

Lifestyle and Consumption in a Sustainable Economy

Juliet Schor
Boston College and
Center for a New American Dream
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BOSTON COLLEGE

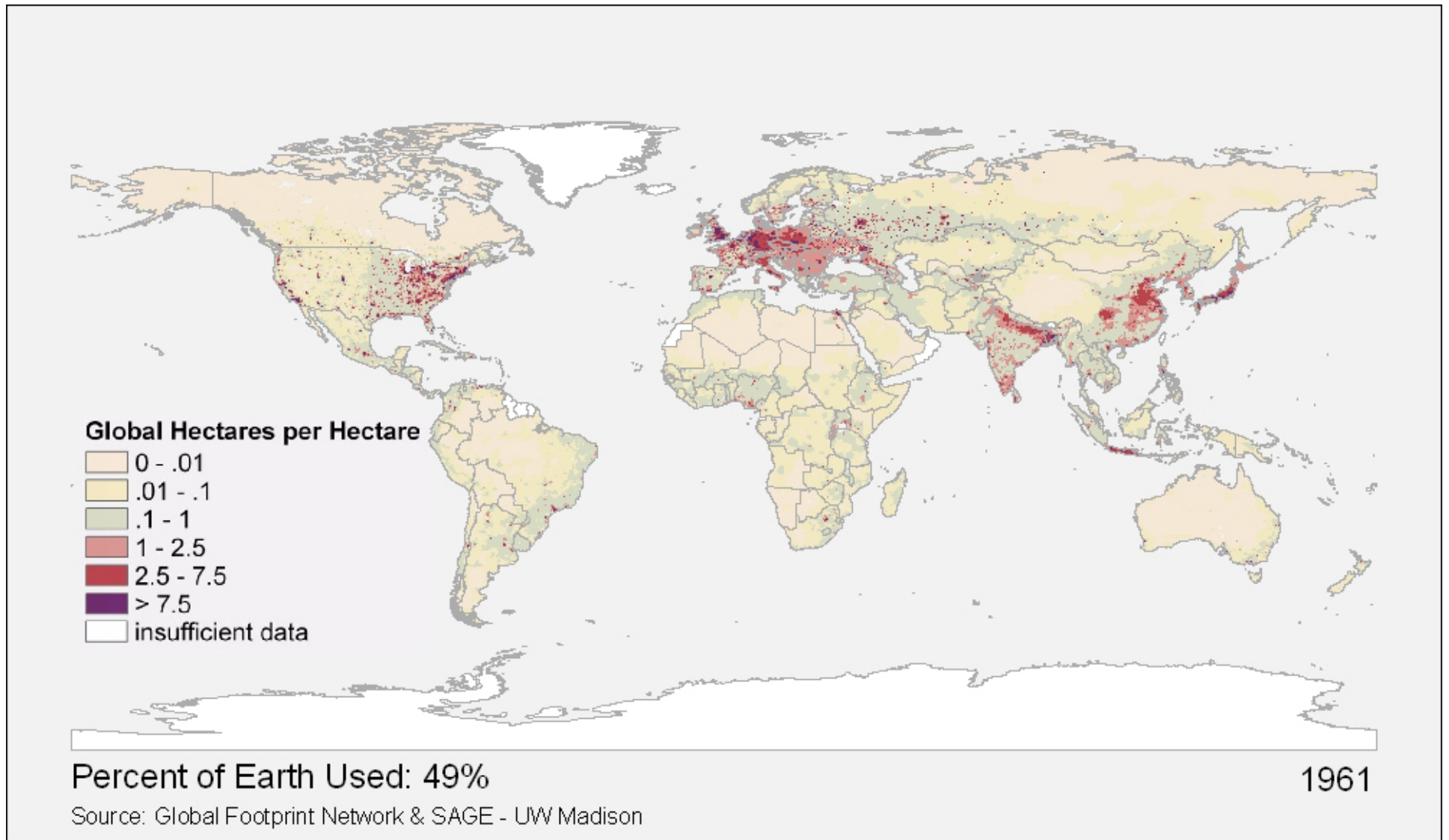
SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT



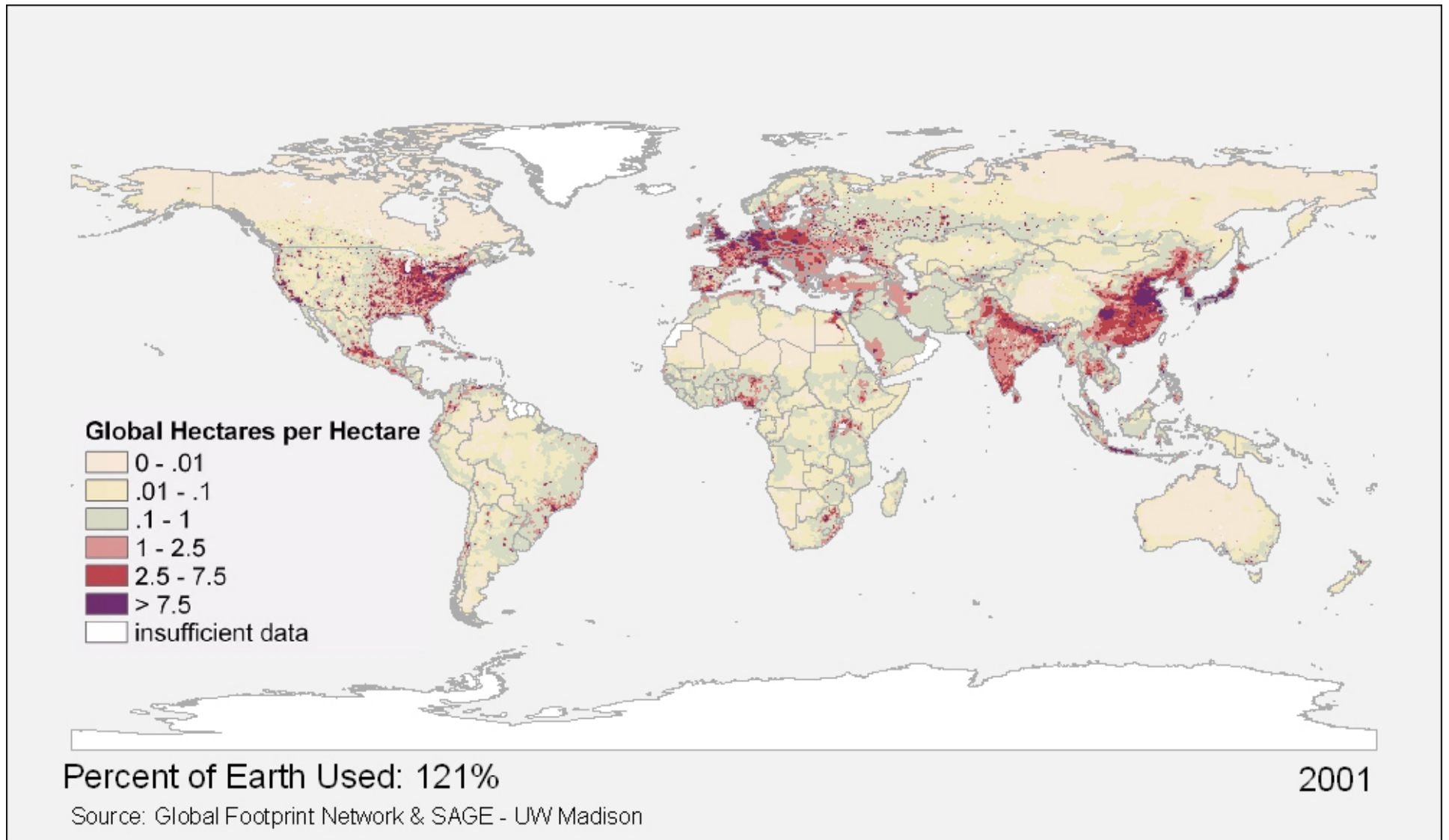
new
american
dream

The logo for the Center for a New American Dream, featuring the text "new american dream" in a sans-serif font, with "new" in blue, "american" in blue, and "dream" in green. Above "american" is a small graphic of a sunburst. The logo is flanked by two horizontal bars, one green on top and one blue on the bottom.

The world ecological footprint in 1961

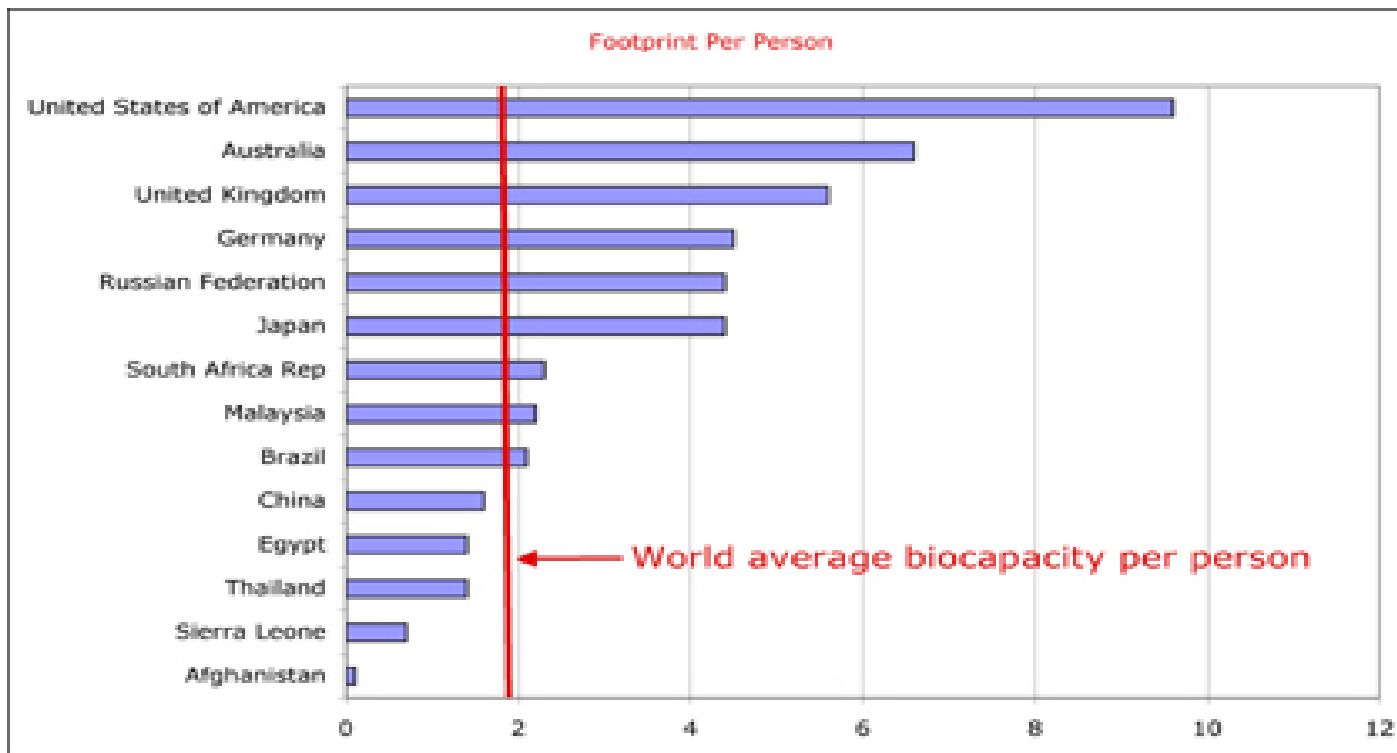


The world ecological footprint in 2001



International Footprint Comparisons

- After some small gulf states the US has the world's highest footprint.
- Other countries of comparable wealth have roughly half our footprint.
- CO2 represents about half the footprint and a large portion of the difference between the US and Western Europe



Understanding Ecological Impact

The "IPAT" Identity

$$\text{Impact} = \text{Population} \times \text{Affluence} \times \text{Technology}$$

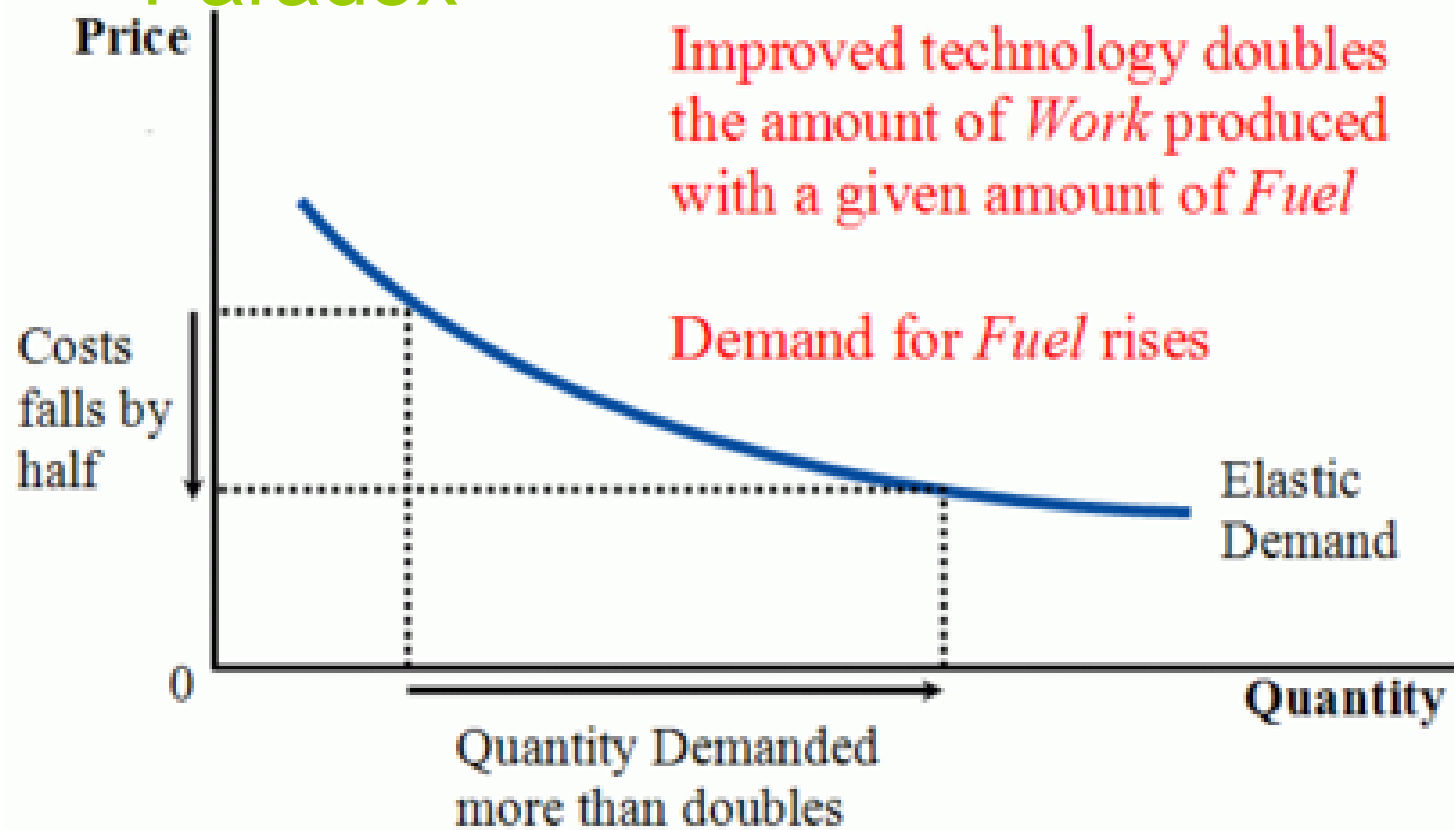
Affluence = per capita consumption

Technology = environmental impact per unit of consumption

To date, solutions to the climate crisis and ecological sustainability have focused on technology. Unless we also address A, we will not be able to control carbon and other GHG emissions or ecological impact more broadly.

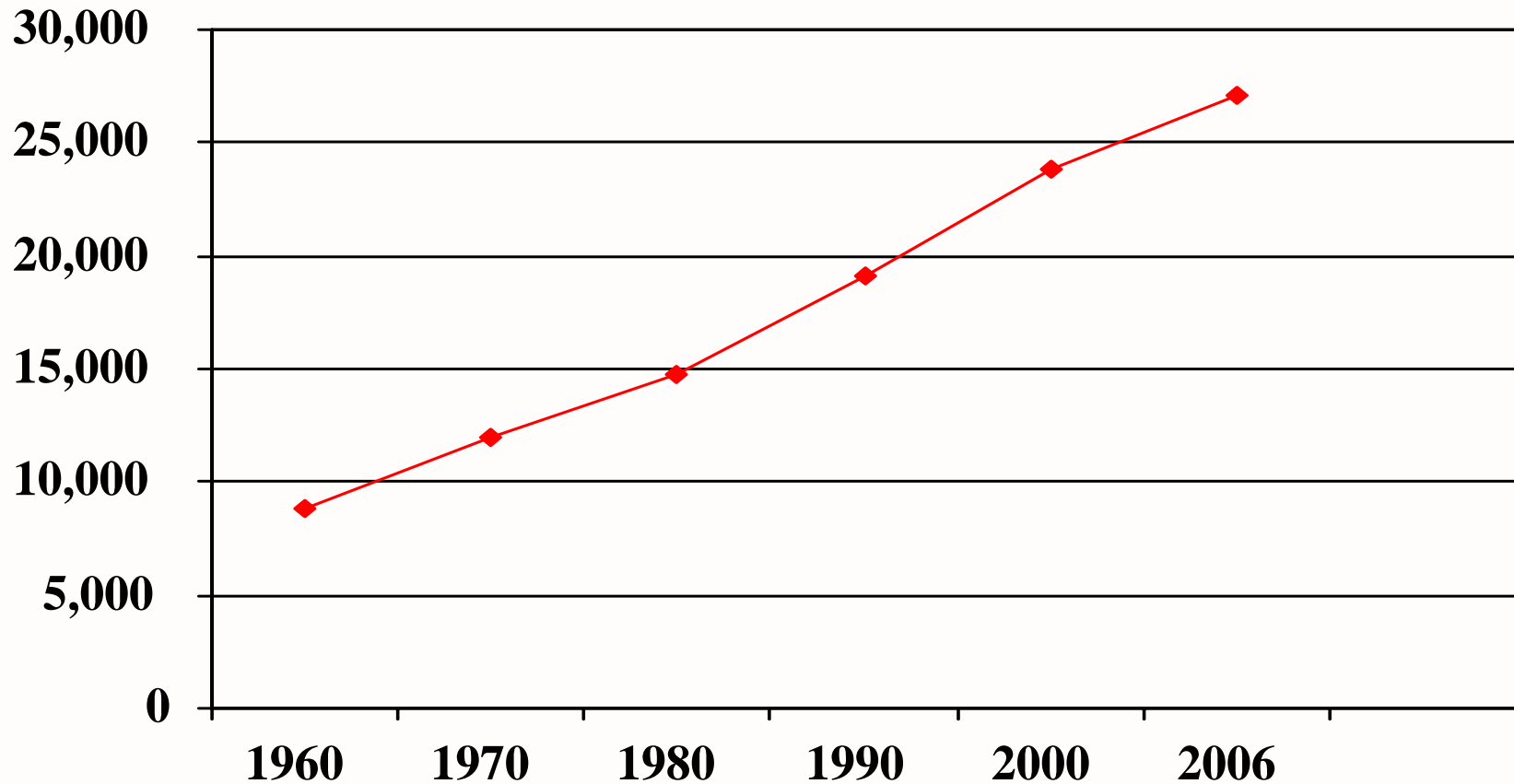
IPAT Identity from Ehrlich and Holdren (1971). *Science*

The limits of technological approaches: Rebound effects and the Jevons Paradox



Rising Affluence

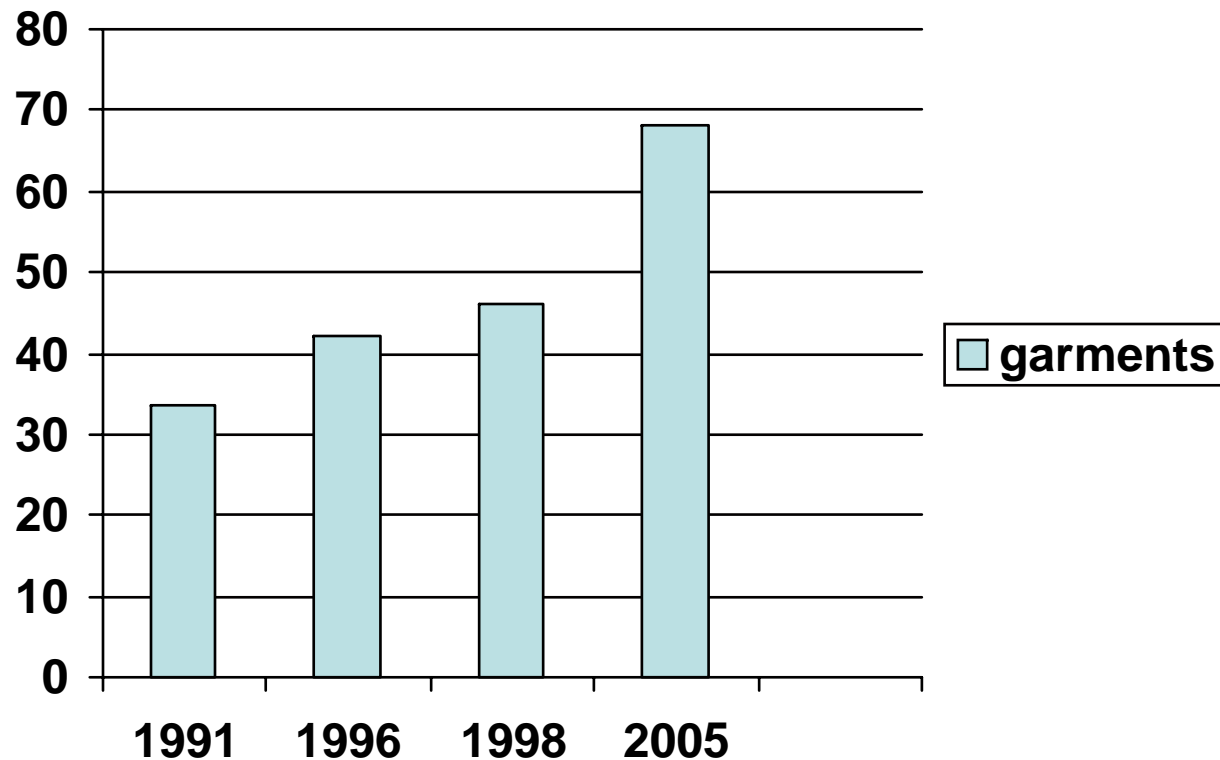
spending per person per year in 2000 dollars



Source: Council of Economic Advisers, 2007 Annual Report Table B-31.

Apparel Accumulation in the Fast Fashion Era:

Annual purchases of garments per capita, 1991-2005



Source: American Apparel and Footwear Association Trends report, using Census of Manufactures Data

**Table 2. Total Import Weight, US, manufacturing
(Millions of kg)**

COMMODITY GROUP	% change 1998- 2005	% change 1998-2007	COMMODITY GROUP	% change 1998- 2005	% change 1998-2007
Food and Beverages	25.4	45.9	Tools and Cutlery	84.7	89.1
Pharmaceutical Products	174.2	226.4	Machinery	66.8	69.9
Soaps	50.4	60.0	Small Electronics	65.4	75.4
Plastics	96.2	97.6	Vehicles	64.5	64.6
Rubber	48.8	50.6	Clocks and Watches	25.3	13.3
Leather And Fur Products	73.7	73.6	Musical Instruments	26.2	3.8
Manufactures of Straw	70.5	55.0	Furniture	146.5	154.6
Printed Books	59.5	76.4	Toys, Games, and Sporting	53.8	58.6
Textiles: Fibers and Fabrics	63.2	70.1	Misc. Manufactured Articles	24.9	17.9
Carpets/Floor Coverings	57.9	62.8			
Apparel	69.8	76.7	SUBTOTAL	53.5	63.0
Footwear	34.9	37.1	ALL COMMODITY GROUPS	31.8	27.6
Ceramic Products	103.3	82.7			
Glass and Glassware	51.6	61.1			
Pearls, Stones, Metals, Jewelry	122.5	158.1			

Sources: WISERTrade, U.S. Bureau of Transportation. Table from Schor 2008

**Table 3. Unit Volumes of Imports, Selected Commodity Groups
in millions**

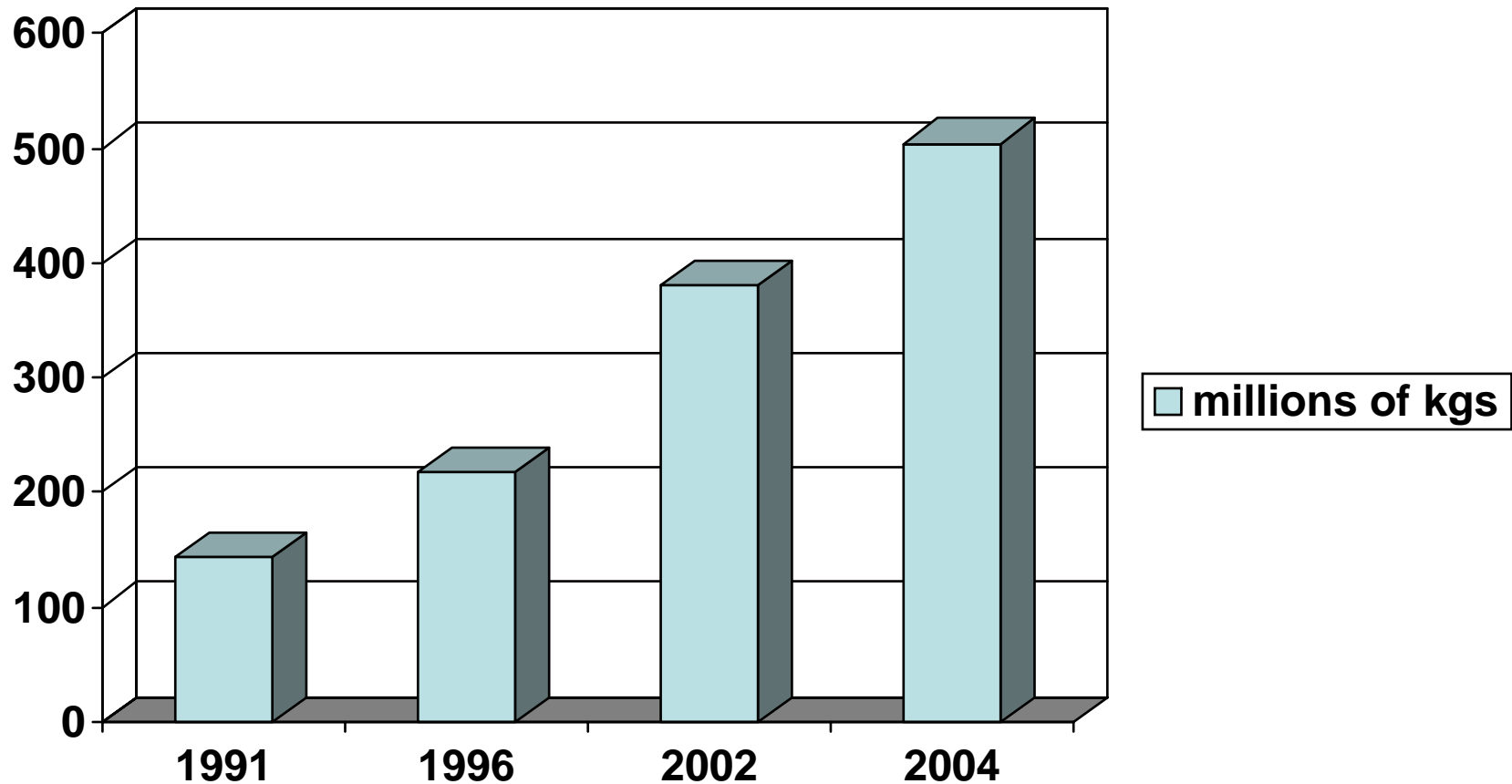
Commodity Group	1998	2005
Furniture	327.6	651.3
Cell Phones	14.2	177.2
Laptops	3.3	23.8
Vacuum Cleaners	67	188
Ovens, Toasters and Coffeemakers	76	227
Consumer Electronics*	715	1,400
Apparel**	12,900	20,400
Footwear**	1,600	2,300

* Small electronics include vacuum cleaners, electric shavers, flashlights, water heaters, hair drying apparatuses, ovens, toasters, and coffeemakers, speakers and headphones, laptops, cell phones and welding equipment.

** Includes a small amount of domestic production.

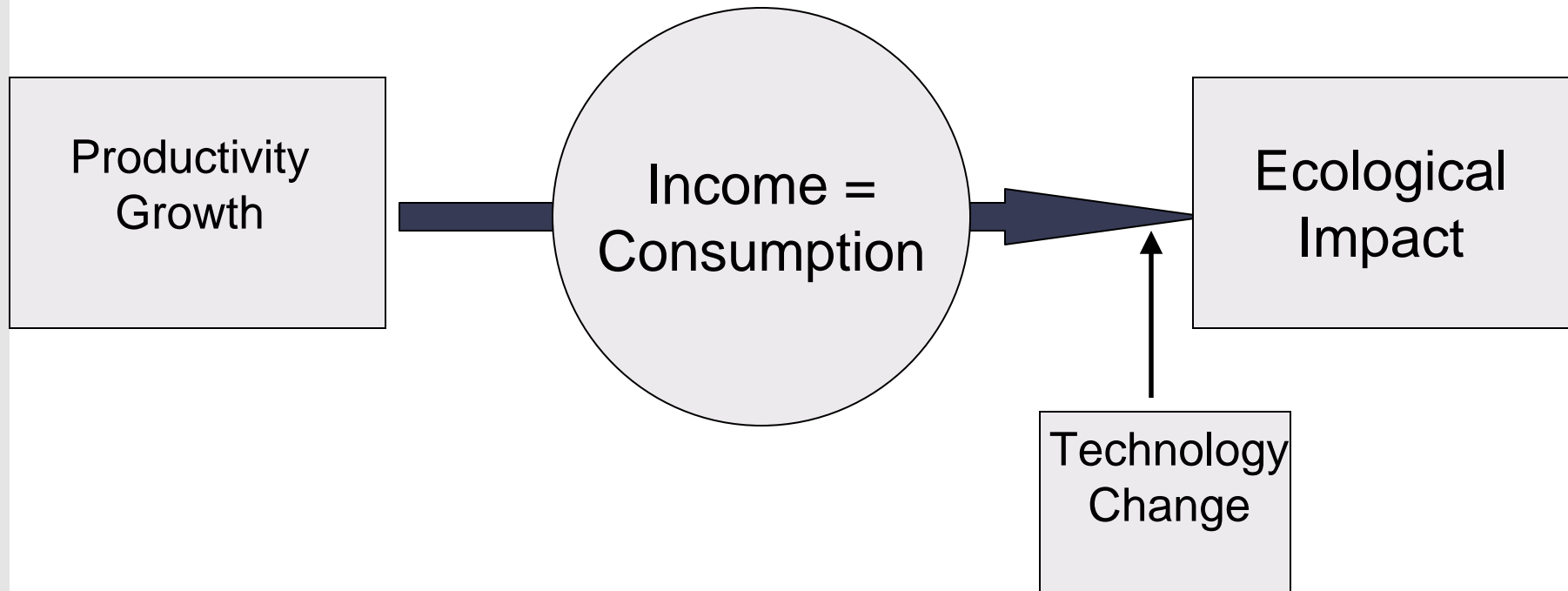
Apparel Discard:

Used apparel exports from US to Rest of World 1991-2004

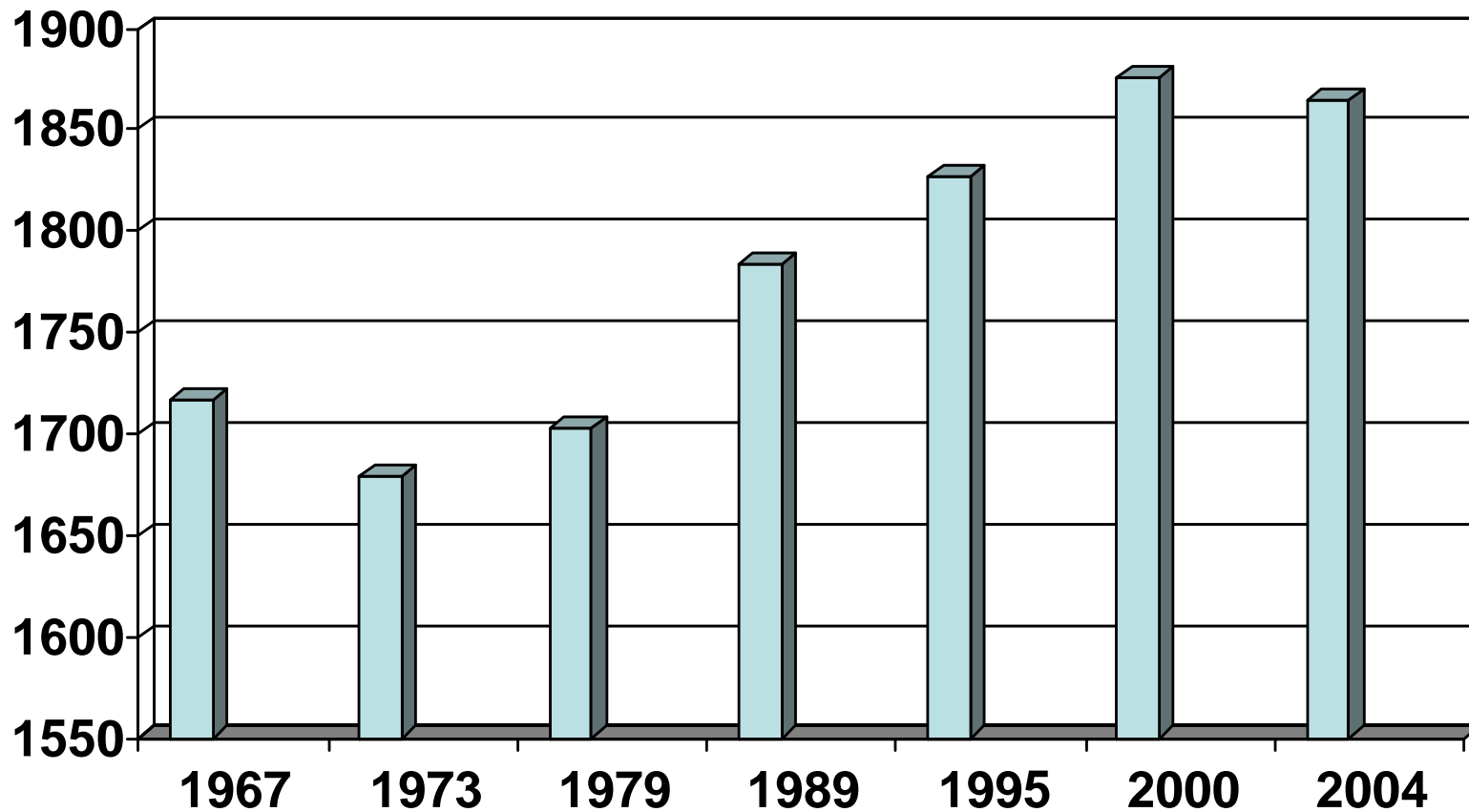


Source: UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database

From Productivity Growth to Ecological Impact

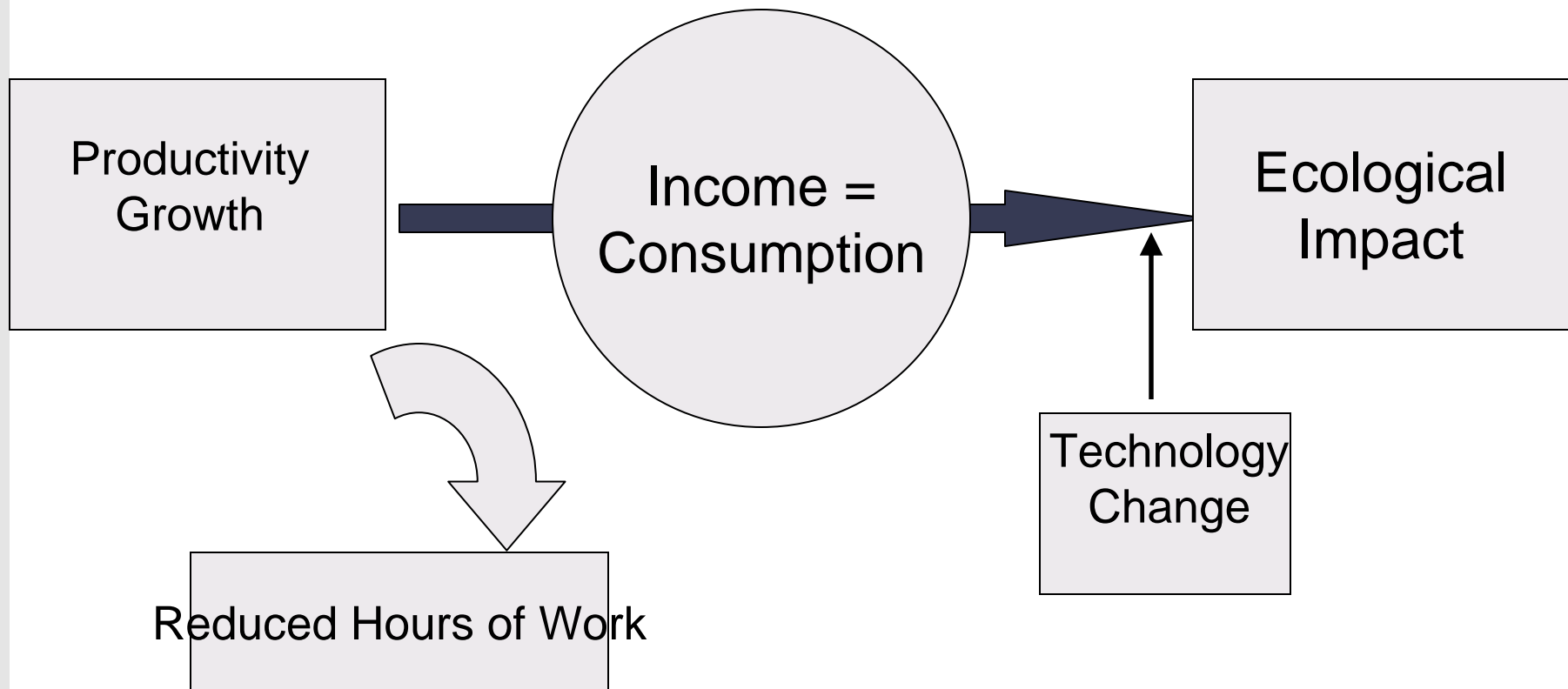


Rising annual hours of work, Current Population Survey, 1967-2004



Source: Economic Policy Institute, State of Working America, 2006-07 Table 3.1

From Productivity Growth to Ecological Impact



Ecological Footprint, Working Hours and Well-Being

Shorter work hours are correlated with lower EF and higher subjective well-being at the individual level (Brown and Kasser 2003)

Shorter work hours are correlated with lower EF across nations (Schor 2005, Hayden and Shandra, forthcoming)

Shorter work hours are associated with lower energy use (Rosnick and Weisbrot 2006)

US Attitudes toward worktime, consumption and environmental impact

Work fewer hours and spend less money.	All (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)	Parents (%)
That's a good idea, and I'm ready to do my part	42	33	49	48
That's a good idea, but I'm not ready to do that	24	23	25	24
That's not a good idea	28	39	19	23
Don't Know	6	5	7	5



Source: "Readiness for Actions to Reduce Consumption and Materialism Poll," Center for the New American Dream, July 2004

US Attitudes toward the need for change in lifestyles

Protecting the environment will require most of us to make major changes in the way we live.	All (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)	Parents (%)
Strongly Agree	40	35	45	39
Somewhat Agree	41	40	42	46
Somewhat Disagree	12	15	8	11
Strongly Disagree	5	7	3	3
Don't Know	2	3	2	2



Source: "Agree Statements: Attitudes About Role in the Environment Poll," Center for the New American Dream, July 2004