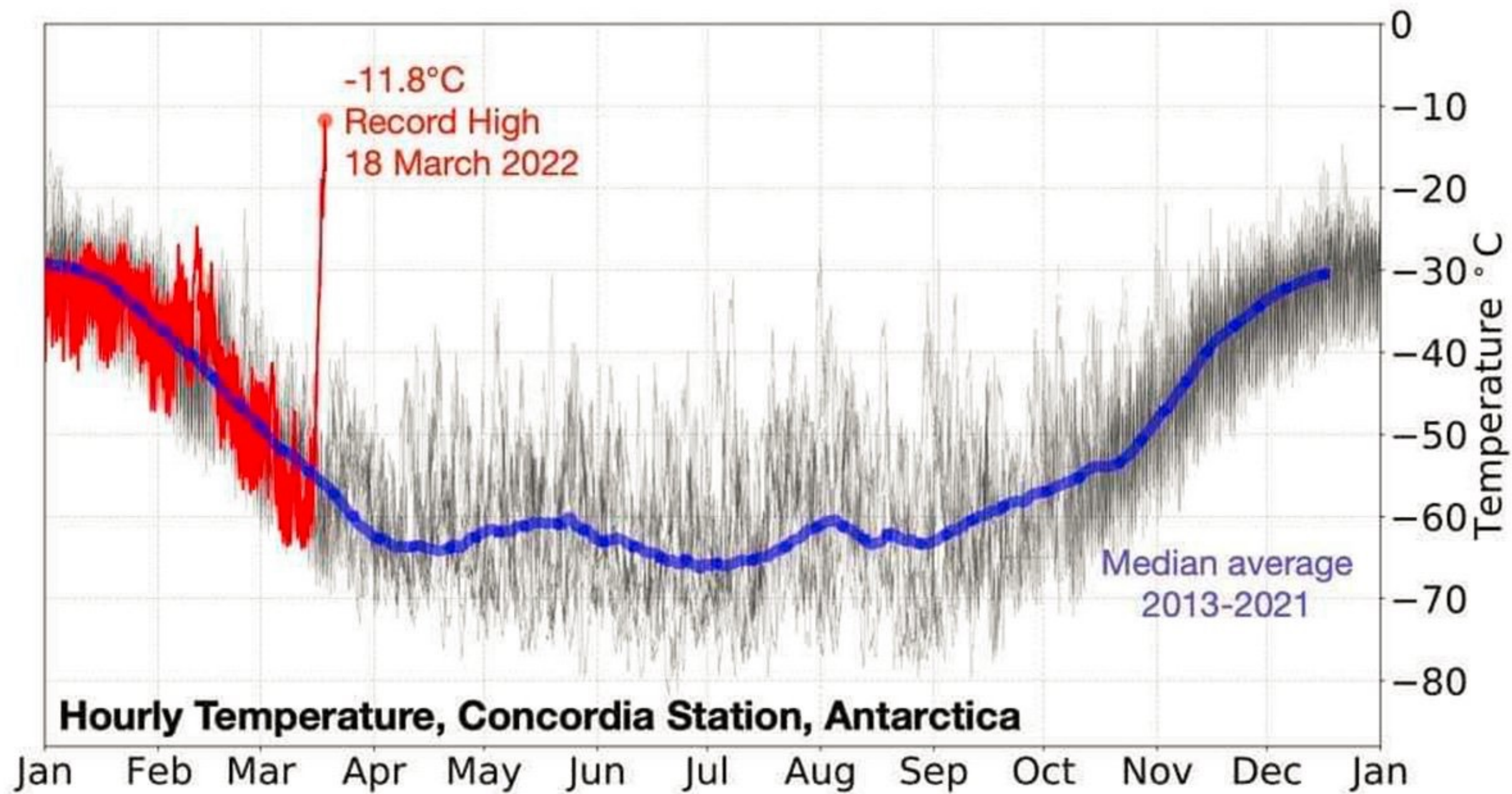
Limiting warming to 1.5C is increasingly difficult without large-scale negative emissions





# Climate impacts emerge earlier and are worse than anticipated





**Hourly Temperature, Concordia Station, Antarctica**



# Canadian inferno: northern heat exceeds worst-case climate models

Scientists fear heat domes in North America and Siberia indicate a new dimension to the global crisis

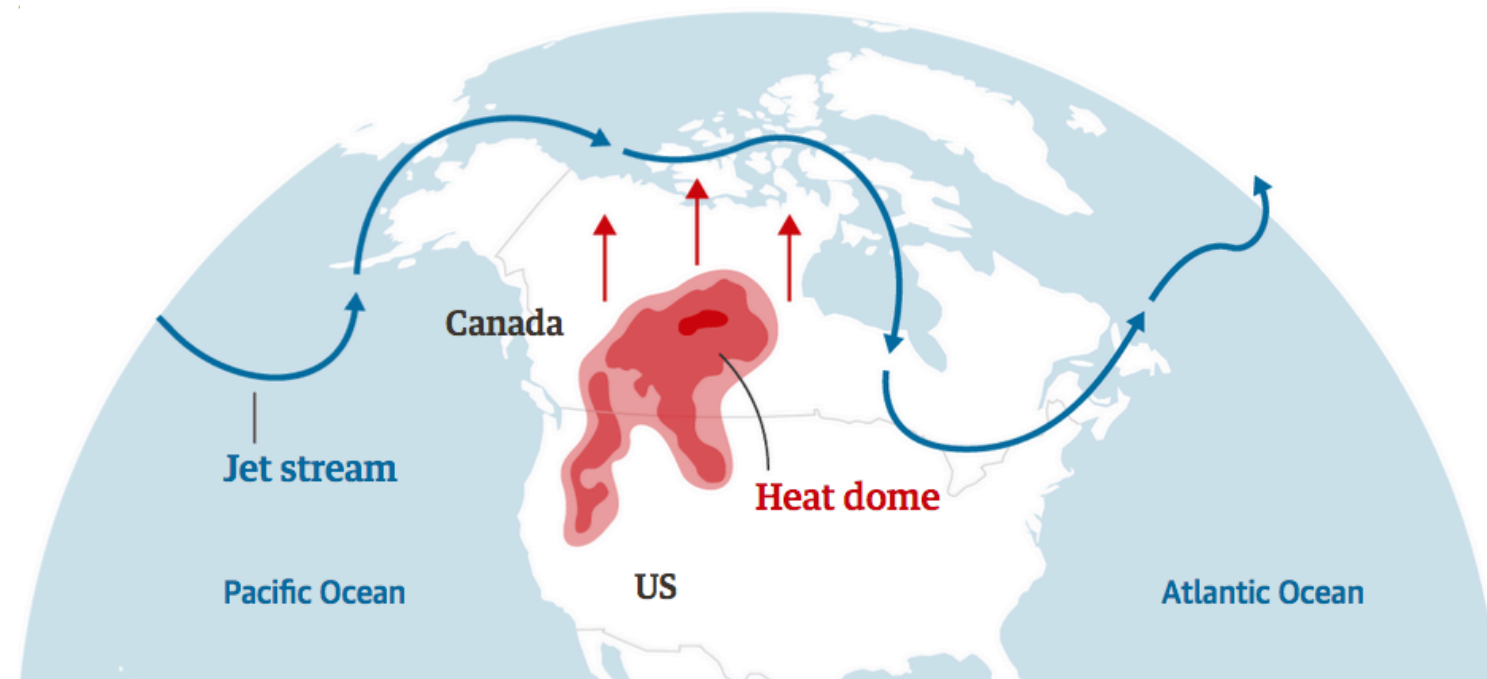
**Jonathan Watts**

🐦 @jonathanwatts

Fri 2 Jul 2021 16.28 BST

“[T]here is something else going on with this heatwave, and indeed, with many of the very persistent weather extremes we’ve seen in recent years in the US, Europe, Asia and elsewhere, where the models aren’t quite capturing the impact of climate change.”

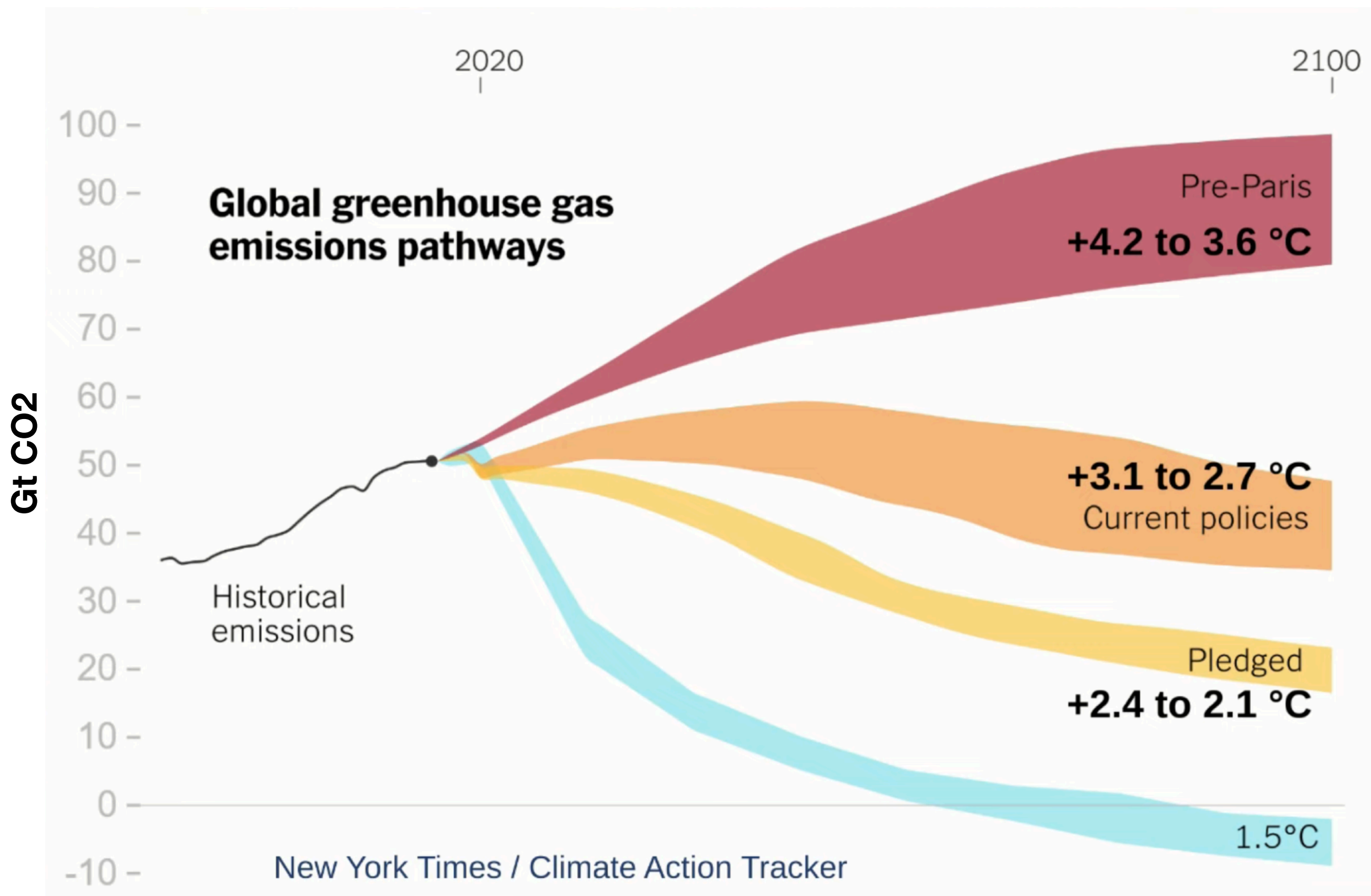
- Michael Mann



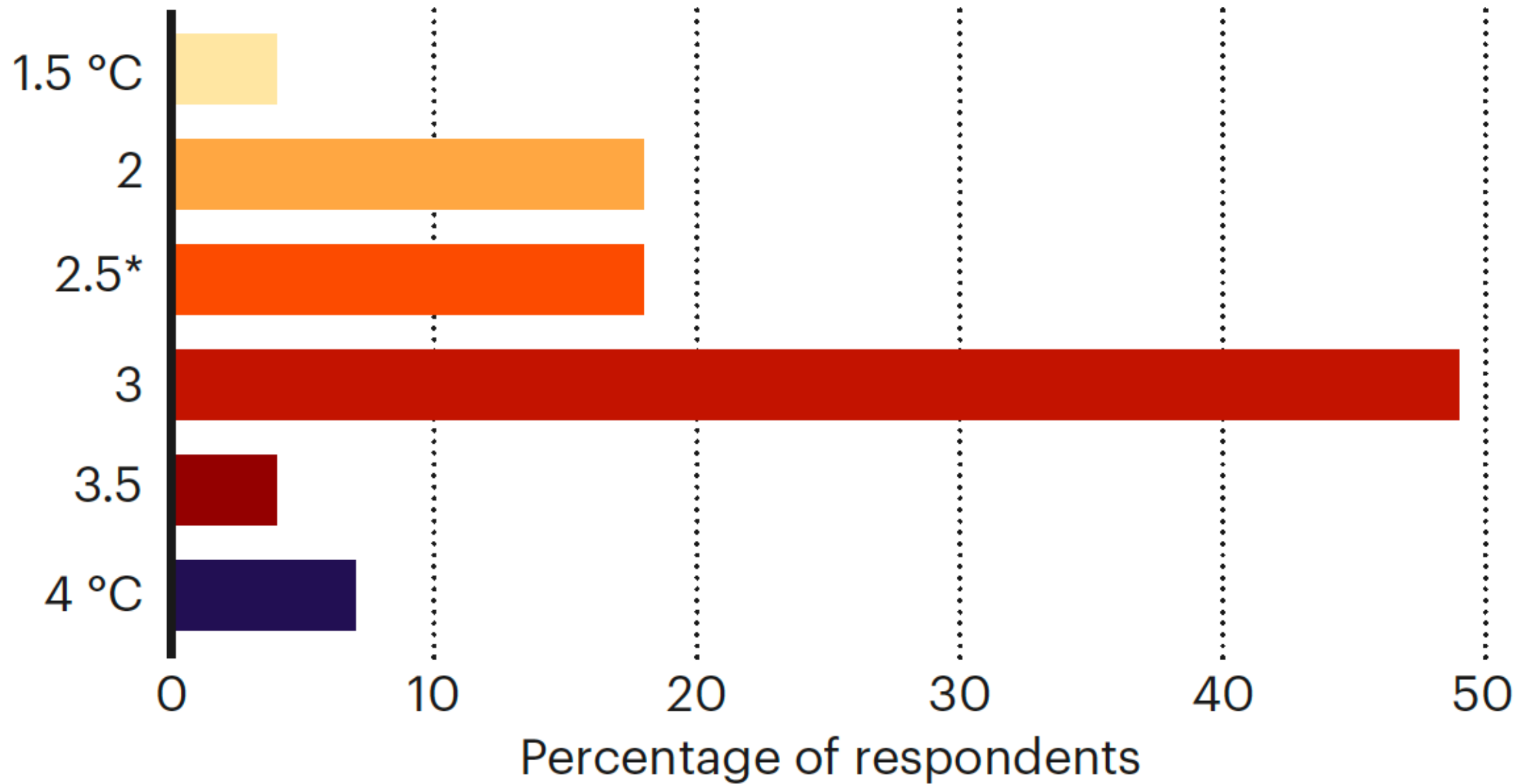
“The recent extreme weather anomalies were not represented in global computer models that are used to project how the world might change with more emissions.”

- Johan Rockström

Fisher et al. (2021)  
McSweeney (2019)



## How much warming above pre-industrial times do you think is likely by 2100?



\*Includes 2 responses between 2.7 °C and 2.75 °C;  
2.5 °C and 3.5 °C were write-in answers.

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# The Uninhabitable Earth

Famine, economic collapse, a sun that  
cooks us: What climate change could  
wreak — sooner than you think.

By David Wallace-Wells



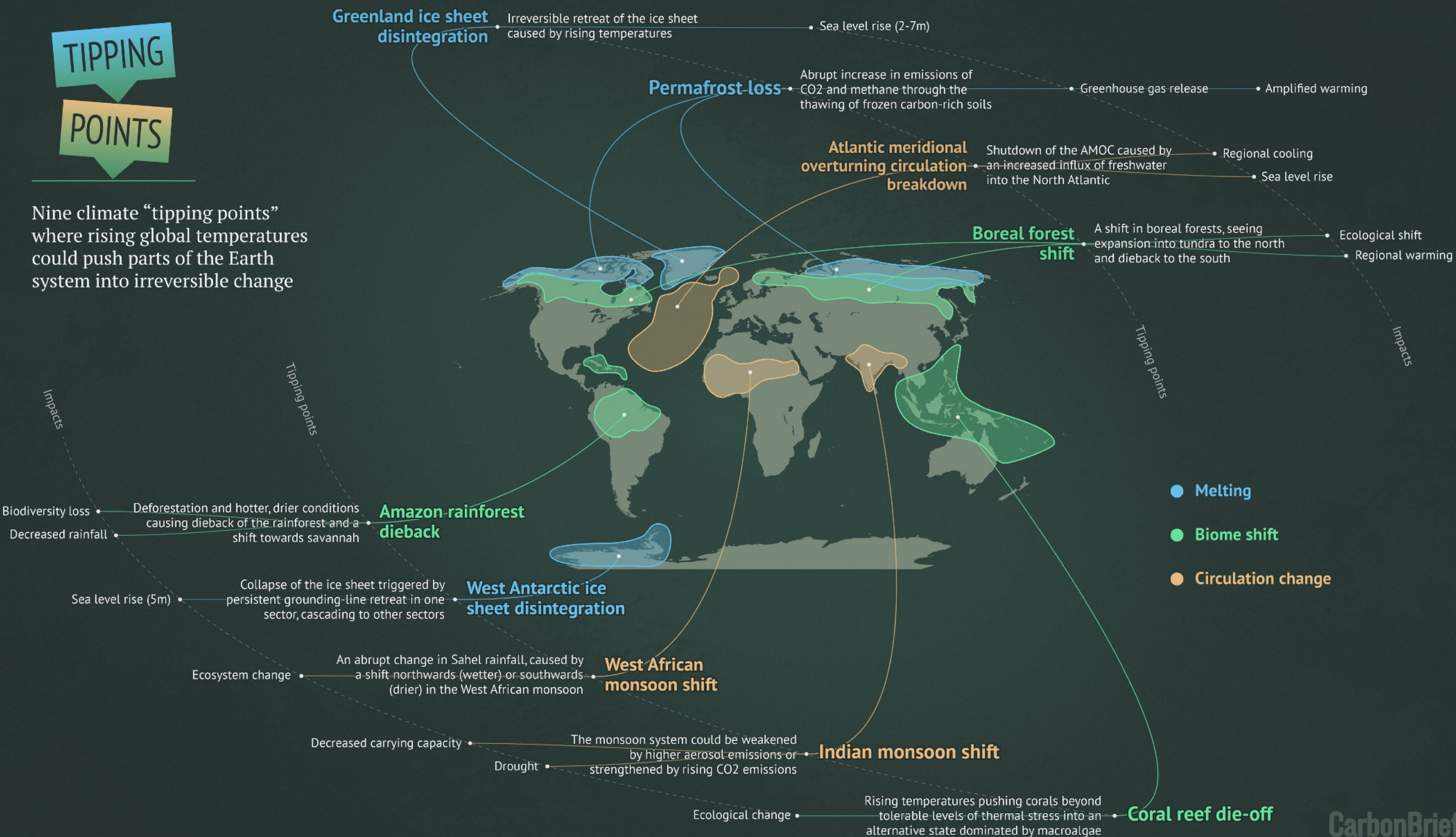
## The Barely Inhabitable Earth: Climate Impacts under Business as Usual



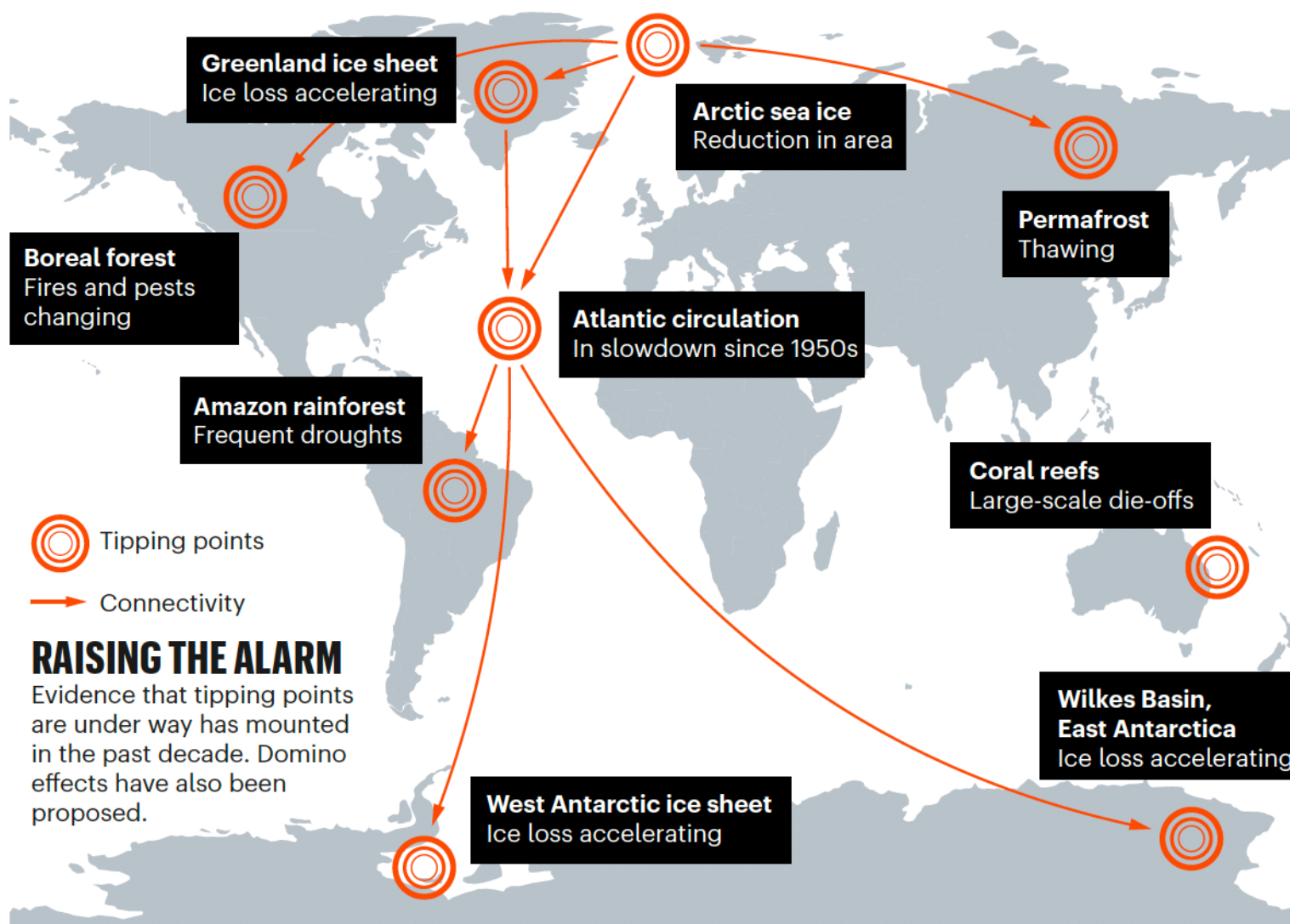


# TIPPING POINTS

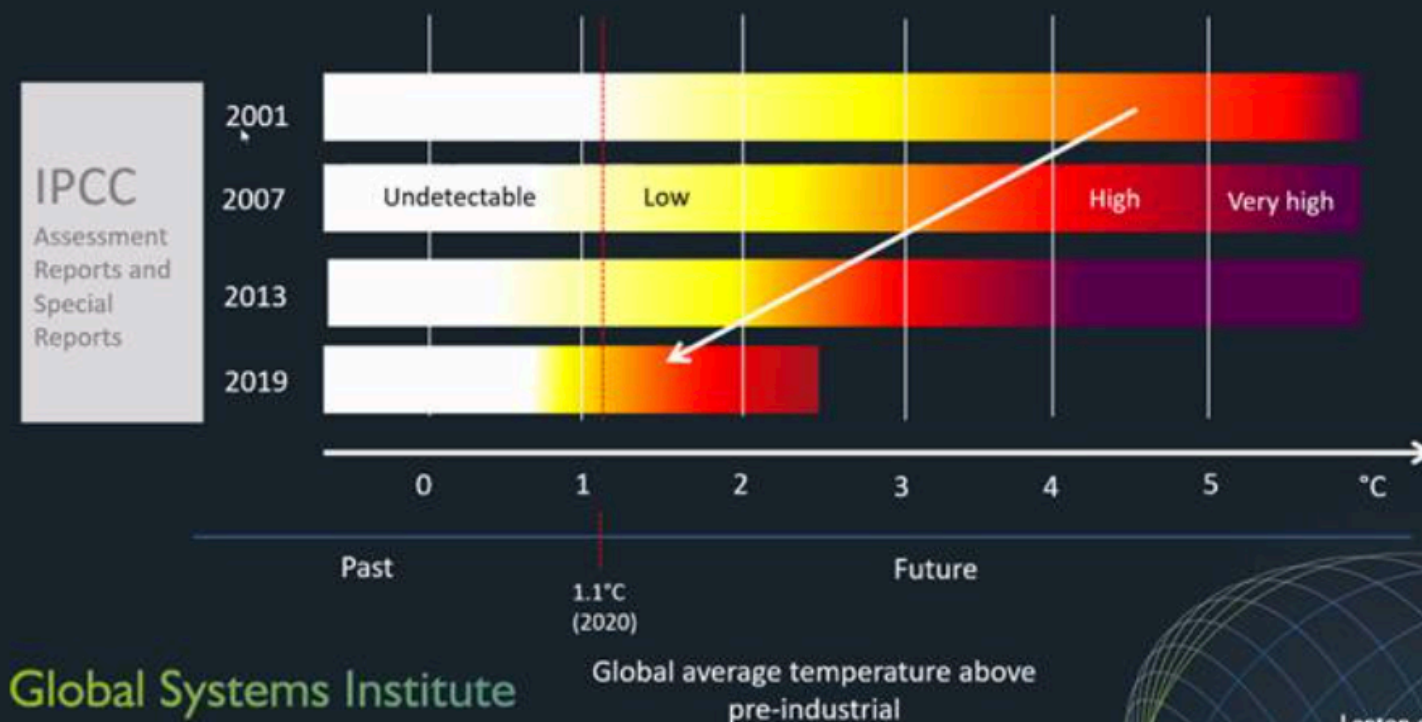
Nine climate “tipping points” where rising global temperatures could push parts of the Earth system into irreversible change



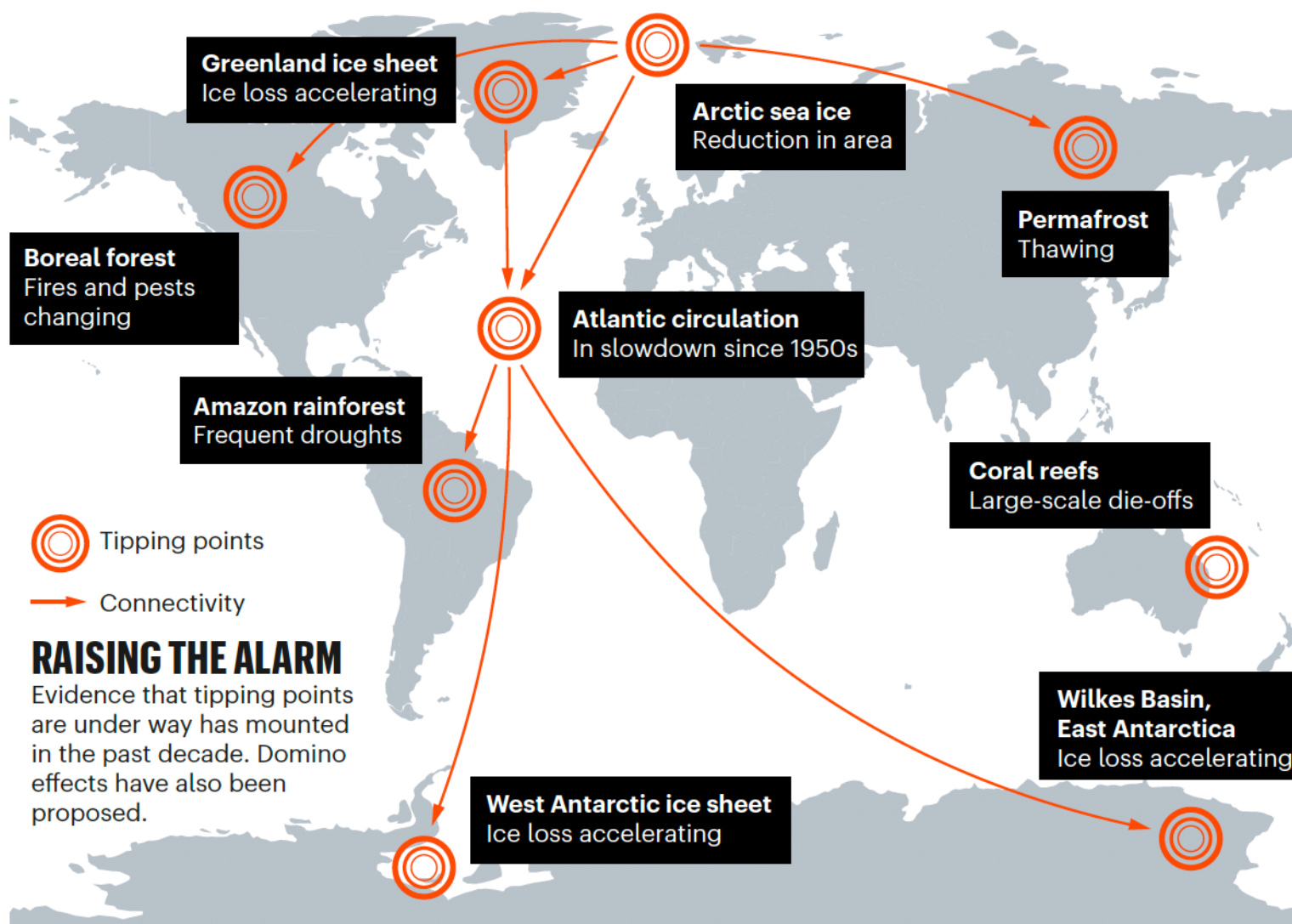




## Changing risk assessment of tipping points



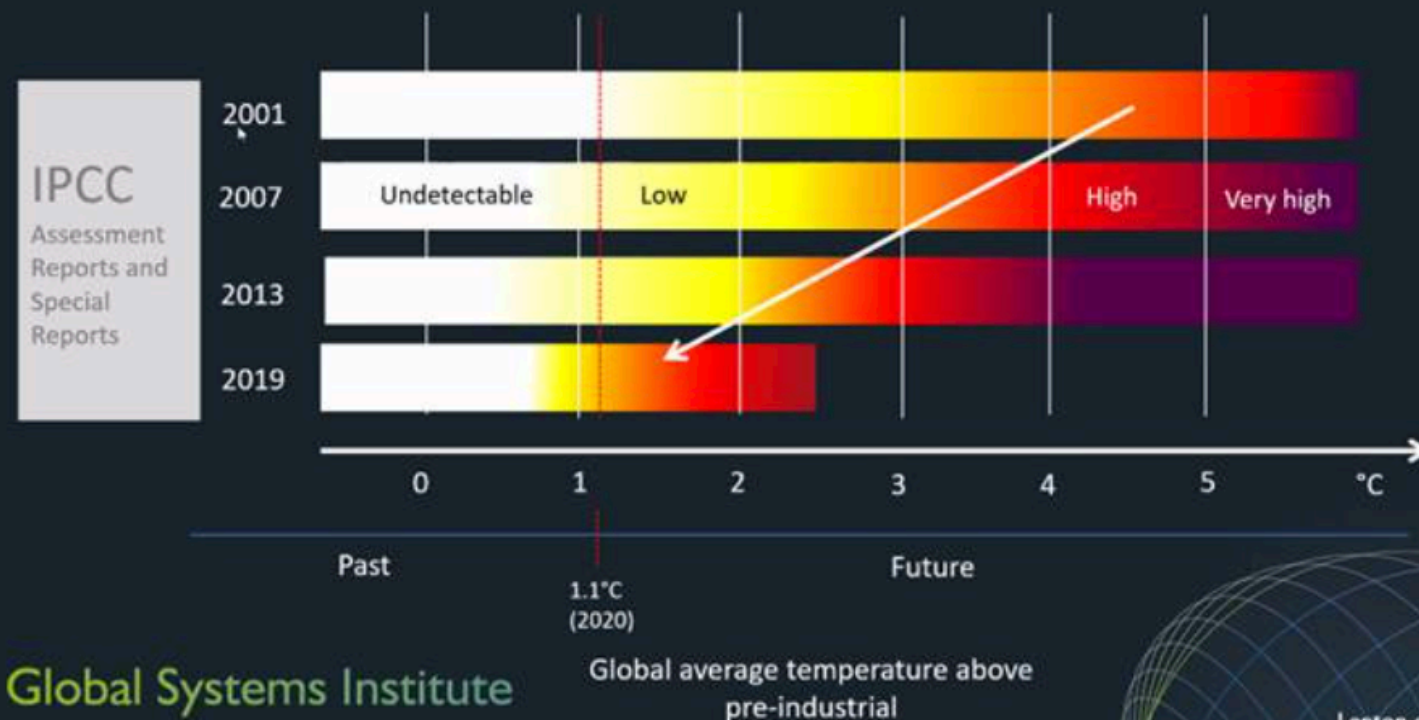
Ritchie et al. (2020)  
 Lenton et al. (2019)  
 Wunderling et al. (2021)  
 McKay et al. (under review)



“The evidence from tipping points alone suggests that we are in a state of planetary emergency.”

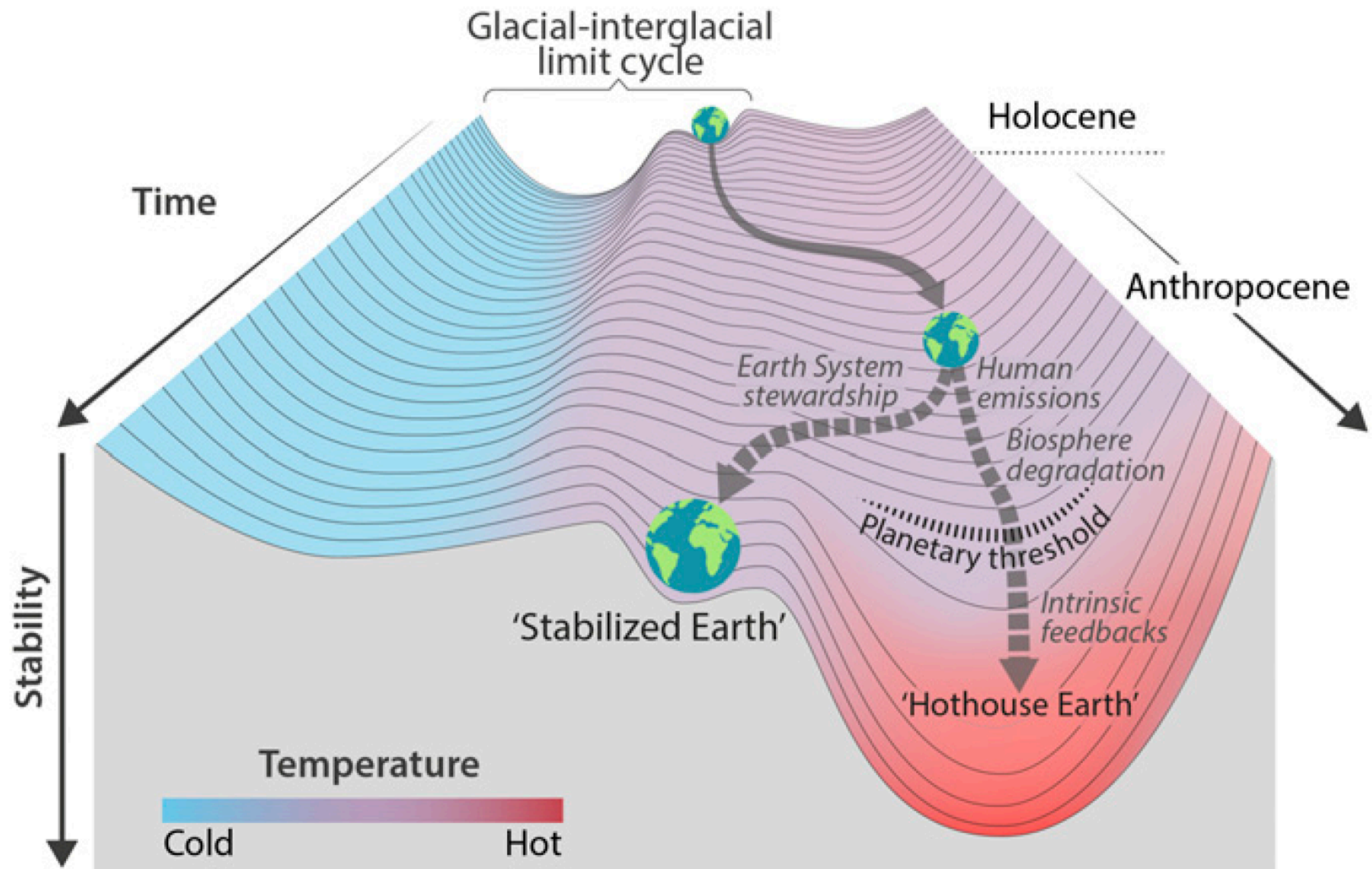
- Lenton et al. (2019)

## Changing risk assessment of tipping points



Ritchie et al. (2020)  
Lenton et al. (2019)  
Wunderling et al. (2021)  
McKay et al. (under review)







# Climate Change 2022

## Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability

Summary for Policymakers



“Any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action on adaptation and mitigation will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all.”

“What we do over the next three to four years, I believe, is going to determine the future of humanity.”

Sir David King (2021)



**Part III:**

**Current Climate Policy**

# Fossil Fuelled Lies

Franta Talk  
Franta Interview  
The Corporation

## Society's Understanding & Actions

## Big Oil's Understanding & Actions

Franta (2018a,b); Franta (2021a,b); Farrell (2016); Supran & Oreskes (2017,2021a,b); McKibben (2015); Bonneuil et al. (2021); Franta & Supran (2017)





# Fossil Fuelled Lies

Franta Talk  
Franta Interview  
The Corporation

## Society's Understanding & Actions

- 1960: Keeling shows increase in CO<sub>2</sub>
- 1965: Environmental Report Lyndon Johnson
- 1970s: Cooling or Warming? Warming!
- 1988: Hansen testifies before Congress
- 1988: IPCC forms
- 1992: UNFCCC
- 1997: Kyoto Protocol signed
- 2015: Paris Agreement

## Big Oil's Understanding & Actions



Franta (2018a,b); Franta (2021a,b); Farrell (2016); Supran & Oreskes (2017,2021a,b); McKibben (2015); Bonneuil et al. (2021); Franta & Supran (2017)

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- 1992: UNFCCC
- 1997: Kyoto Protocol signed
- 2015: Paris Agreement

## Big Oil's Understanding & Actions

- 1959: Edward Teller warns Big Oil
- 1965: President of API warns Big Oil
- 1979-83: Exxon internal research programme
- 1980: API argues for tripling coal
- 1987: IPIECA Strategy meeting  
Emphasise uncertainties  
Stress the cost of action  
Focus on policies that do not threaten fossil fuels  
Insist on 'detection before action'
- 1989-2002: Global Climate Coalition
- 2000-now: Greenwashing



Franta (2018a,b); Franta (2021a,b); Farrell (2016); Supran & Oreskes (2017,2021a,b); McKibben (2015); Bonneuil et al. (2021); Franta & Supran (2017)

**Exclusive:** Oil and gas majors are planning scores of vast projects that threaten to shatter the 1.5C climate goal. If governments do not act, these firms will continue to cash in as the world burns

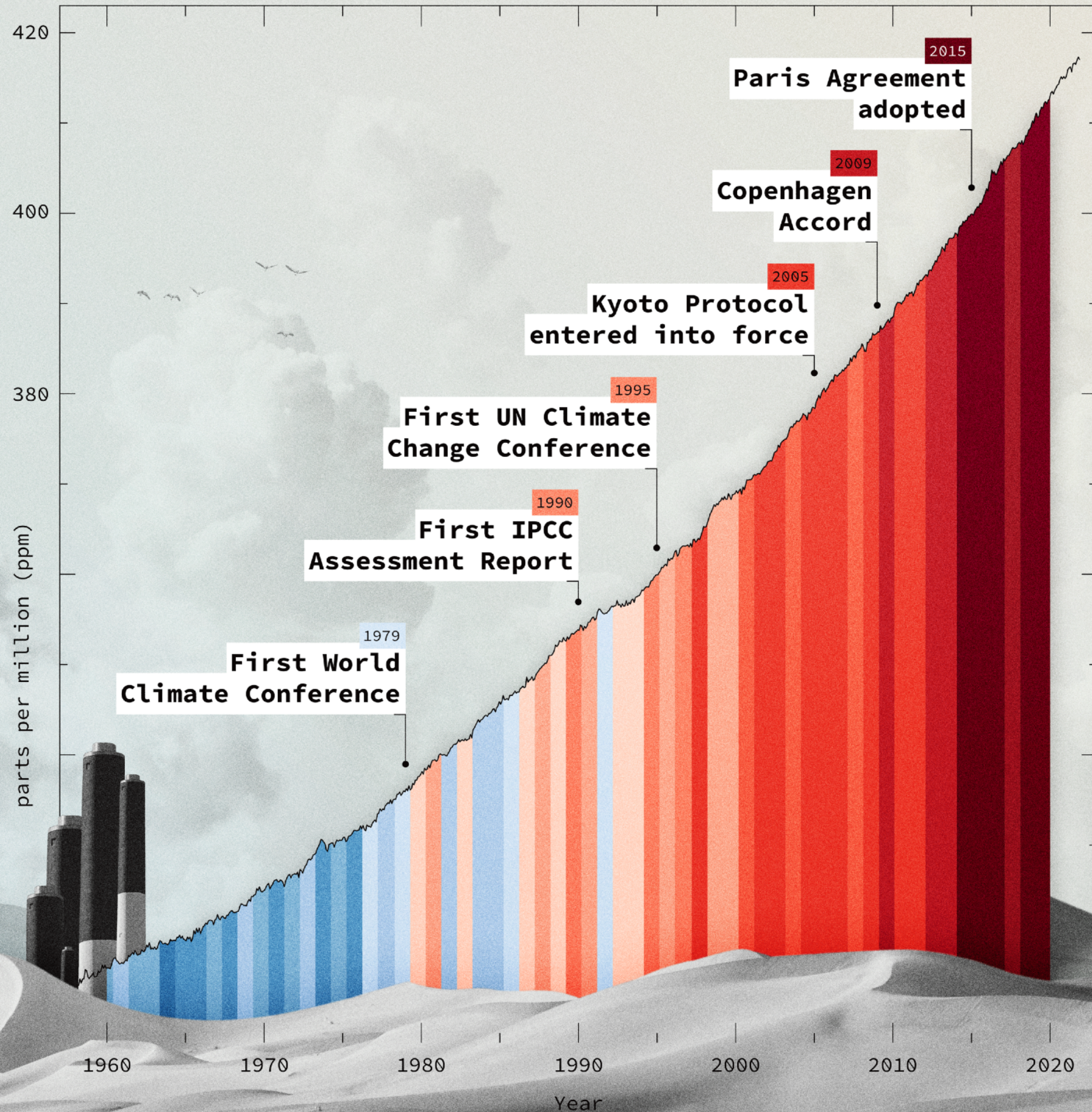
by **Damian Carrington** and **Matthew Taylor**





## Trends in Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> vs Global Temperature Change

#climateINACTiONstripes



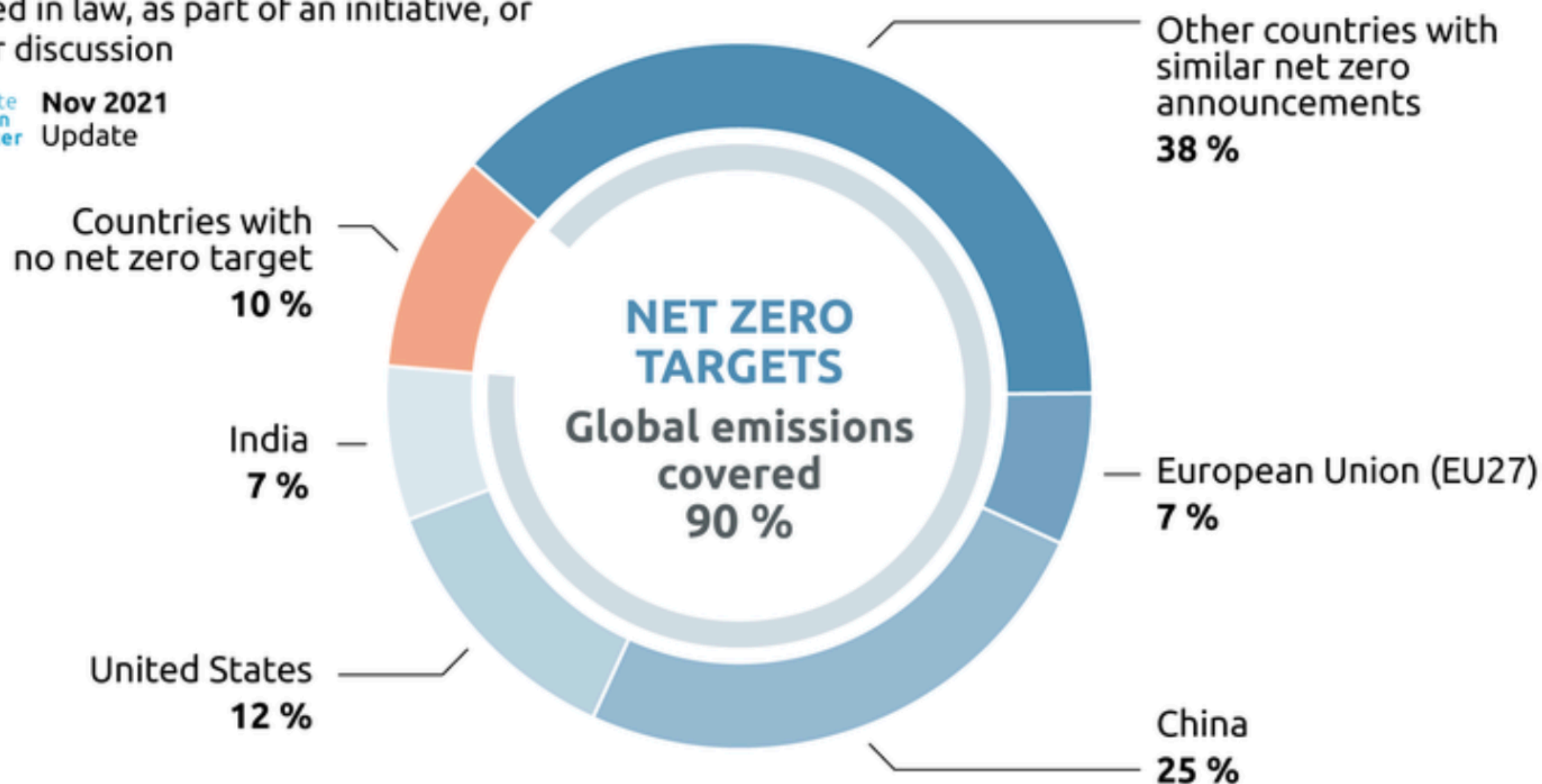
Composite Graph of: Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> at Mauna Loa Observatory, December 2021 – Scripps Institution of Oceanography & NOAA Global Monitoring Laboratory | #ShowYourStripes – Graphics & lead scientist: Ed Hawkins, National Centre for Atmospheric Science, University of Reading; Data: UK Met Office | Design by: sustentio [PG] | Licence: CC-BY  
@MuellerTadzio @wiebkenarie @MariusHasenheit @sustentioEU



## Net zero emissions target announcements

Agreed in law, as part of an initiative, or under discussion

 **Nov 2021**  
Update

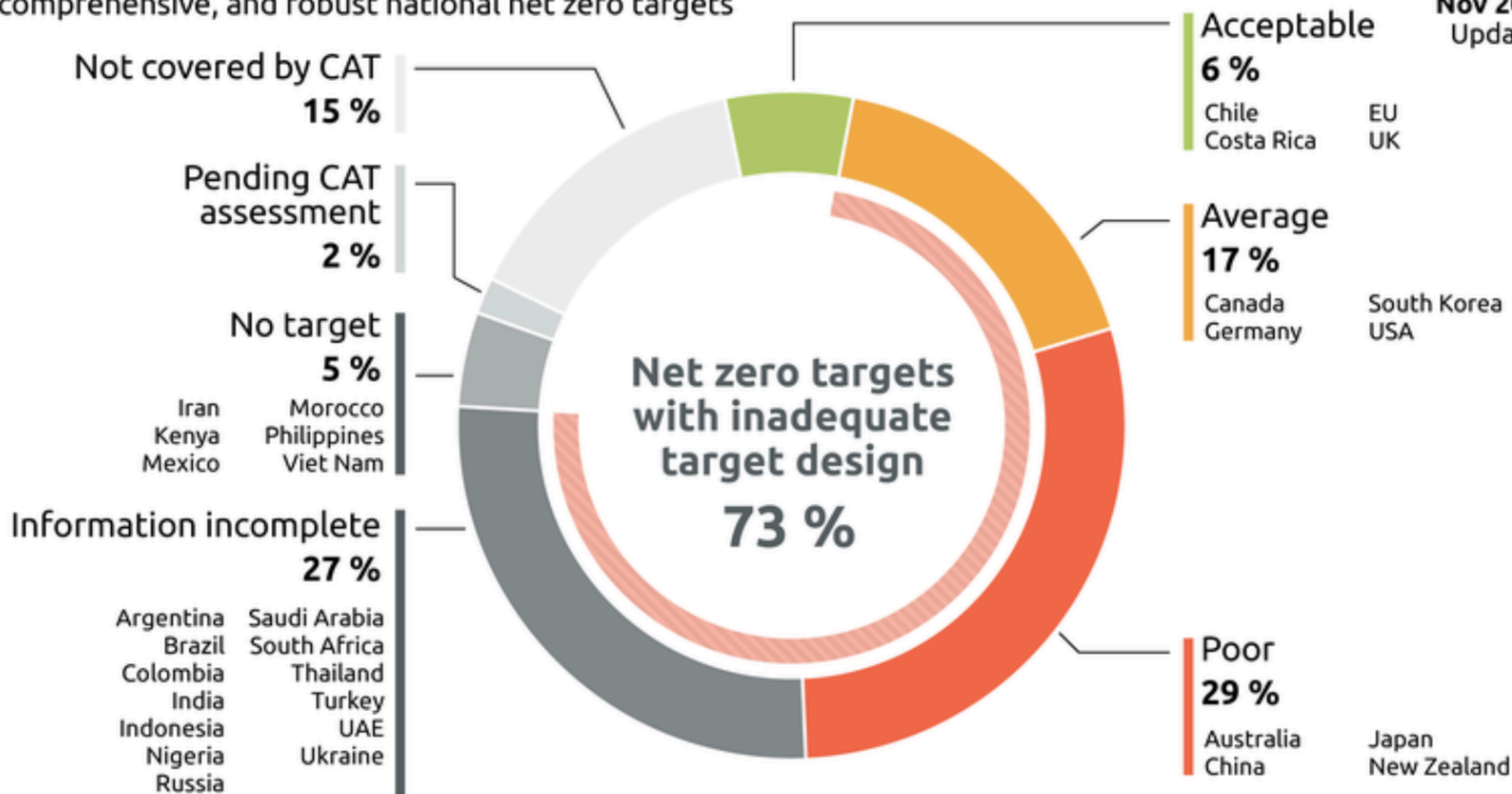


# Net zero target design - mostly inadequate to date

Evaluation of the quality of net zero targets using the CAT's design blueprint for transparent, comprehensive, and robust national net zero targets



Nov 2021 Update



# NET ZERO STOCKTAKE 2022

Assessing the status and trends of net zero target setting across countries, sub-national governments and companies.

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June 2022

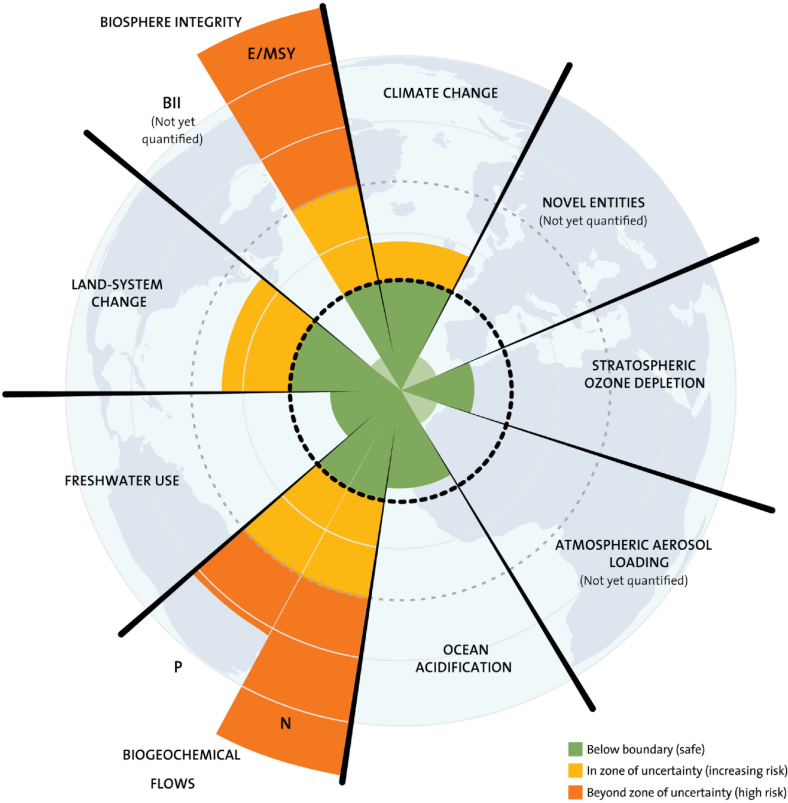
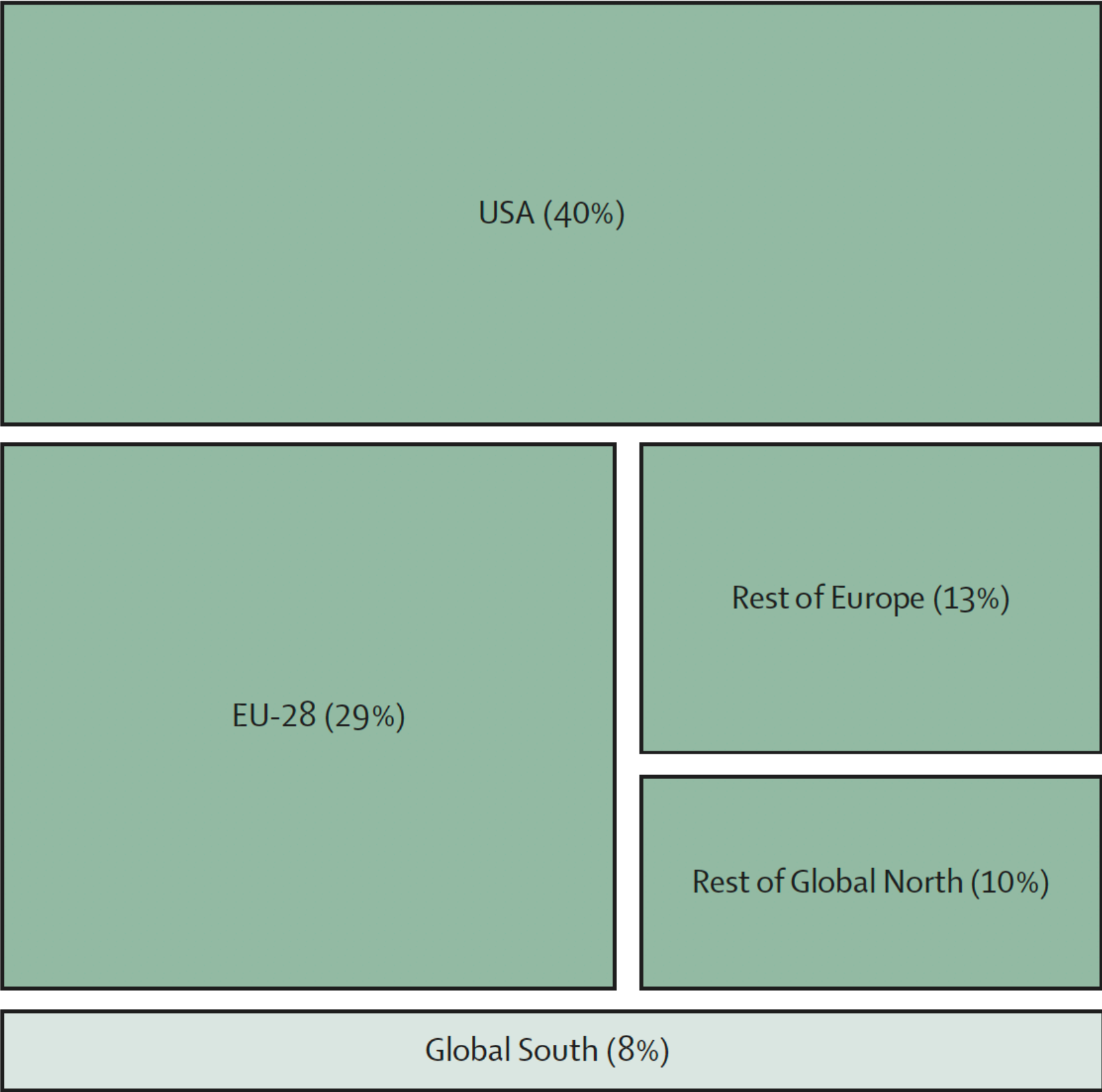


**Four Reasons why  
Net zero by 2050 is  
woefully inadequate**

**Why net zero by 2050 is woefully inadequate**

**1. There is no carbon budget left for rich nations**

Responsibility for climate breakdown





# CLIMATE COLONIALISM

**Anuradha Mittal**

Founder and Director of  
Oakland Institute CA

**Nnimmo Bassey**

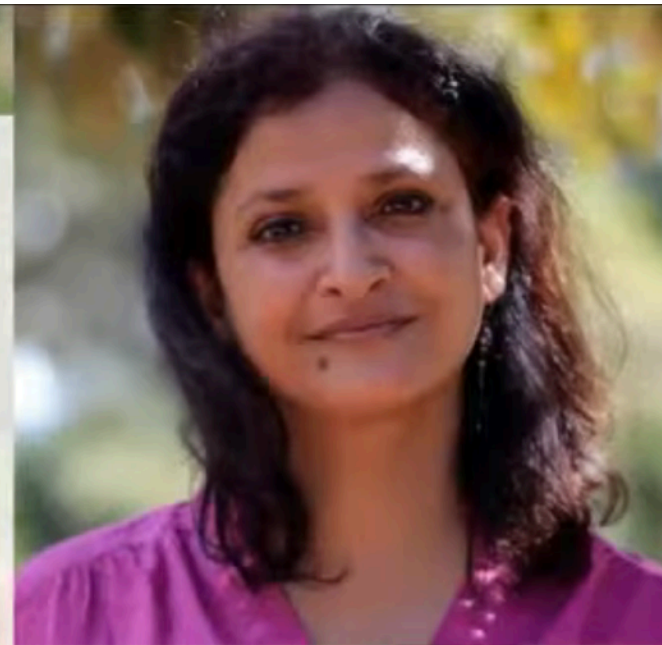
Former Chair of Friends of Earth International,  
Director, Home of Mother Earth Foundation

Oxford Climate Society Online Events

Mon 25 Jan | 18:00 UTC | OCS YouTube Livestream



OXFORD CLIMATE SOCIETY



## Mittal & Bassey Event

## Climate Reparations

PEOPLE

4 October 2021 7:00

# In-depth Q&A: What is 'climate justice'?



Why net zero by 2050 is woefully inadequate

2. Gives us a mere 50%  
chance of staying within  
1.5°C

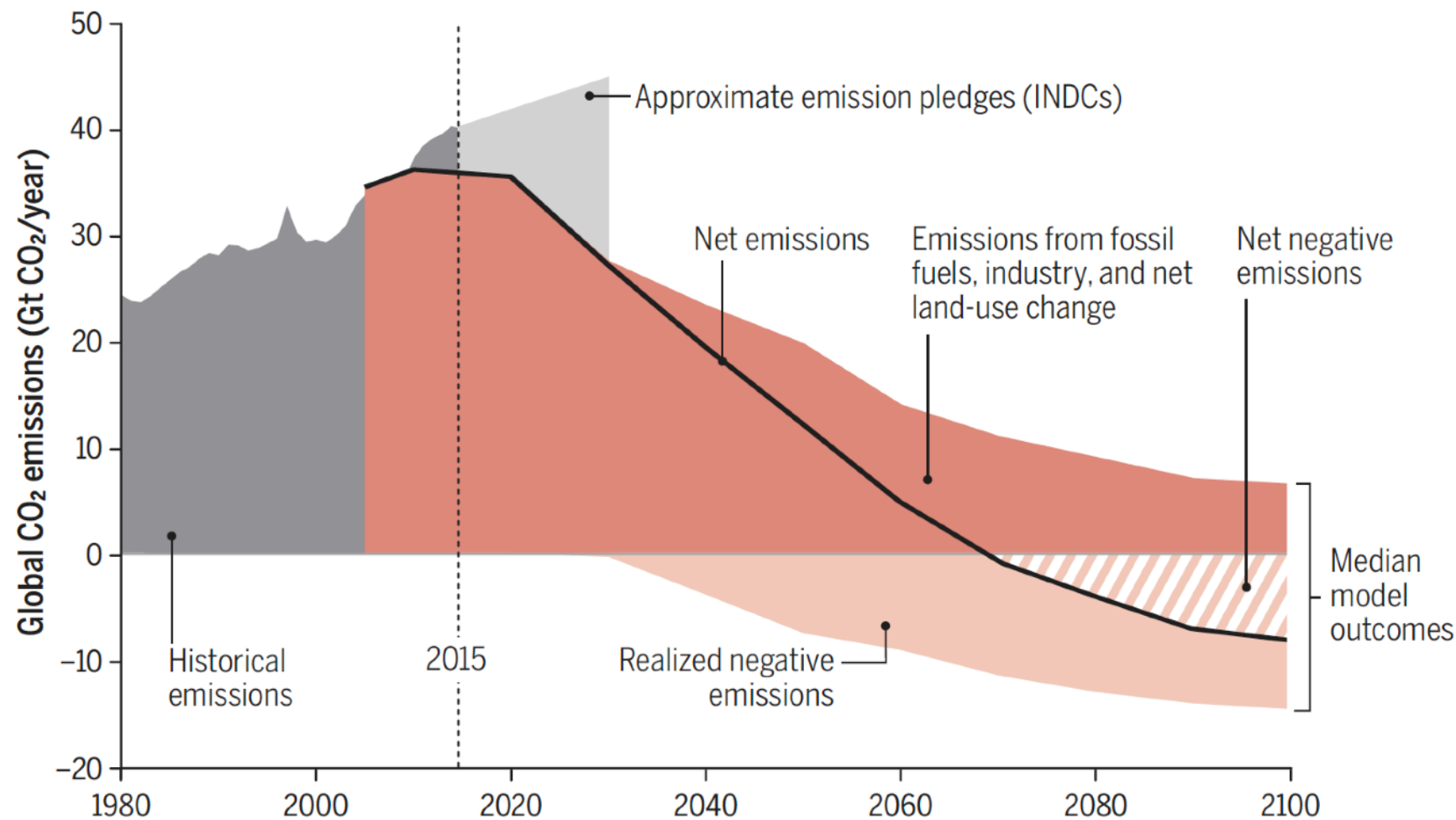
Why net zero by 2050 is woefully inadequate

3. Relies on negative emissions technology that is unproven at scale



## No quick fixes

Modelers generally report net carbon emissions, unintentionally hiding the scale of negative emissions. Separating out the positive CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion, industry, and land-use change reveals the scale of negative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the model scenarios (16). INDCs, Intended Nationally Determined Contributions.



Peters [Talk](#)

Anderson [Talk](#)

Anderson [Interview](#)

***“Negative-emission technologies are not an insurance policy, but rather an unjust and high-stakes gamble.”***

- Anderson & Peters ([2016](#))

Hickman ([2016](#))

Sen & Dabi ([2021](#))

[Carbon Brief](#)

Hausfather ([2022](#))

Land used exclusively for removal\* could compete with food production

LAND FOR  
CARBON  
REMOVAL



1.62bn ha

CROPLAND  
WORLDWIDE



1.5bn ha

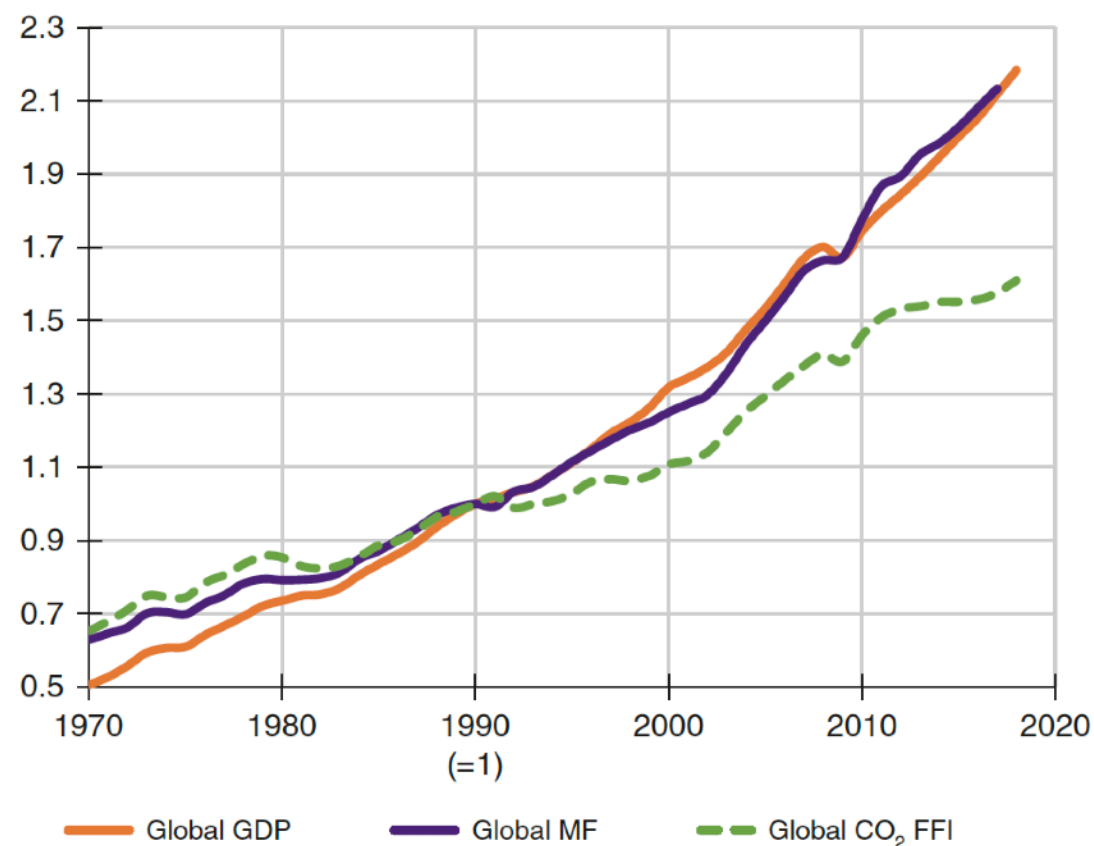
\*Afforestation, reforestation and BECCS



# Climate scientists: concept of net zero is a dangerous trap

Published: April 22, 2021 12.25am EDT

“Current net zero policies will not keep warming to within 1.5°C because they were never intended to. They were and still are driven by a need to protect business as usual, not the climate.”



## ECONOMICS


# Unraveling the claims for (and against) green growth

Can the global economy grow indefinitely, decoupled from Earth's limitations?

By **Tim Jackson<sup>1</sup>** and **Peter A. Victor<sup>2</sup>**

Comment | Published: 04 August 2021

## Urgent need for post-growth climate mitigation scenarios

















Jason Hickel , Paul Brockway, Giorgos Kallis, Lorenz Keyßer, Manfred Lenzen, Aljoša Slameršak, Julia Steinberger & Diana Ürge-Vorsatz

*Nature Energy* **6**, 766–768 (2021) | [Cite this article](#)

2218 Accesses | 1476 Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

## PAPER • OPEN ACCESS

## A systematic review of the evidence on decoupling of GDP, resource use and GHG emissions, part II: synthesizing the insights

Helmut Haberl<sup>1</sup> , Dominik Wiedenhofer<sup>1,9</sup> , Doris Virág<sup>1,9</sup> , Gerald Kalt<sup>1</sup> , Barbara Plank<sup>1</sup> , Paul Brockway<sup>2</sup> , Tomer Fishman<sup>3</sup> , Daniel Hausknost<sup>5</sup> , Fridolin Krausmann<sup>1</sup> , Bartholomäus Leon-Gruchalski<sup>4</sup> , Andreas Mayer<sup>1</sup> , Melanie Pichler<sup>1</sup> , Anke Schaffartzik<sup>1,6</sup> , Tânia Sousa<sup>7</sup> , Jan Streeck<sup>1</sup>  and Felix Creutzig<sup>8</sup>  — [Hide full author list](#)

Published 11 June 2020 • © 2020 The Author(s). Published by IOP Publishing Ltd

[Environmental Research Letters](#), Volume 15, Number 6

Citation Helmut Haberl *et al* 2020 *Environ. Res. Lett.* **15** 065003

## Is Green Growth Possible?

Jason Hickel<sup>a</sup> and Giorgos Kallis<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Anthropology, Goldsmiths, University of London, London, UK; <sup>b</sup>ICREA and ICTA-UAB, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

## ABSTRACT

The notion of green growth has emerged as a dominant policy response to climate change and ecological breakdown. Green growth theory asserts that continued economic expansion is compatible with our planet's ecology, as technological change and substitution will allow us to absolutely decouple GDP growth from resource use and carbon emissions. This claim is now assumed in national and international policy, including in the Sustainable Development Goals. But empirical evidence on resource use and carbon emissions does not support green growth theory. Examining relevant studies on historical trends and model-based projections, we find that: (1) there is no empirical evidence that absolute decoupling from resource use can be achieved on a global scale against a background of continued economic growth, and (2) absolute decoupling from carbon emissions is highly unlikely to be achieved at a rate rapid enough to prevent global warming over 1.5°C or 2°C, even under optimistic policy conditions. We conclude that green growth is likely to be a misguided objective, and that policymakers need to look toward alternative strategies.

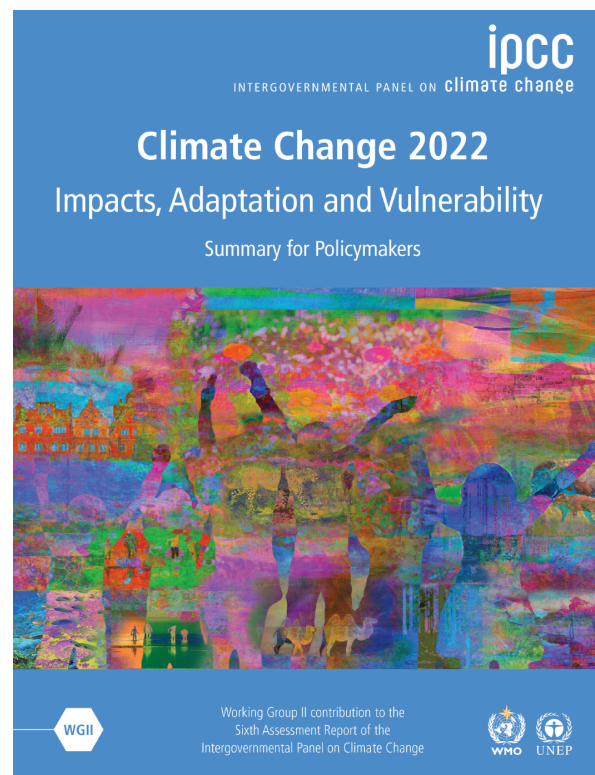
## KEYWORDS

Sustainable development; ecological economics; green growth; degrowth; decoupling



# Why net zero by 2050 is woefully inadequate

## 4. Climate impacts are worse than predicted and accelerating

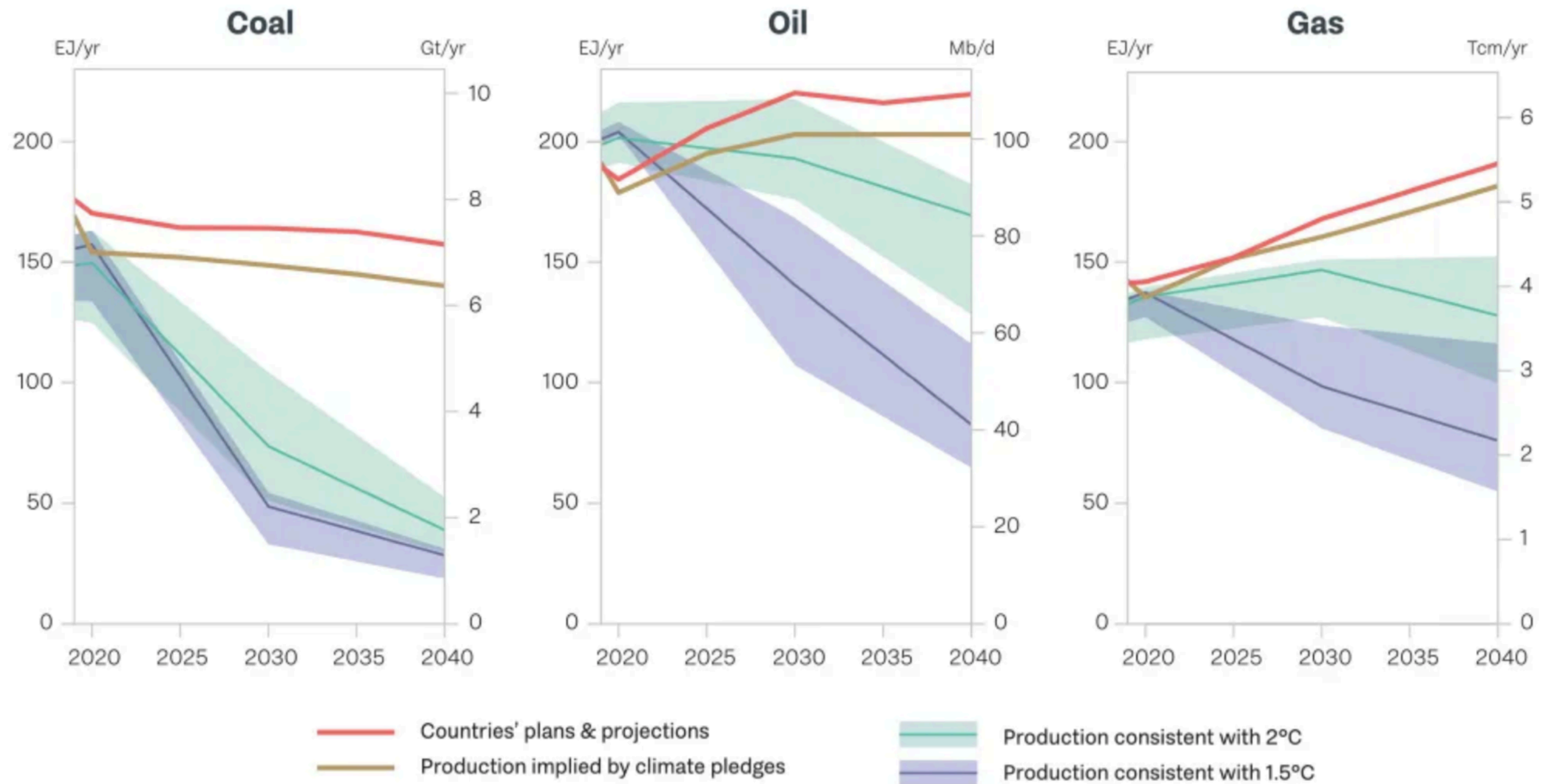


“If governments are serious about the climate crisis,  
there can be no new investments in oil, gas and coal,  
from now – from this year.”

Fatih Birol (2021)



“Governments plan to produce more than twice the amount of fossil fuels in 2030 than would be consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C.”







Extinction Rebellion  
@ExtinctionR

...

"The truly dangerous radicals are the countries that are increasing the supply of fossil fuels."

Which countries is the Secretary General of the UN referring to here?

Brace yourselves. 🧵

[Tweet übersetzen](#)



António Guterres  
@antonioguterres

...

Climate activists are sometimes depicted as dangerous radicals.

But the truly dangerous radicals are the countries that are increasing the production of fossil fuels.

Investing in new fossil fuels infrastructure is moral and economic madness.

11:46 AM · Apr 5, 2022 · Twitter Web App

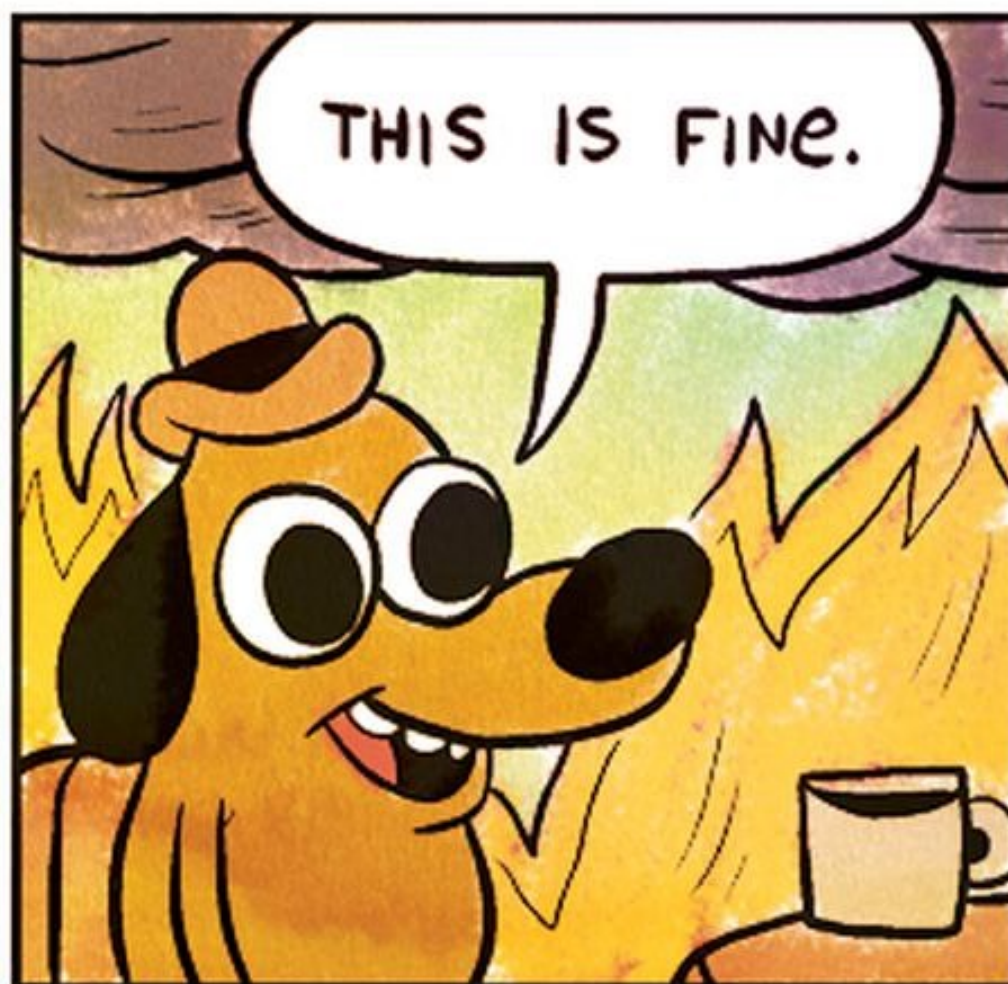
6:54 nachm. · 13. Apr. 2022 · Twitter Web App

1.448 Retweets 104 Zitierte Tweets 3.524 „Gefällt mir“-Angaben

United States  
United Kingdom  
Germany  
The Netherlands  
Norway  
Turkey  
Cyprus  
Canada  
Australia  
New Zealand  
Russia  
Brazil  
Mexico  
Japan  
China  
India  
Nigeria  
Uganda  
Egypt  
Morocco

...

Source

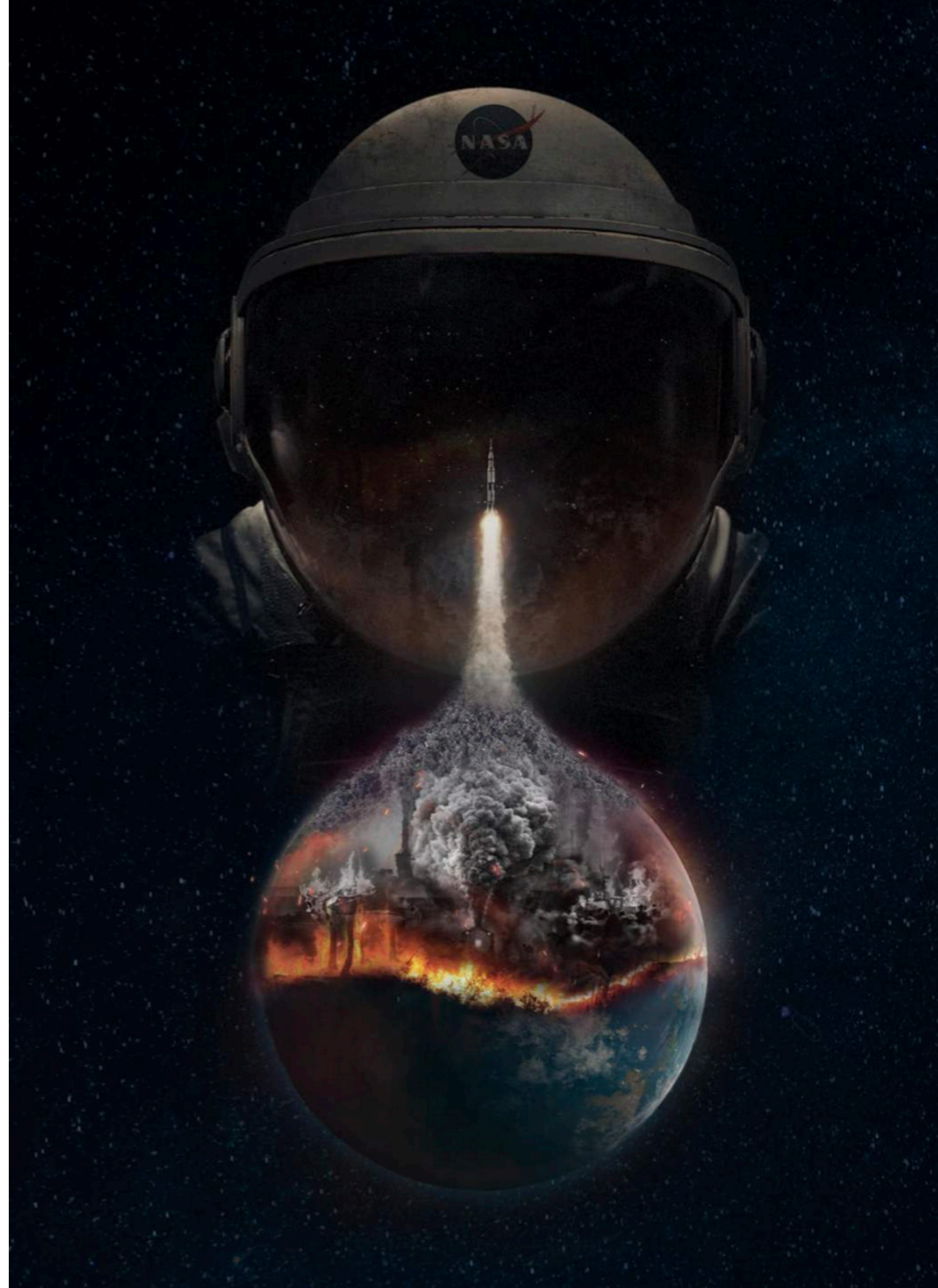




# UN Warns of 'Total Societal Collapse' Due to Breaching of Planetary Boundaries

**Nafeez Ahmed**

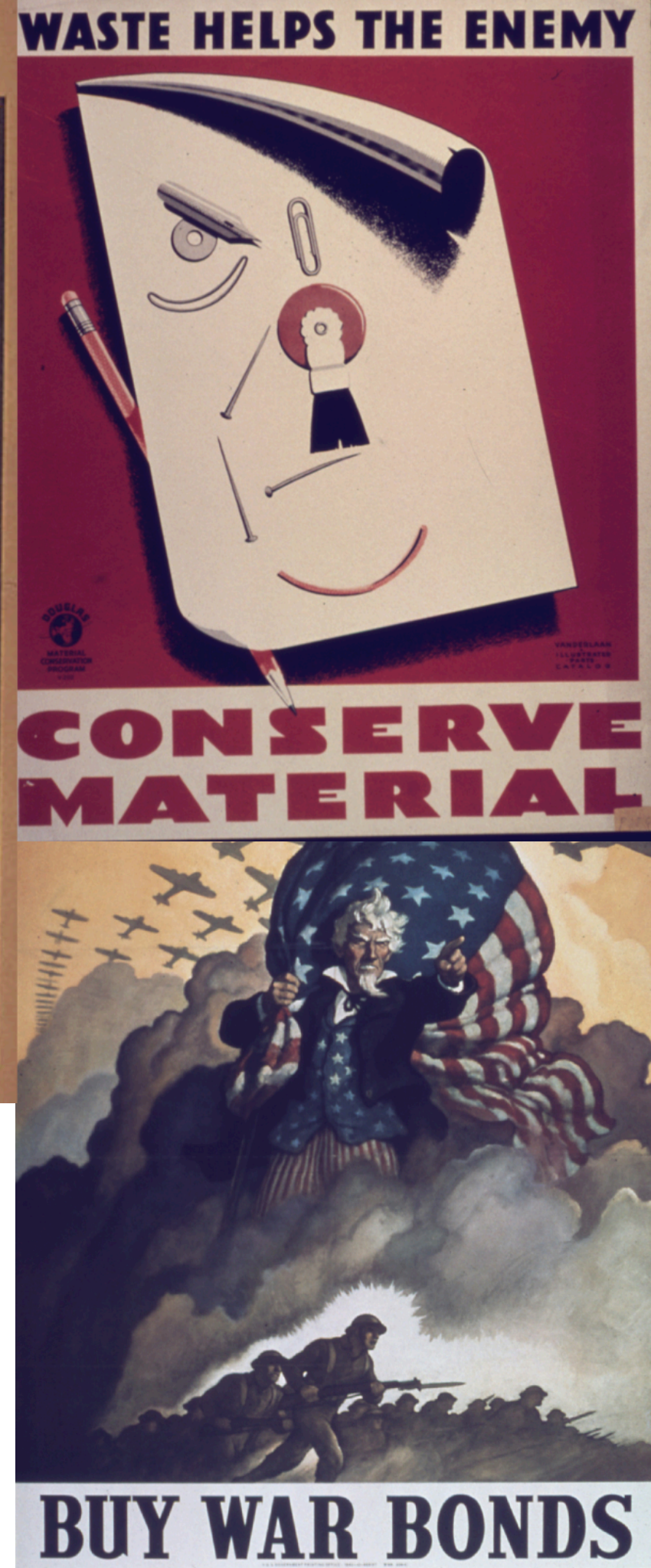
26 May 2022





We need to shift  
into emergency  
mode





Source

Government spending rose 10 fold from 1940 to 1945  
 National speed limit of 35 mph to conserve fuel, car sharing  
 Manufacturing of cars, construction of new homes banned  
 Rationing of gasoline, meat, butter, sugar etc.  
 Income taxes of up to 94%



# Tipping positive change

Timothy M. Lenton


## *Sensitive intervention points in the post-carbon transition*

We must exploit socioeconomic tipping points and amplifiers

By J. D. Farmer<sup>1,2,3</sup>, C. Hepburn<sup>1,4</sup>, M. C. Ives<sup>1,4</sup>, T. Hale<sup>5</sup>, T. Wetzer<sup>1,6,7</sup>, P. Mealy<sup>1,4,8</sup>, R. Rafaty<sup>1</sup>, S. Srivastav<sup>1,4</sup>, R. Way<sup>1,4</sup>

points”) (3), such that a relatively small change can trigger a larger change that becomes irreversible (4), where nonlinear

## Social tipping dynamics for stabilizing Earth's climate by 2050

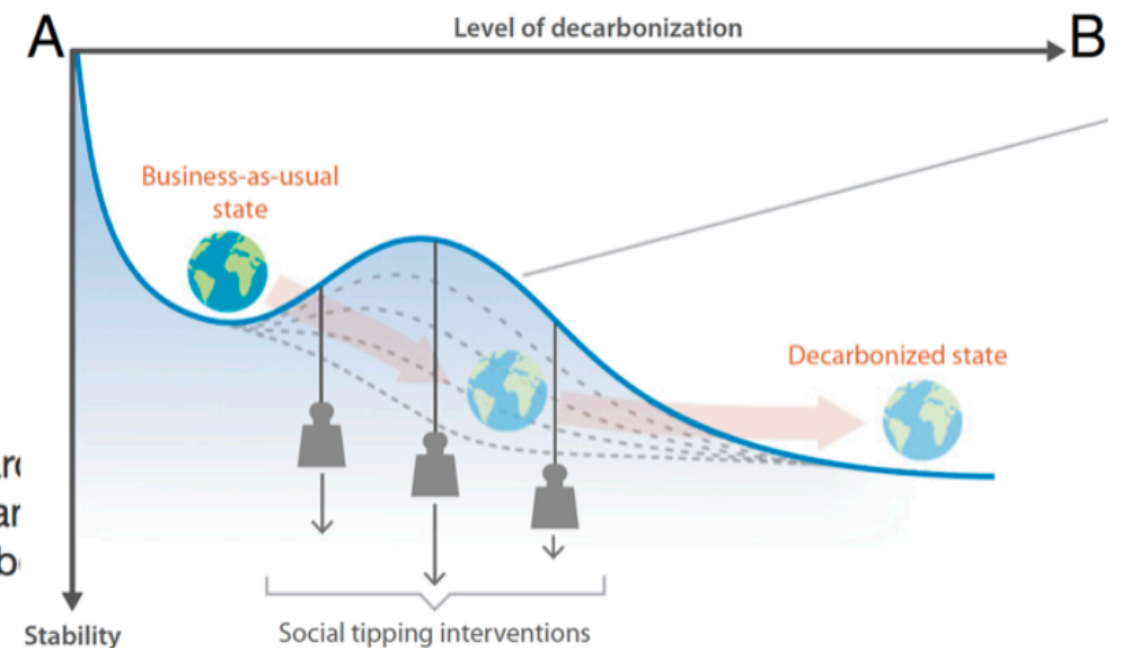
 Ilona M. Otto, Jonathan F. Donges,  Roger Cremades, Avit Bhowmik, Richard Wolfgang Lucht, Johan Rockström, Franziska Allerberger, Mark McCaffrey, Sylvar Alex Lenferna, Nerea Morán, Detlef P. van Vuuren, and Hans Joachim Schellnhuber

## Sensitive intervention points to achieve net-zero emissions

Report of the Policy Advisory Group\* of the Committee on Climate Change

9 December 2020

Cameron Hepburn, Tera Allas, Laura Cozzi, Michael Liebreich, Jim Skea, Lorraine Whitmarsh, Giles Wilkes and Bryony Worthington



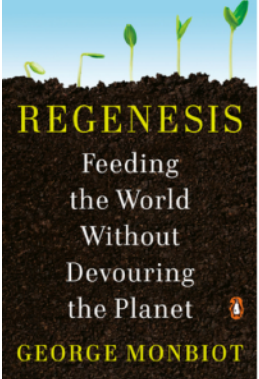


**Part V:**

**Climate Revolution**

It's easy to feel pessimistic about the climate. But we've got two big things on our side

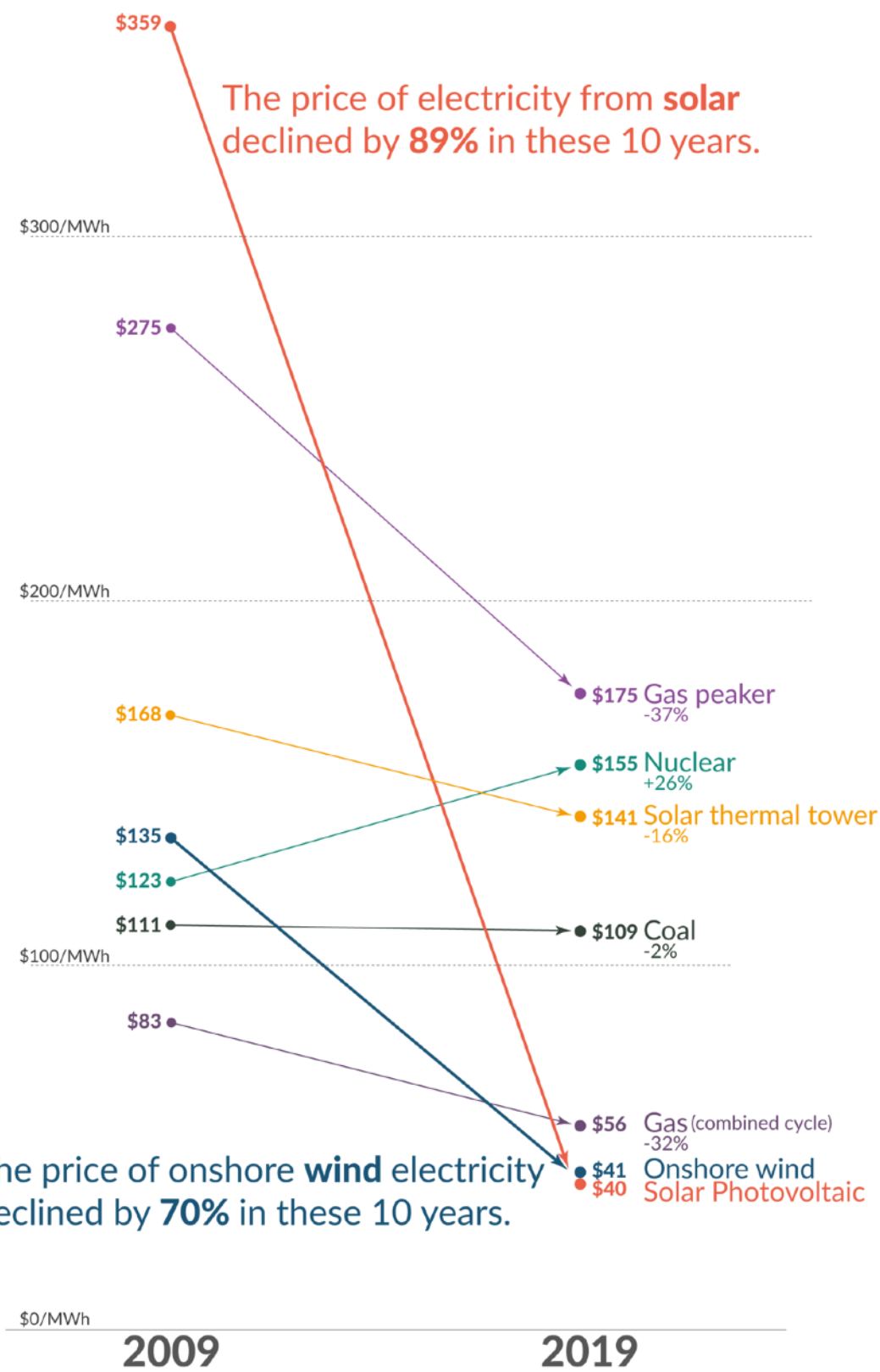
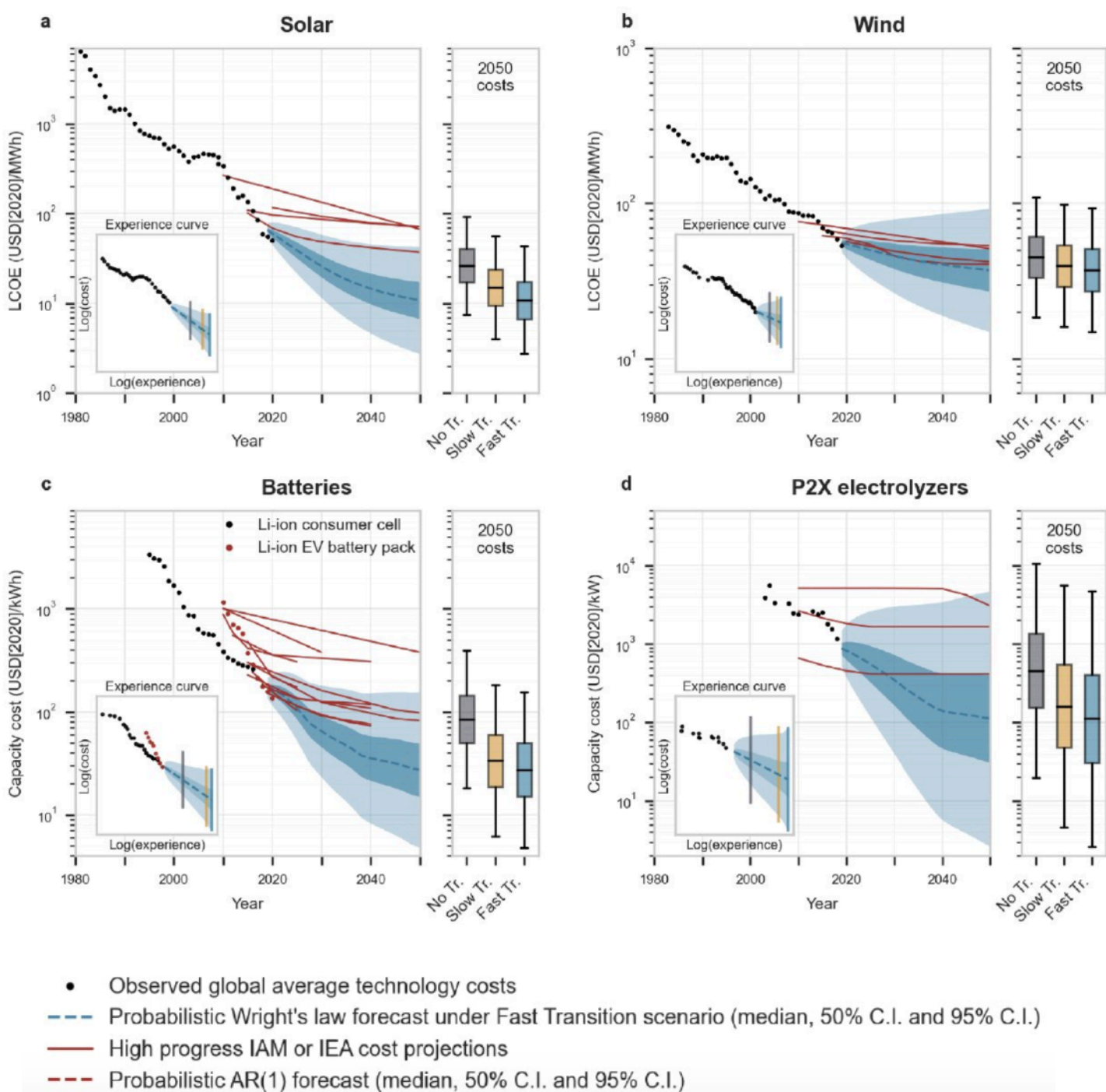
*Bill McKibben*



# The price of electricity from new power plants

Electricity prices are expressed in 'levelized costs of energy' (LCOE). LCOE captures the cost of building the power plant itself as well as the ongoing costs for fuel and operating the power plant over its lifetime.

Our World in Data



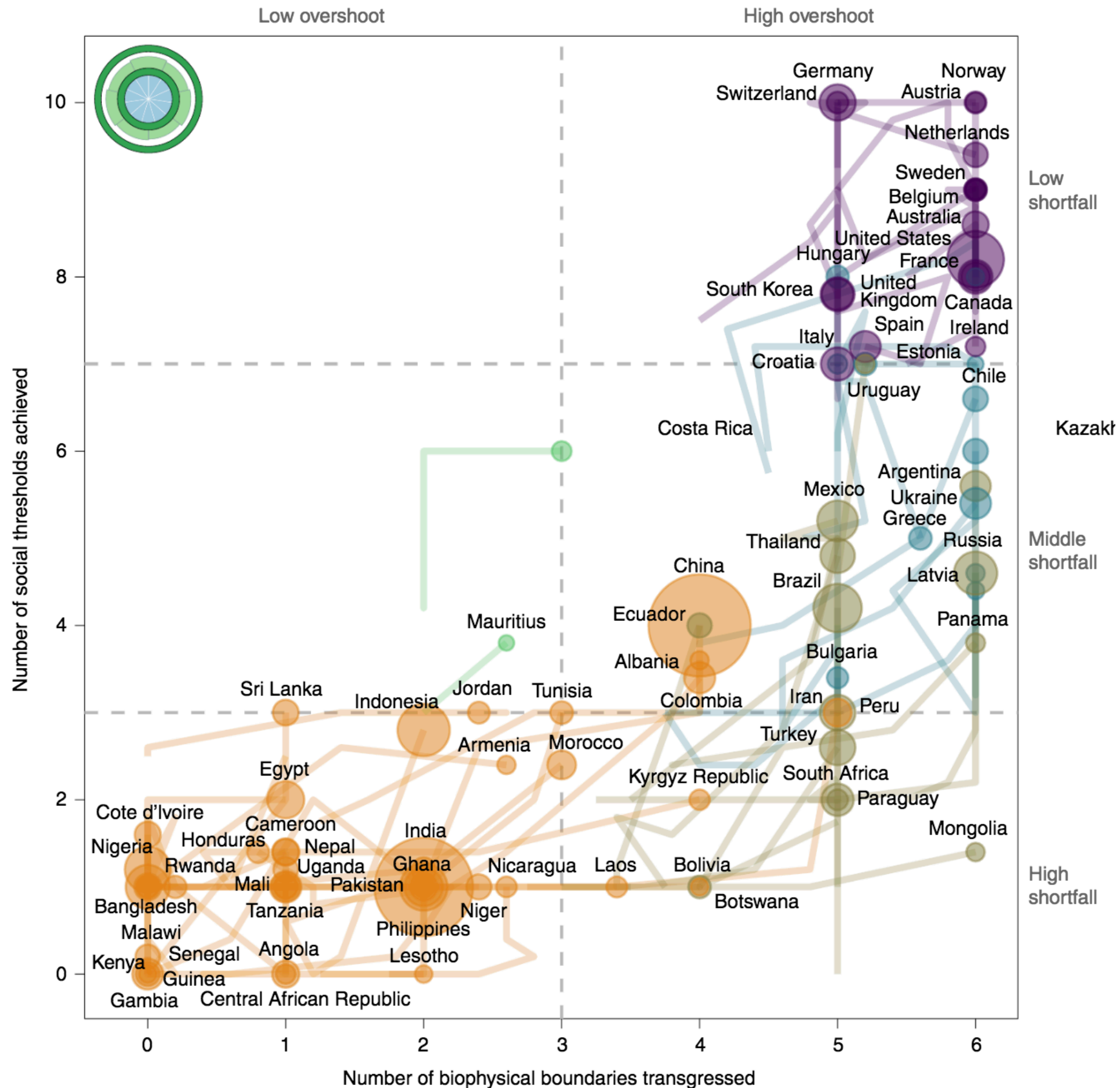
Data: Lazard Levelized Cost of Energy Analysis, Version 13.0  
 OurWorldinData.org – Research and data to make progress against the world's largest problems. Licensed under CC-BY by the author Max Roser.

Way et al. (2021); Roser (2020)

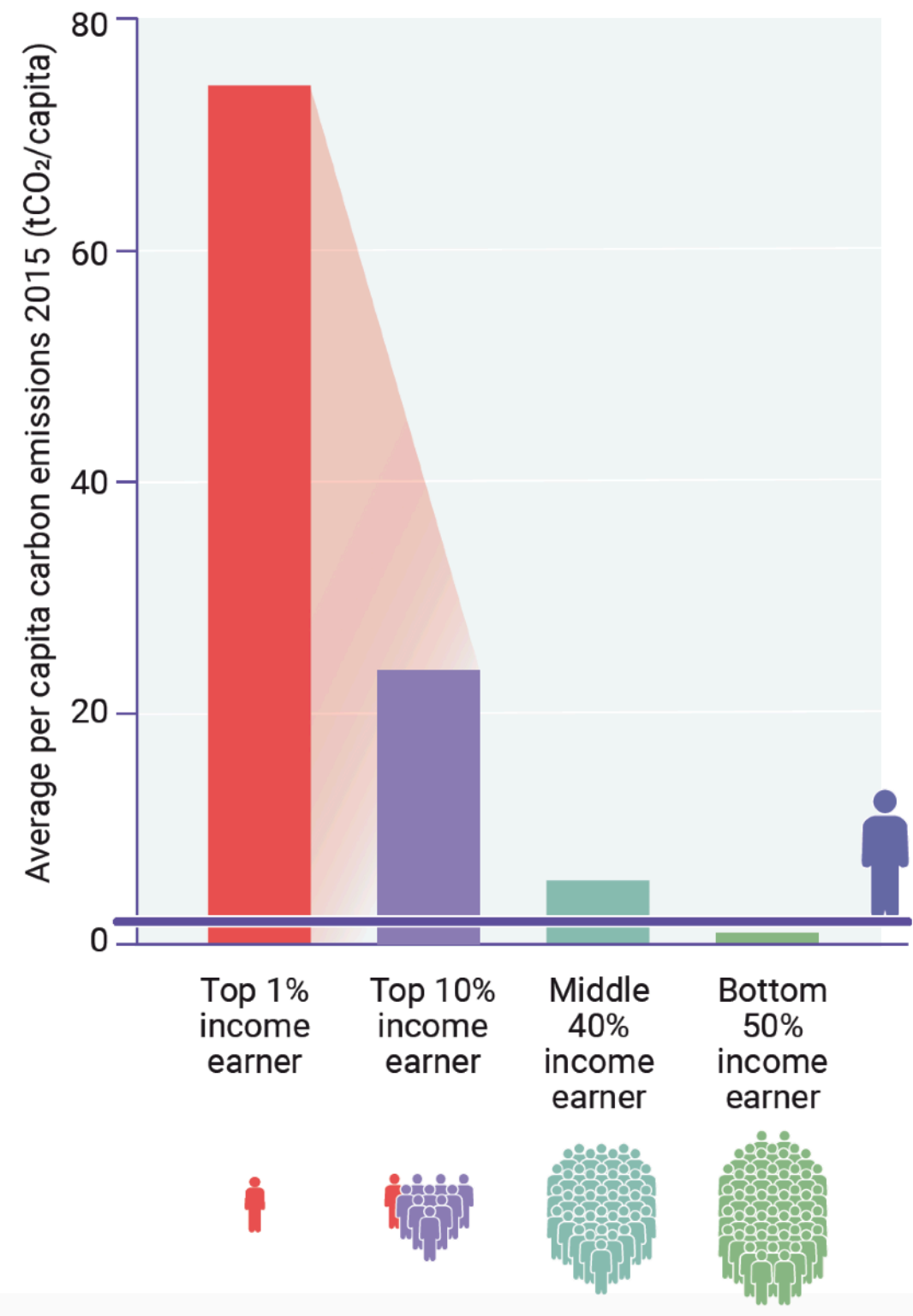




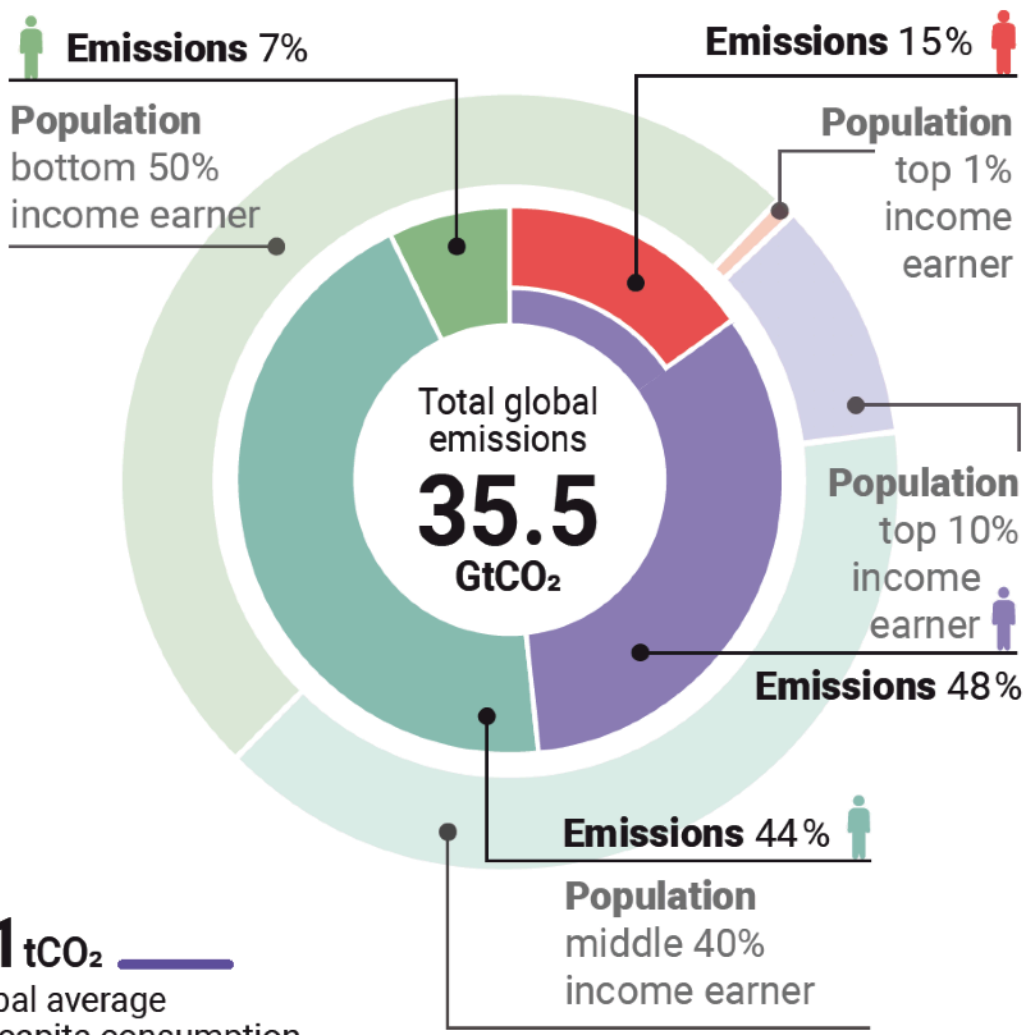




# Carbon Inequality



Total carbon emissions per group 2015 (GtCO<sub>2</sub>)



Top 1% : > 94,000 € / year  
Top 10%: > 32,800 € / year



Comment | [Published: 28 January 2019](#)

## Shift the focus from the super-poor to the super-rich

[Ilona M. Otto](#) , [Kyoung Mi Kim](#), [Nika Dubrovsky](#) & [Wolfgang Lucht](#)

[Nature Climate Change](#) **9**, 82–84 (2019) | [Cite this article](#)

**4864** Accesses | **28** Citations | **1921** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

Perspective | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 19 June 2020](#)

## Scientists' warning on affluence

[Thomas Wiedmann](#) , [Manfred Lenzen](#), [Lorenz T. Keyßer](#) & [Julia K. Steinberger](#)

[Nature Communications](#) **11**, Article number: 3107 (2020) | [Cite this article](#)

**171k** Accesses | **107** Citations | **4550** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

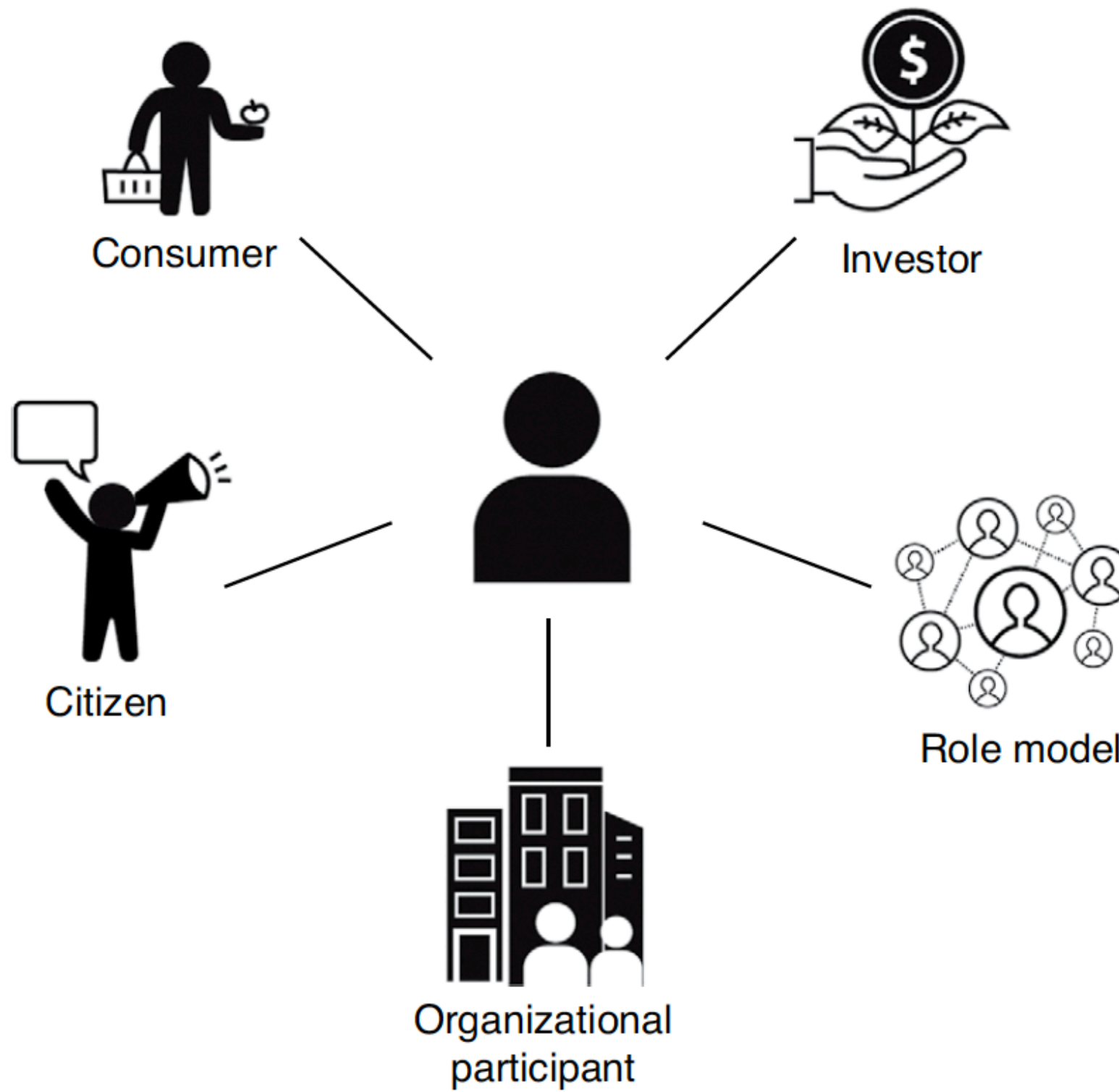
Perspective | [Published: 30 September 2021](#)

## The role of high-socioeconomic-status people in locking in or rapidly reducing energy-driven greenhouse gas emissions

[Kristian S. Nielsen](#) , [Kimberly A. Nicholas](#), [Felix Creutzig](#), [Thomas Dietz](#) & [Paul C. Stern](#)

[Nature Energy](#) **6**, 1011–1016 (2021) | [Cite this article](#)

**12k** Accesses | **671** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)





# Carbon Footprint Reduction



- Stop or lower air travel
- Stop driving petrol cars
- Reduce your meat consumption, especially beef
- Talk about it!

## An Audacious Toolkit: Actions Against Climate Breakdown (Part 3: I is for Individual)



Julia Steinberger Nov 26, 2018 · 15 min read



## Your Personal Action Guide for the Environment

Solving our biggest environmental problems will require huge changes in policy and business practice. But it turns out that our personal actions can help too, if we focus on the right things. Here are some places to start.



Dr. Jonathan Foley

Follow



Apr 22, 2020 · 14 min read ★







Investor



Organizational  
participant

- Divestment (Personal & Organizational)
- Donations to environmental organizations
- Influence through position / status



Organize lectures / workshops  
High-level interventions

(Reduce meat in cafeteria, at parties,  
disincentivize flights, etc.)

....

Comment | [Published: 15 March 2021](#)

## Changing scientific meetings for the better

[Sarvenaz Sarabipour](#) , [Aziz Khan](#), [Yu Fen Samantha Seah](#), [Aneth D. Mwakilili](#), [Fiona N. Mumoki](#), [Pablo J. Sáez](#), [Benjamin Schwessinger](#), [Humberto J. Debat](#) & [Tomislav Mestrovic](#)

[Nature Human Behaviour](#) **5**, 296–300 (2021) | [Cite this article](#)

**7822** Accesses | **4** Citations | **249** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

## Sustainability at the UvA

We integrate sustainability into study programmes and conduct research on sustainability issues. We have also adopted a sustainable approach to our operations.



Citizen



Role model

- Vote
- Talk about the climate crisis (urgency **and** agency)
- Contagion of low-carbon lifestyle (social norm shift)



Citizen



Role model

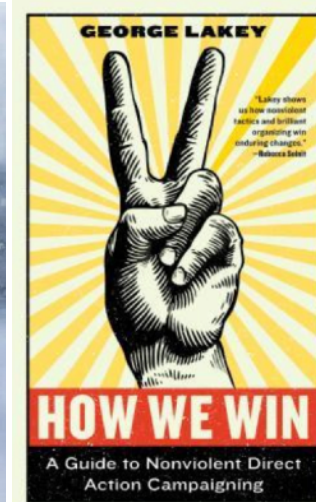
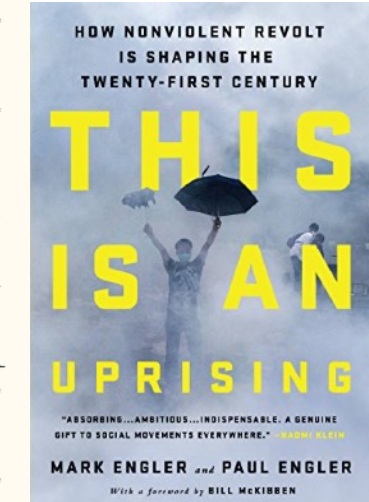
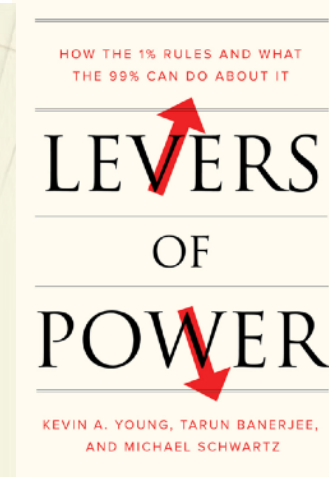
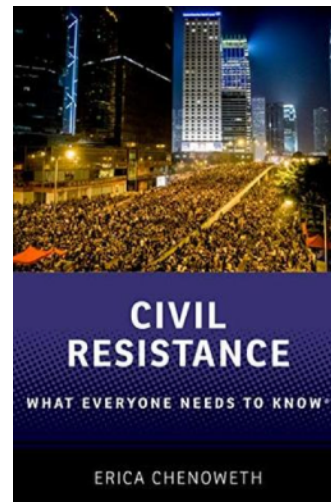
- Vote
- Talk about the climate crisis (urgency **and** agency)
- Contagion of low-carbon lifestyle (social norm shift)

# Civil Resistance



# Civil Resistance

- Method to change the status quo using a diverse set of nonviolent, noninstitutional actions (strikes, protests, occupations, boycotts, etc.)





# Fridays for Future

**2018**

SKOLSTREJK  
FÖR  
KLIMATET

**2019**

STRIKE FOR THE CLIMA



# End Fossil: Occupy!

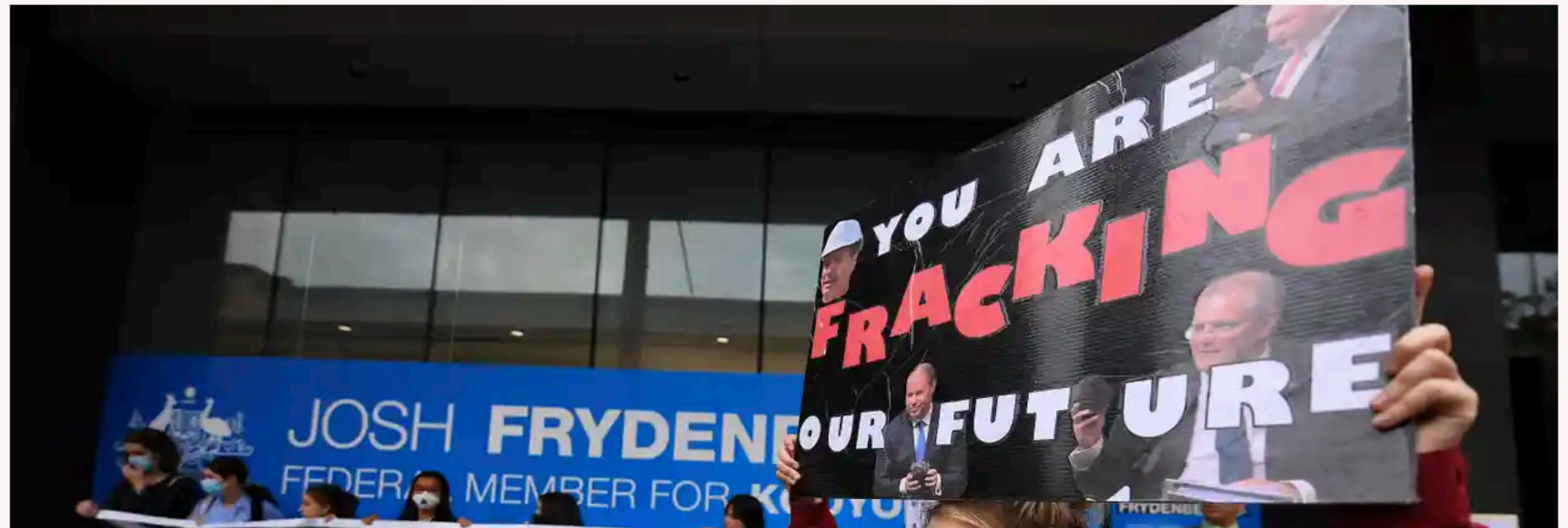
**Opinion**  
Climate crisis

We're occupying schools across the world to protest climate inaction  
*Youth activists involved in End Fossil: Occupy!*

Tue 26 Jul 2022 06.22 EDT



We can't keep sitting in school, pretending everything is all right, and studying as if the planet wasn't on fire





# Extinction Rebellion





# Extinction Rebellion

The Troublemaker

Common Sense for the 21st Century

WHY WE ARE HERE?

## OUR DEMANDS.

### 1. TELL THE TRUTH.

Governments must tell the truth by declaring a climate and ecological emergency, working with other institutions to communicate the urgency for change.

### 2. ACT NOW.

Governments must act now to halt biodiversity loss and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025.

### 3. GO BEYOND POLITICS.

Governments must create and be led by the decisions of a Citizens' Assembly on climate and ecological justice.

**84 COUNTRIES**

**1185 GROUPS**

**151 UPCOMING EVENTS**

## A GLOBAL MOVEMENT.

Join our global and politically non-partisan movement where we use non-violent direct action to persuade governments to act justly on the climate and ecological emergency.

# Civil Disobedience Climate Movements

- Fridays for Future
- Extinction Rebellion
- Sunrise Movement
- Indigenous peoples
- Letzte Generation
- Ende Gelände
- Insulate Britain
- Just Stop Oil
- Debt for Climate
- Declare Emergency
- Blockade Australia
- Save Old Growth
- Scientist Rebellion
- ...



# Scientist Rebellion

# Scientist Rebellion



- Global movement of scientists and academics, from PhD students to full professors
- Engage in civil disobedience
- Decentralized and horizontal organisation





# Over 1000 academics in 26 countries took to the streets during 4 - 9 April



- Blocking government ministries / corporations, paper pastings
- Academic strikes, occupations, teach-ins, street theatre
- Mass arrests in multiple countries
- Global press coverage



# Scientist Rebellion



## Scientist Rebellion at Chase Bank Los Angeles

7.1K views • 3 months ago



Climate Ad Project

When *\*scientists\** around the world are putting their bodies on the line to

Subtitles

# Scientist Rebellion



## Scientist Rebellion takes action in the Netherlands

3.8K views • 3 months ago



Scientist Rebellion

To secure a liveable future, we need emergency action! 🚨 The scientific community



“I wish the Ring had never  
come to me. I wish none  
of this had happened.”





“So do all who live to see such times,  
but that is not for them to decide.

All we have to decide is what to do  
with the time that is given to us.”

Thank you!