

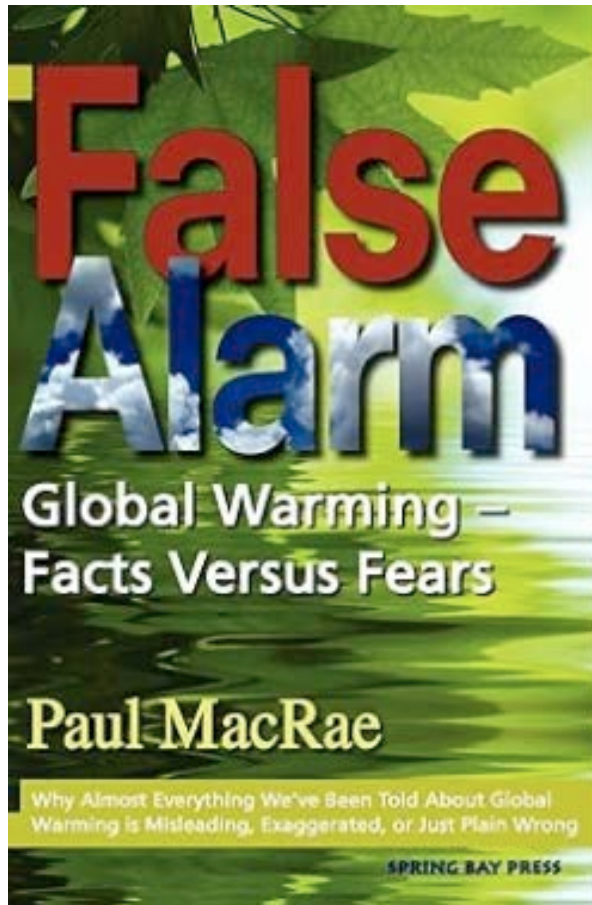
# Why we can't abandon fossil fuels – and why we shouldn't try

Sections 4 & 5 of [Climate and Energy at a Glance](#)

Paul MacRae

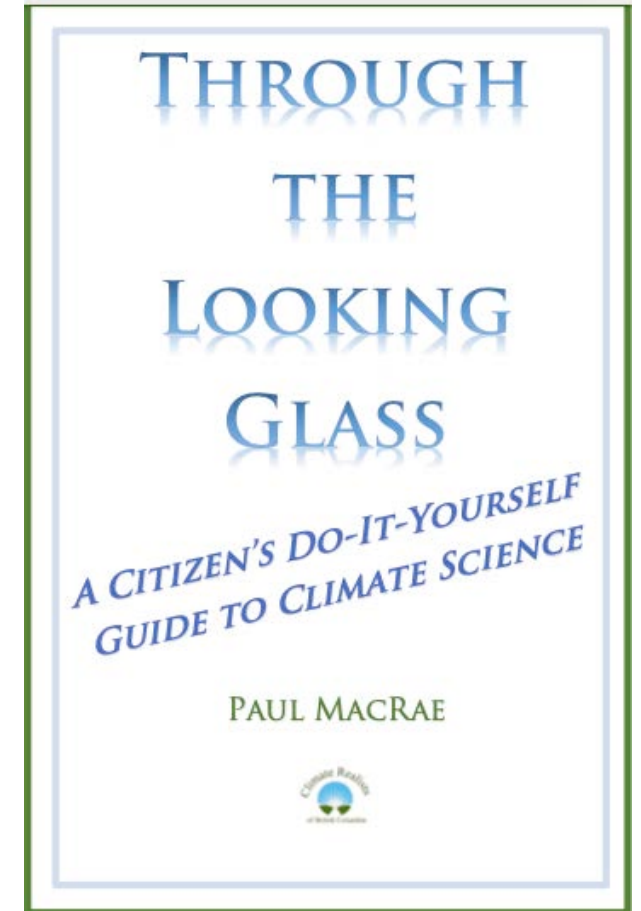
March 11, 2025

# Biographical note




2010

- Not a scientist
- Ex-journalist, instructor in writing at Univ. of Victoria
- Written two books and many articles trying to understand climate-change alarmism
- Wrote Section 4 of CAAG, edited much of the rest
- Basic position: Climate alarmism makes no sense, scientifically or economically. And yet, here we are....



2023



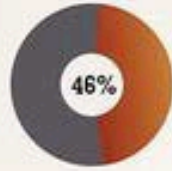
# SECTION 4: THE BENEFITS OF FOSSIL FUELS AND CO2

Chapter 1: Petroleum  
products

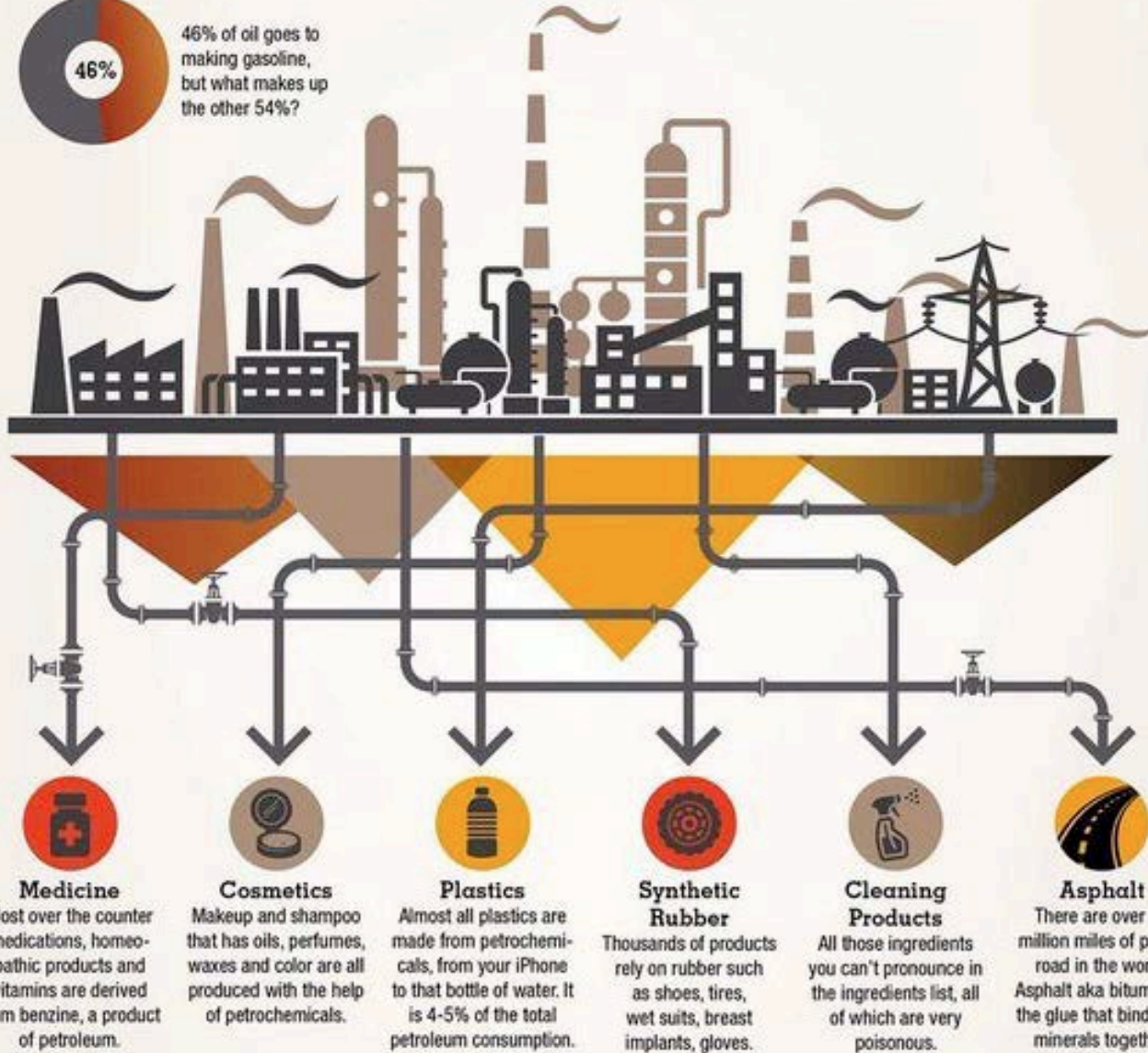
THE BIGGER PICTURE

# Life Without Oil

NOT AS SIMPLE AS YOU MAY THINK

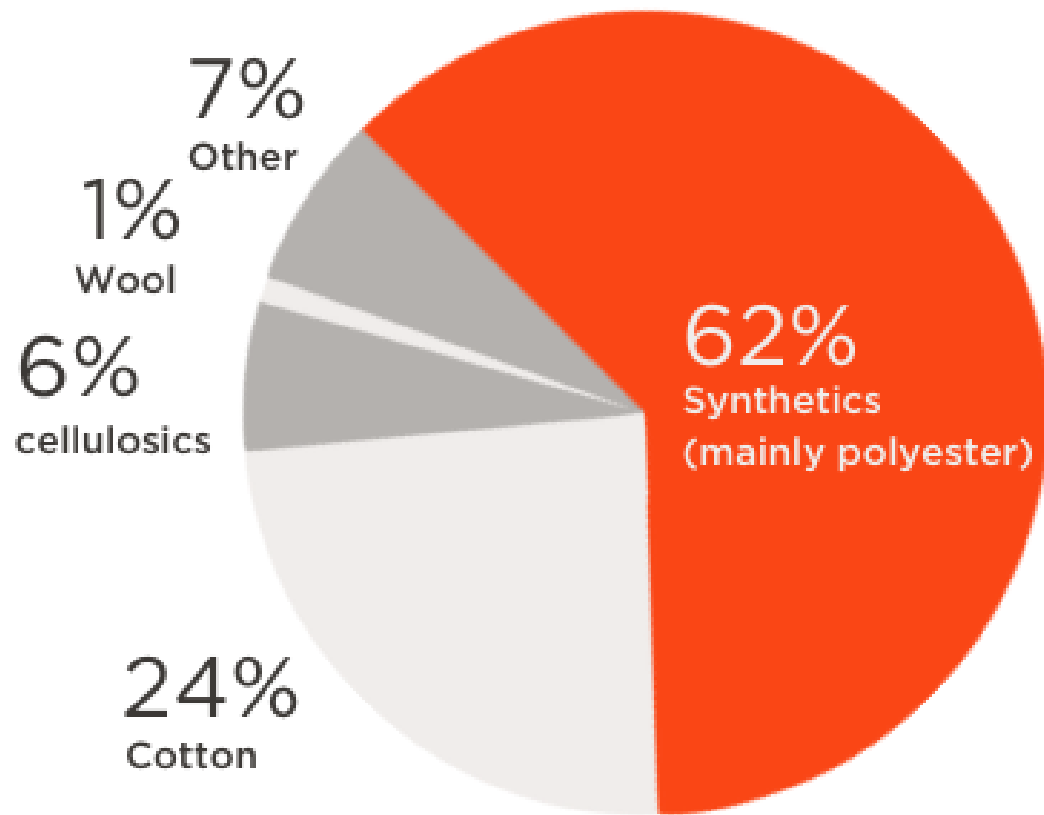


46% of oil goes to making gasoline, but what makes up the other 54%?



## Life without oil: Not as easy as the IPPC thinks!

- 46% of oil goes to make gasoline
- The other 54%? Thousands of products we wouldn't want to be without!
- If we shut down fossil fuels, we will have to find substitutes for a huge variety of
  - Medicines, cosmetics, plastics, synthetic rubber, cleaning products, asphalt (to name just a few)



Fun Fact: 60 per cent of clothing is made using fossil fuels!

Even cotton is grown using fossil-fuel-based fertilizers



We could be back to wearing furs...

## Chapter 2: Fossil fuels in agriculture, transportation and medicine

Natural gas a key ingredient in synthetic fertilizer

Artificial fertilizers are often better than 'natural' fertilizers

- Better absorption by the soil
- Nutrients released gradually
- Application is less frequent
- Less costly for farmers
- Less land to produce the same amount of food



**Fossil fuels are essential for agriculture: Tractors, harvesters, trucks, and transportation to markets**

# Without fossil fuels, almost half the world population would starve

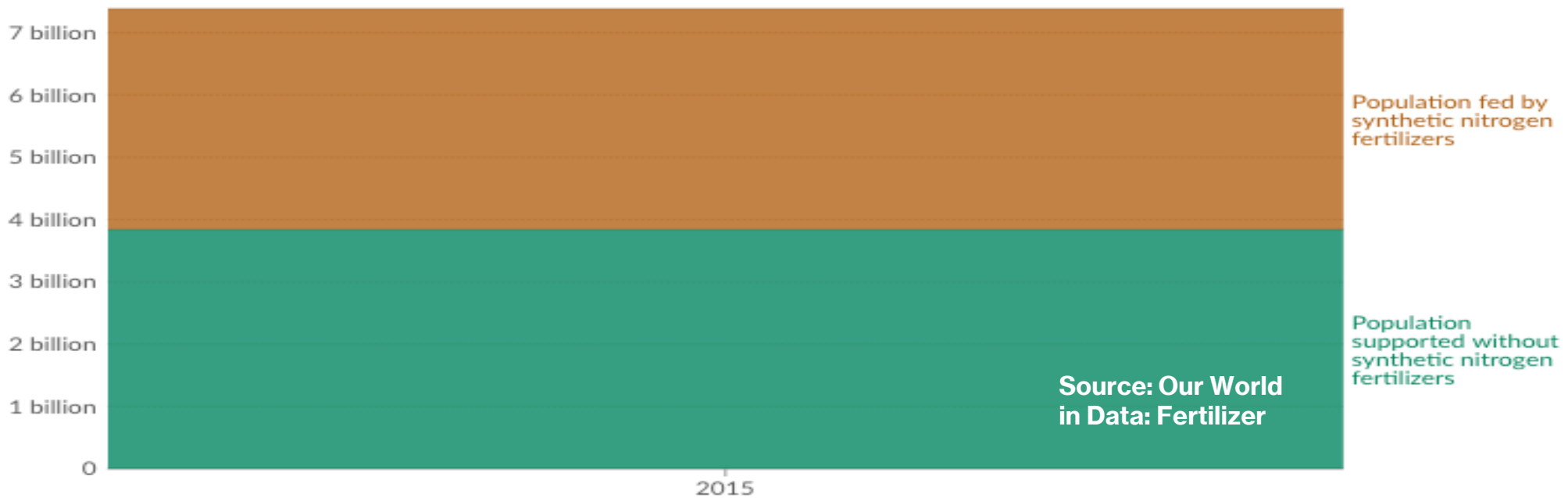
## World population supported by synthetic nitrogen fertilizers

Best estimates project that just over half of the global population could be sustained without reactive nitrogen fertilizer derived from the Haber-Bosch process.

Our World  
in Data

Table Chart

Settings



Source: Our World  
in Data: Fertilizer



1900

2015



2015

# The Sri Lanka experiment

Government banned artificial fertilizers and pesticides in favor of 'all natural' farming

Result:

- Rice production fell 80 per cent
- Tea production fell by half
- Exports crashed
- Food prices soared

A popular uprising unseated the Sri Lankan president



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

**With a world population  
of 8 billion+, we need  
more food, not less**

Banning synthetic fertilizers will mean less food, and could cause hunger and even starvation for hundreds of millions, maybe billions, of people



**Polyethylene terephthalate**  
[Water bottles]



**High-density polyethylene**  
[Milk bottles]



**Low-density polyethylene**  
[Packaging film]



**Polyethylene Polypropylene**  
[Grocery bags]



**Polystyrene**  
[Cutlery]



**Polyvinyl chloride**  
[Plumbing pipes]



**Polycarbonate**  
[Construction]



**Polyurethane**  
[Foam, sponge]

## Key Takeaways

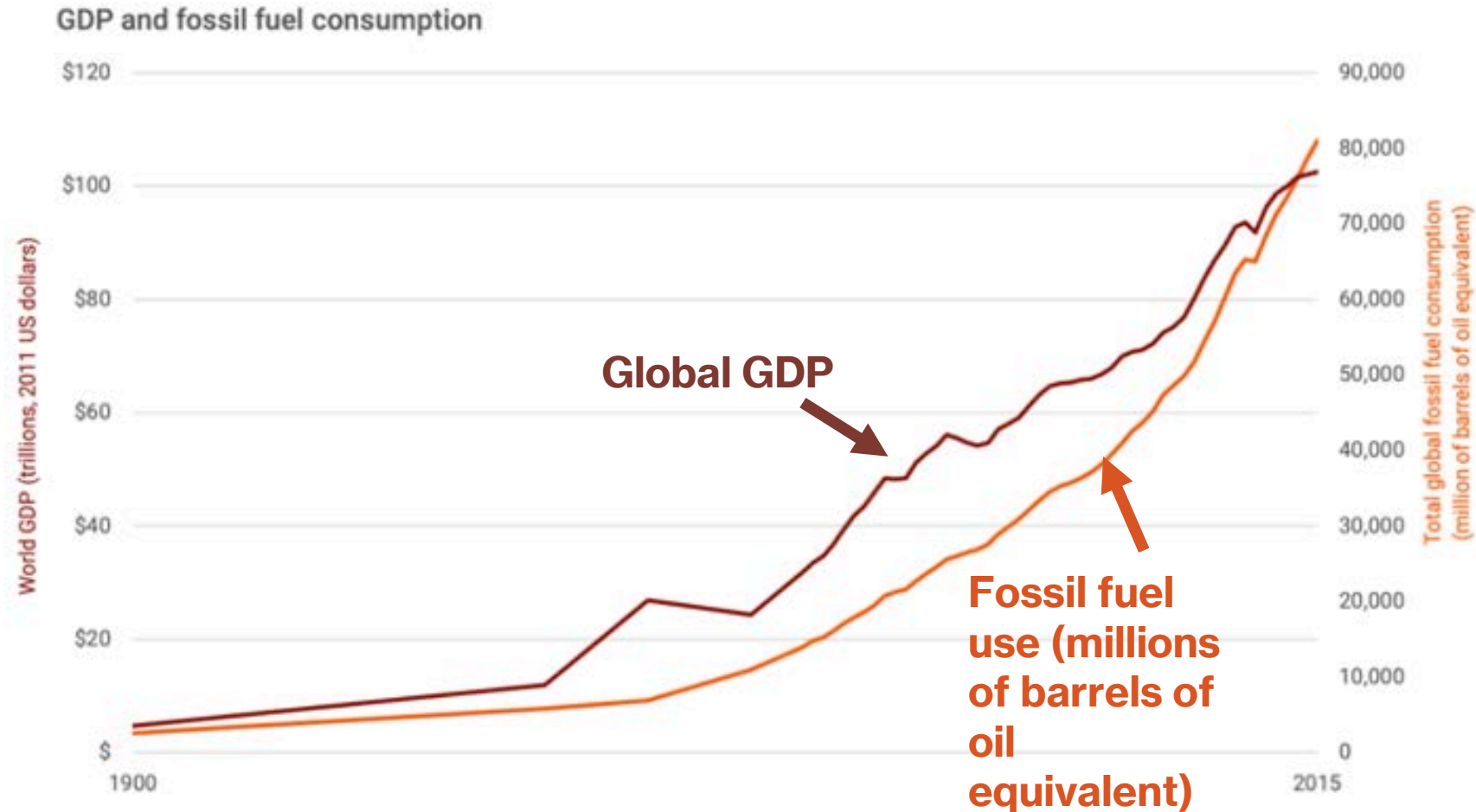
- Fossil fuels don't just provide fuel: Thousands of essential products are made using fossil fuels
- Without fossil fuels, we must find other ways to make these products (or go back to a third-world lifestyle)
- These techniques may be more environmentally harmful than fossil fuels (e.g., going back to fur clothing)!

# Chapter 3: Poverty rates, Lifespan, Infant Mortality



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

# Rise in GDP and rise in fossil fuel use are strongly correlated



Source: Our World in Data/Brookings Institute

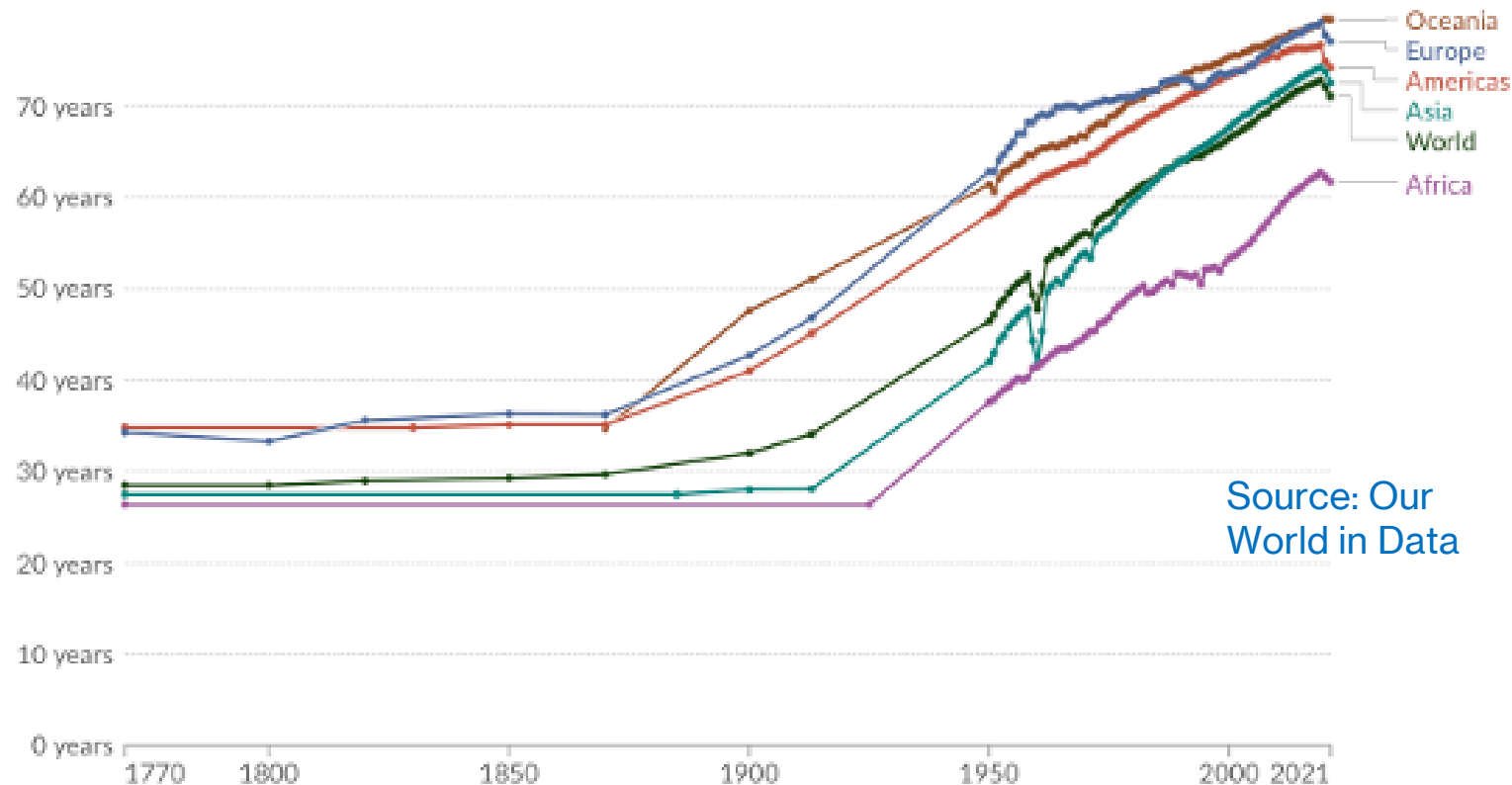
## Life expectancy

The period life expectancy at birth, in a given year.

Table | Map | Chart

Edit countries and regions

Settings



Source: Our World in Data

**Longer life span from 1850 is also strongly correlated to use of fossil fuels**

Fossil fuels = more prosperous lifestyle = healthier people = longer life!

## Neonatal mortality rate

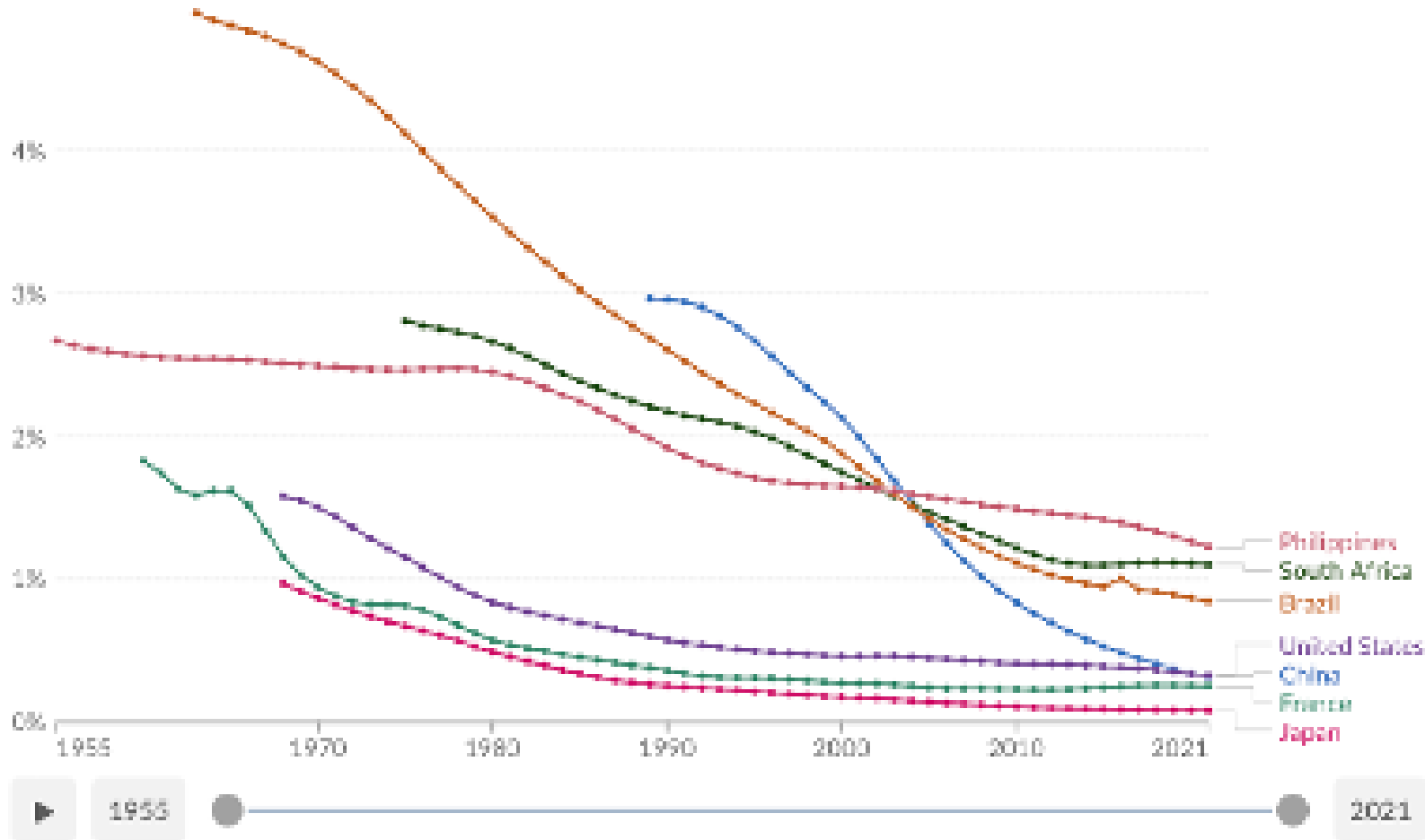
The estimated share of newborns who die before reaching 28 days of age.

Our World  
in Data

Table | Map | Chart

Edit countries and regions

Settings



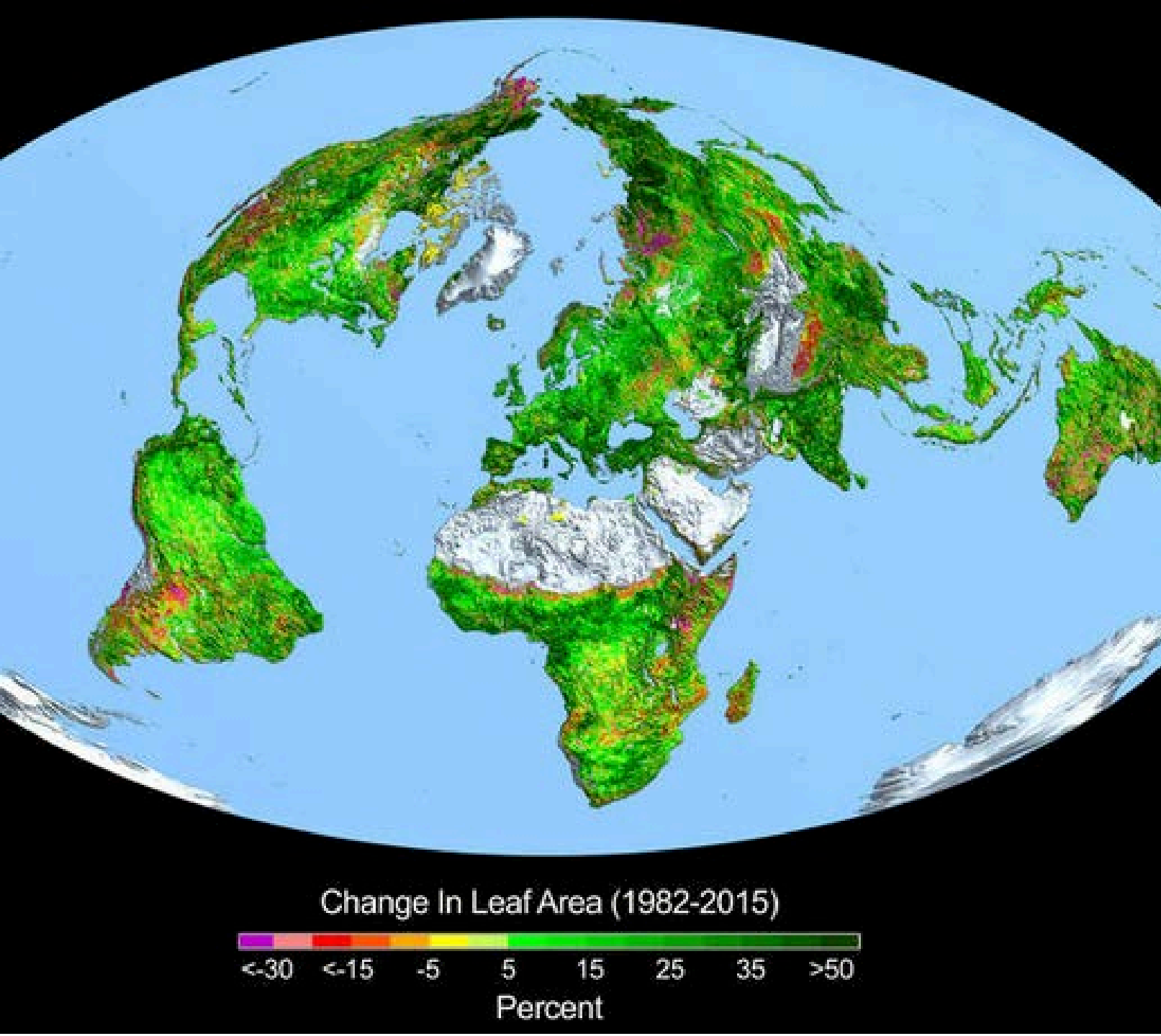
**Child deaths down from 1955-2021 as fossil fuel use increases**

Source: UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (2023)/Our World in Data.



## Key takeaways

- Increased fossil-fuel is strongly correlated with falling global poverty over the past two hundred years.
- Countries using fossil fuels have a fast-rising national GDP, a good measure of poverty reduction and prosperity.
- Reduction in poverty has increased human lifespans and reduced infant mortality.
- The idea that fossil fuels are some sort of danger to humanity is absurd.



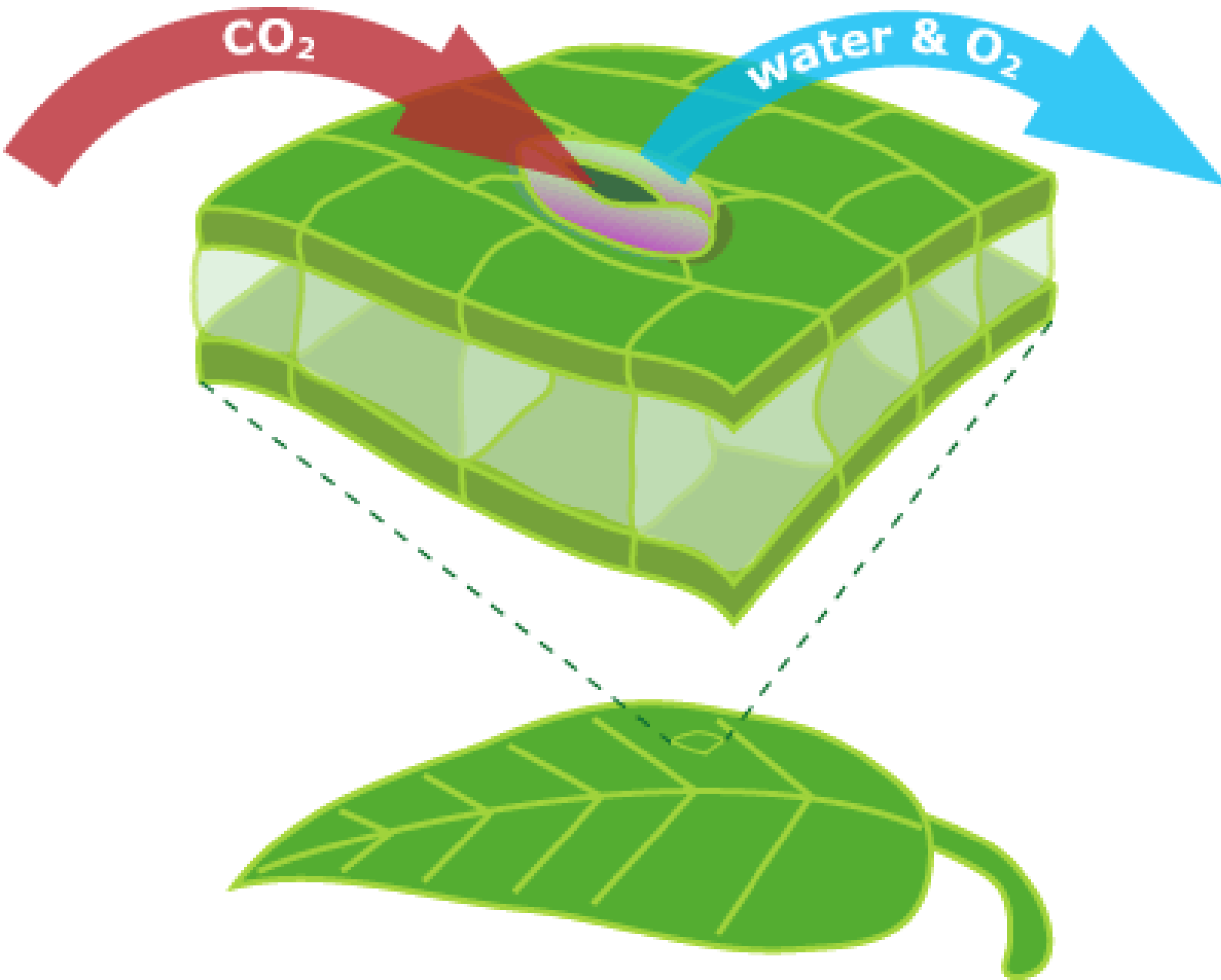
## Chapter 4: CO<sub>2</sub> is a plant fertilizer.

**More CO<sub>2</sub> is  
greening the earth!**

From NASA (2015)

‘From a quarter to half of Earth’s vegetated lands have shown significant greening over the last 35 years (5% over the past 20 years) largely due to rising levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide.’

Carbon dioxide enters, while water and oxygen exit, through a leaf's stomata.

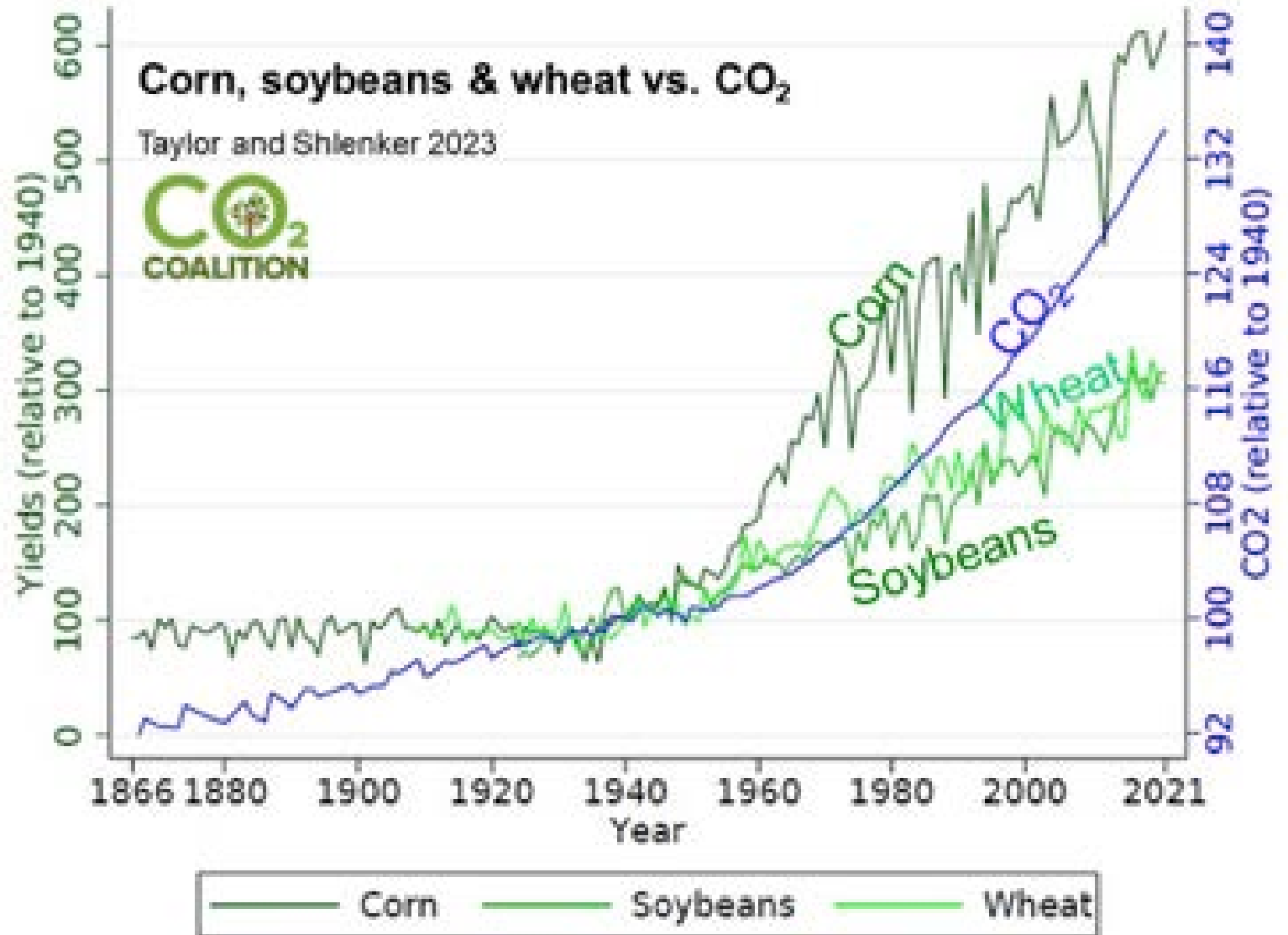


## How CO<sub>2</sub> acts as a fertilizer

- CO<sub>2</sub> enters plants through small openings (stomata) on their leaves
- Stomata must open to admit CO<sub>2</sub> molecules; when they do, they also lose water
- With more CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, stomata can collect more CO<sub>2</sub> molecules more easily and quickly for their roots and stems
- More carbon molecules, plants grow stronger and faster!
- Plants lose less water in high-CO<sub>2</sub> conditions, so more drought-resistant
- We need more CO<sub>2</sub> in the air, not less....

**More CO<sub>2</sub> =  
increased  
crop yields**

Corn, soy and  
wheat yields  
from 1866-  
2021, highly  
correlated  
with CO<sub>2</sub> (and  
fossil fuel)  
increase



CO <sub>2</sub> COALITION		
Carrots & turnips		+77.8%
Fresh fruit not elsewhere specified		+72.3%
Tropical fresh fruit not elsewhere specified		+72.3%
Grapes		+68.2%
Sugar beet	© 2017 Gregory Wrightstone	+65.7%
Dry beans	Idso 2013 The positive externalities of CO <sub>2</sub> Courtesy Monckton	+61.7%
Oranges		+54.9%
Yams		+47.0%
Groundnuts with shells		+47.0%
Rapeseed		+46.9%
Soybeans		+45.5%
Bananas		+44.8%
Apples		+44.8%
Coconuts		+44.8%
Plantains		+44.8%
Cucumbers & gherkins		+44.8%
Pears		+44.8%
Millet		+44.3%
Watermelons		+41.5%
Pumpkins, squash & gourds		+41.5%
Fresh vegetables not elsewhere specified		+41.1%
Chillies & peppers		+41.1%
Eggplants		+41.0%

Idso 2013

**% increase in crop biomass from additional 300 ppm of CO<sub>2</sub>**

**Cash benefit from CO<sub>2</sub> fertilization, of crops, 1961-2010**

\$150+ bn
\$100-149 bn
\$45-99 bn
\$30-45 bn
\$15-30 bn
\$0-15 bn

**More CO<sub>2</sub> means higher crop yields, more income for farmers**



## Key takeaways

- Each additional 300 ppm of CO<sub>2</sub> can increase crop yields by 41 to 71 per cent
- More CO<sub>2</sub> means more plant growth, more food for humanity, more income for farmers

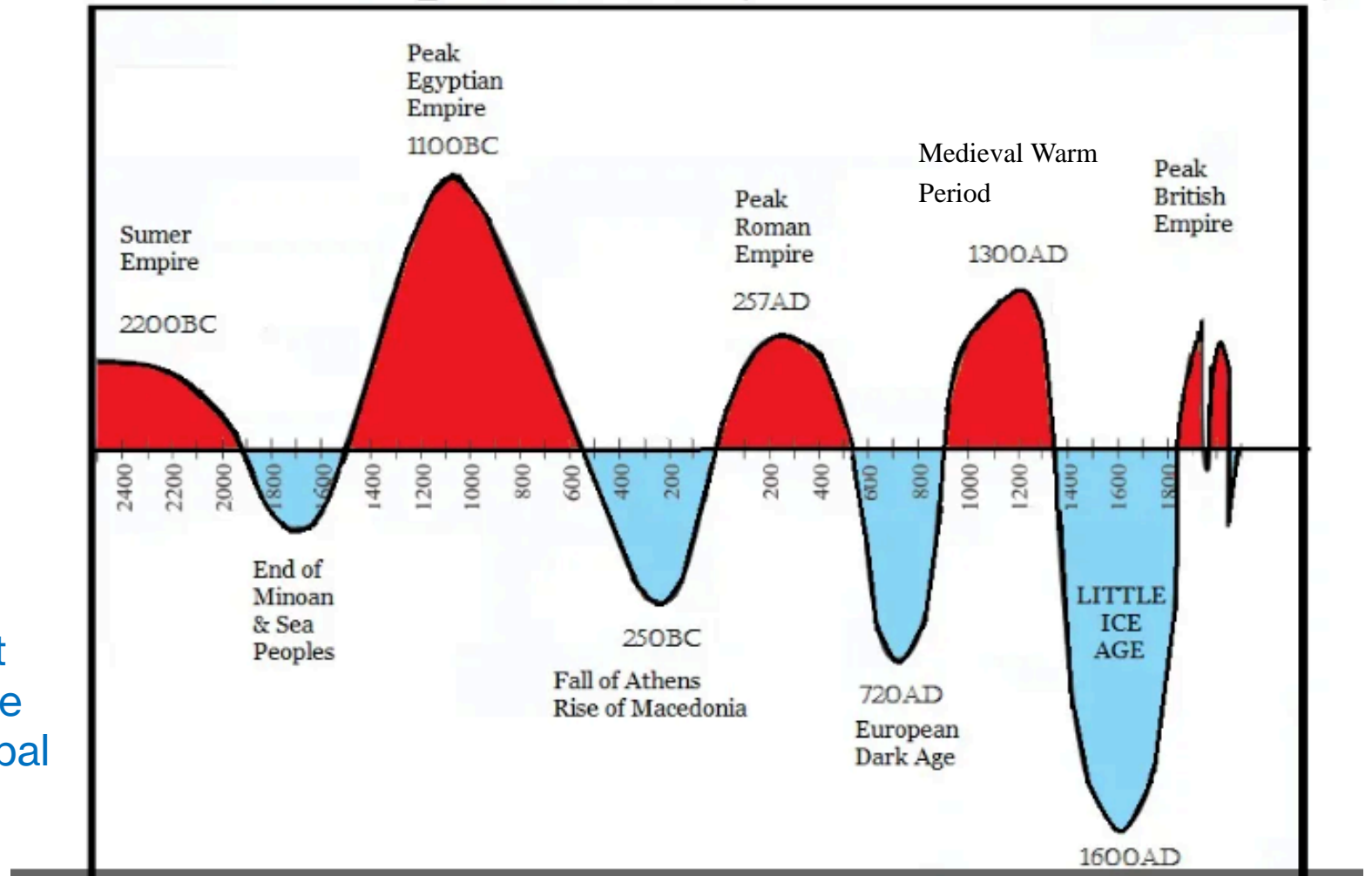
# Chapter 6: Warming is good for civilization

Humanity's good times are strongly correlated with warming weather!



This is the first time in history that people have feared 'global warming'

## Global Temperatures (2500BC - 2015AD)

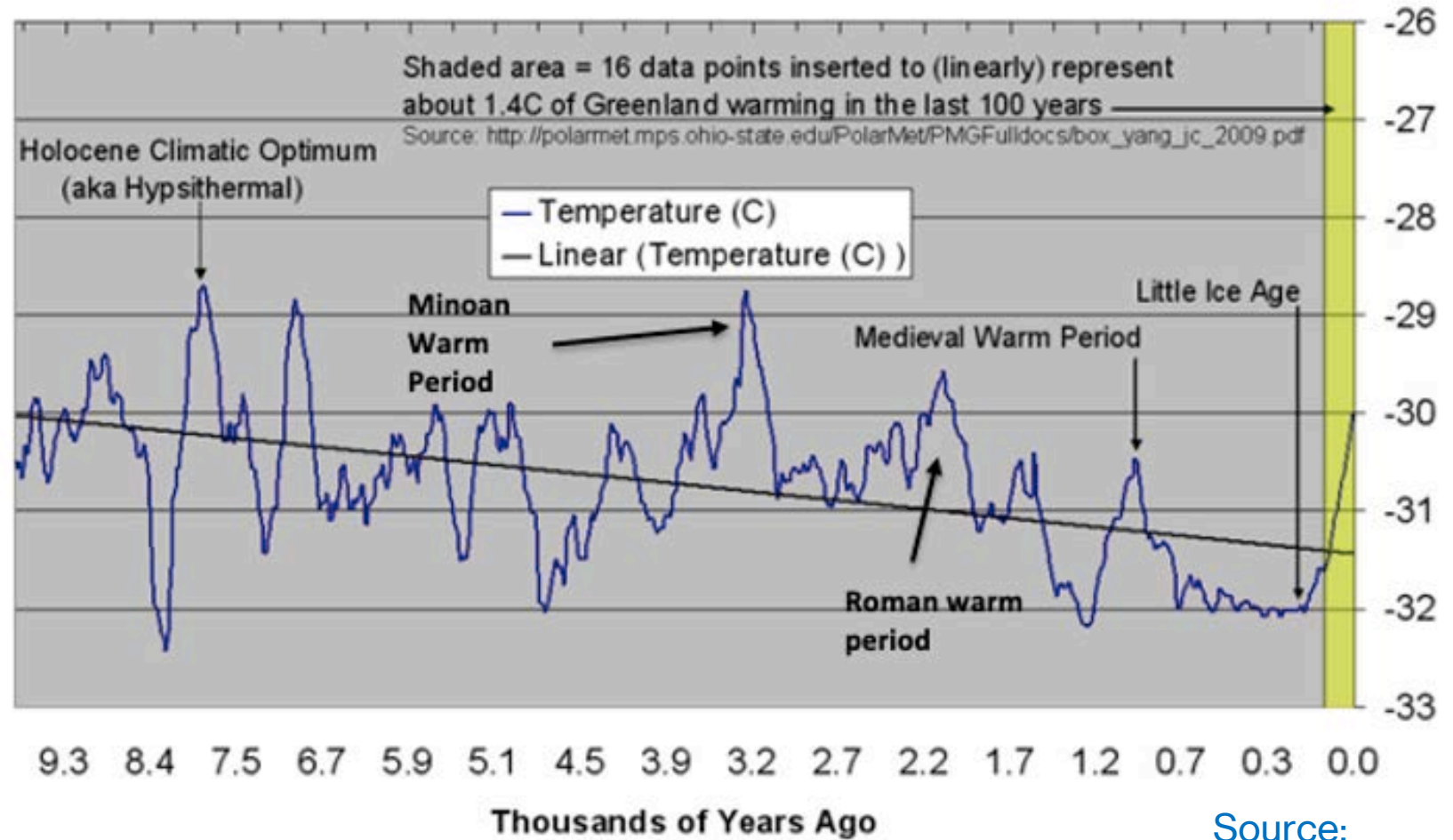


## Greenland GISP2 Ice Core Temperature Data 10,000 Year Cooling Trend

Source:

[ftp://ftp.ncdc.noaa.gov/pub/data/paleo/icecore/greenland/summit/gisp2/isotopes/gisp2\\_temp\\_accum\\_alley2000.bt](ftp://ftp.ncdc.noaa.gov/pub/data/paleo/icecore/greenland/summit/gisp2/isotopes/gisp2_temp_accum_alley2000.bt)

On average,  
planet  
is not  
getting  
warmer



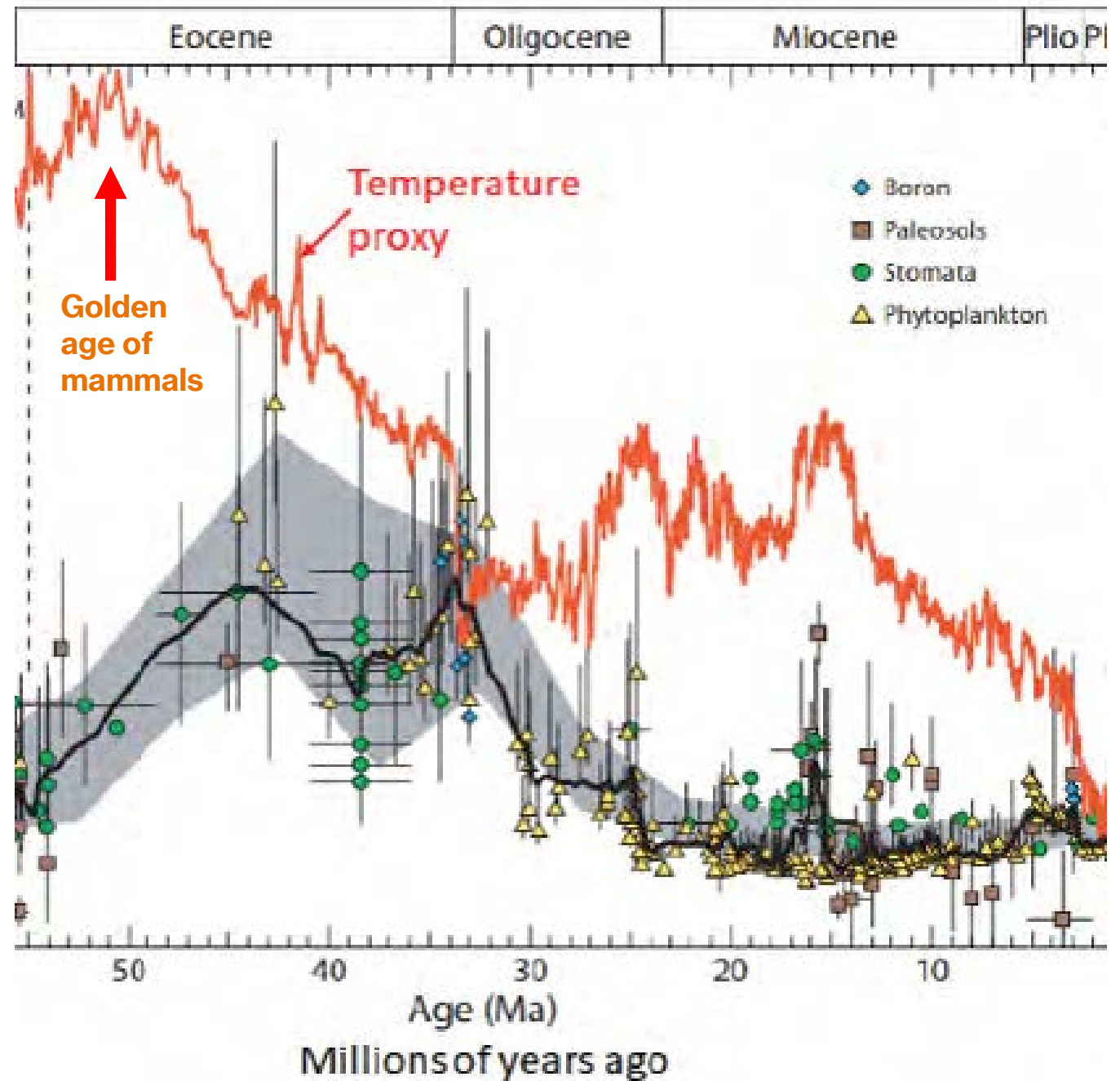
Earth has been warmer in the past: Holocene Climate Optimum, Minoan, Roman and Medieval Warm Periods

Somehow, the world didn't end; civilizations thrived

Source:  
NASA

# Earth much warmer in the past!

- Despite much warmer temperatures in the deep past, somehow life survived and thrived
- A peak temperature, during the Eocene (55 million years ago), has been called 'The Golden Age of Mammals'
- Note: There is almost no correlation between CO<sub>2</sub> (black line) and temperature (orange line) over this time
- Why would we believe CO<sub>2</sub> and temperature are strongly correlated now?





## Key Takeaways

- Warming after the last Ice Age (12,000 BCE) created the conditions for civilization
- Humans have always been better off when the planet is warming, rather than cooling
- When the planet returns to Ice Age conditions (we are in a warm 'interglacial'), then we will have a 'crisis'!

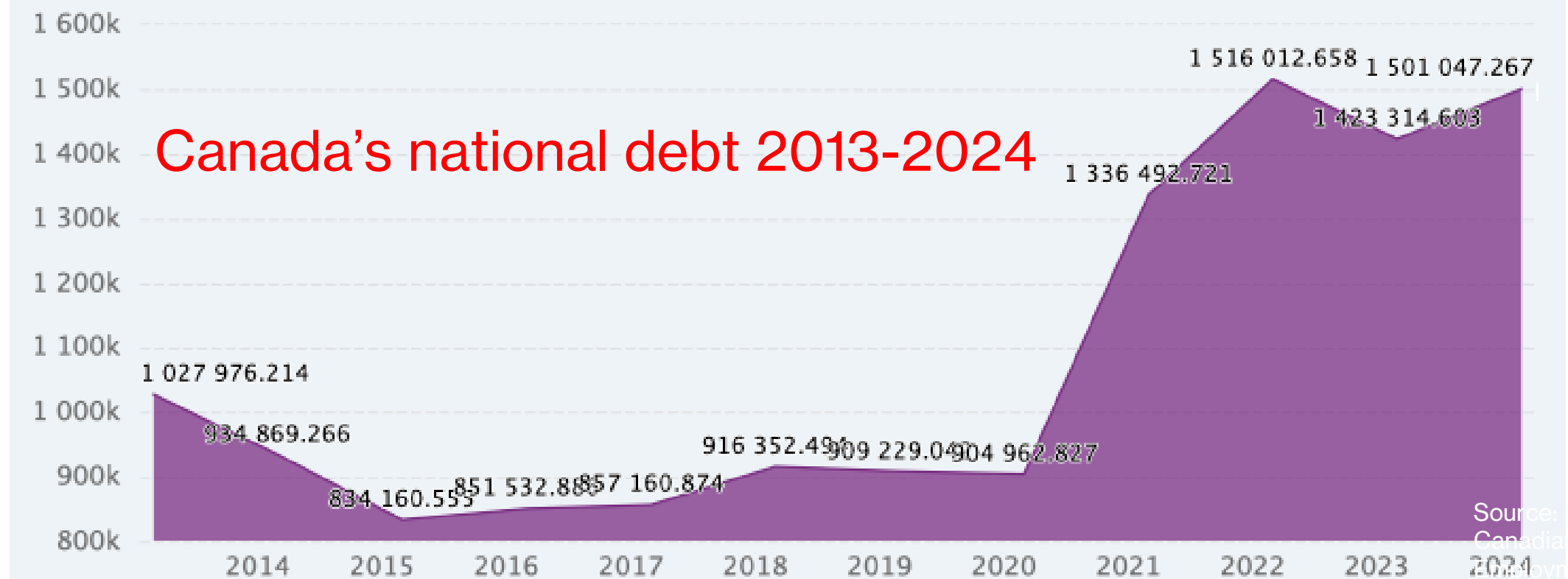
Cooler climate  
is not good!

## Section 6: What are our best options?

- The Canadian government (Trudeau or Carney) seeks to achieve “Net Zero” emissions by 2050
- This includes eliminating fossil fuels from as much electricity generation as possible by 2035
- Is this possible?



Are windmills our best option?



## What will Net Zero cost Canadians?

- One estimate of total cost for Canada of Net Zero by 2050: \$3.6 trillion This = \$90,000 per Canadian (\$360,000 for a family of four)
- This is on top of current debt of \$30,000 per Canadian
- Add \$55,000/Canadian for Net Zero housing requirements (e.g., elimination of natural gas in favor of electric), etc.
- Talk about 'unsustainable'....



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Featured Insights



## The \$2 Trillion Transition: Canada's Road to Net Zero



# Royal Bank on what Net Zero will cost Canadians

- Royal Bank “\$2 Trillion Transition” report estimates Net Zero will cost Canadians \$60 billion/year, or \$2 trillion by 2050 (counting from 2020)
- \$2 trillion would cut emissions by 75% by 2050
- RBC says this is “affordable” because it will provide amazing new “green” technologies and thousands of “green” jobs to replace nasty fossil-fuel-based jobs

# The fine print on Canadians' future incomes and lifestyle

“The challenge is getting people to change. A low-carbon lifestyle can be more expensive, harder, and less convenient than the status quo. While getting nearly 40 million Canadians to accept less convenience in their daily lives is daunting, design and innovation could make things easier.”



In other words, the RBC's “green” revolution will make us poorer; but we'll be happier!



## How much will Canada's reductions reduce temperature?

- IPCC estimates each trillion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by human activity warms planet by about 0.45°C
- Canada's emissions account for 1.5% of global emissions, so Canada's emissions in 2022 warmed the planet by 0.000247°C
- Even if Canada eliminated all carbon emissions, we would make virtually zero difference to "global warming", while crippling our economy
- The 'net zero' fantasy will cost trillions for no useful benefit

# Another, simpler way to look at this: the Mark Carney carbon plan



UN Special Envoy for  
Climate Action and  
Finance

- Carney wants to spend \$2 trillion to reach NZ by 2050
- That's \$80 billion a year, or \$2,000 per Canadian per year, or \$8,000 for a family of four, on top of all other taxes

## How much warming will our \$2 trillion buy us?

- NZ aims to keep warming at 1.5°C above pre-industrial times, to avoid the dreaded 2°C increase. We aim, then, to prevent 0.5°C of warming
- Canada contributes 1.5% of global carbon emissions
- Doing the math: by 2050, then, our \$2 trillion will have prevented 0.0075°C of warming, a meaningless number
- And this is assuming CO2 warms the planet as the IPCC predicts (it doesn't)

# A \$2 trillion 'solution' in search of a problem



- How do we know the planet won't warm uncontrollably?

The 'apocalypse' IPCC scenario is RCP8.5 ("business as usual"). But even the IPCC no longer believes in this scenario (in part because of a large-scale move away from coal to ... natural gas, a fossil fuel)

- From the 2022 report:
  - 'High-end scenarios (like RCP8.5) can be very useful to explore high-end risks of climate change but are not typical "business-as-usual" projections and should therefore not be presented as such.'
- There is no 'climate crisis,' there is no need for a 25-year forced march away from fossil fuels to full electrification
- It is a \$2 trillion solution in search of a problem

# What we should do



Abandon Net Zero



Eliminate all carbon pricing



Ensure a cost-benefit analysis of all climate programs



Eliminate curbs on fossil fuel development and use (e.g., requiring electrical heating rather than natural gas), subject to environmental oversight



Recruit “pathfinders” to take this message to Canadians

# Key Takeaways

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Net Zero plans are incredibly expensive and futile. We need a better balance of environmental and public policy considerations

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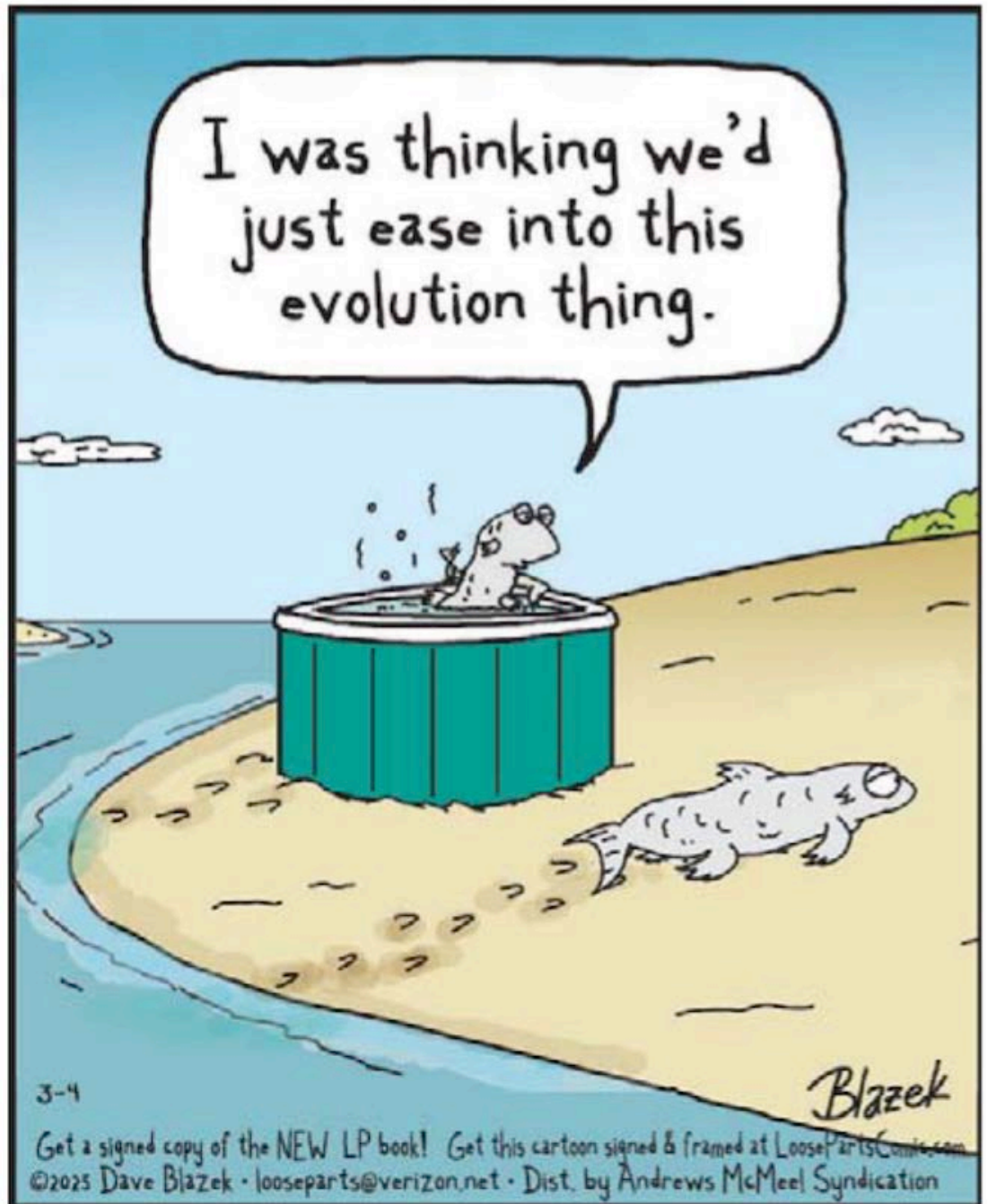
Climate policies must not artificially increase costs to consumers, while reducing reliability (e.g., the inevitable “green” brown- and blackouts under “sustainable” power)

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Avoid ideologically driven goals that will have zero effect on the weather

# Final thoughts on transition to Net Zero

- Net Zero climate plans will make Canada and Canadians poorer, by making energy more expensive and less reliable
- Poor nations are less able to adapt to climate changes that do occur
- Well-off nations have the resources to respond and adapt to changes in weather and climate – as humanity has been doing for thousands of years
- Let's adapt, not panic!

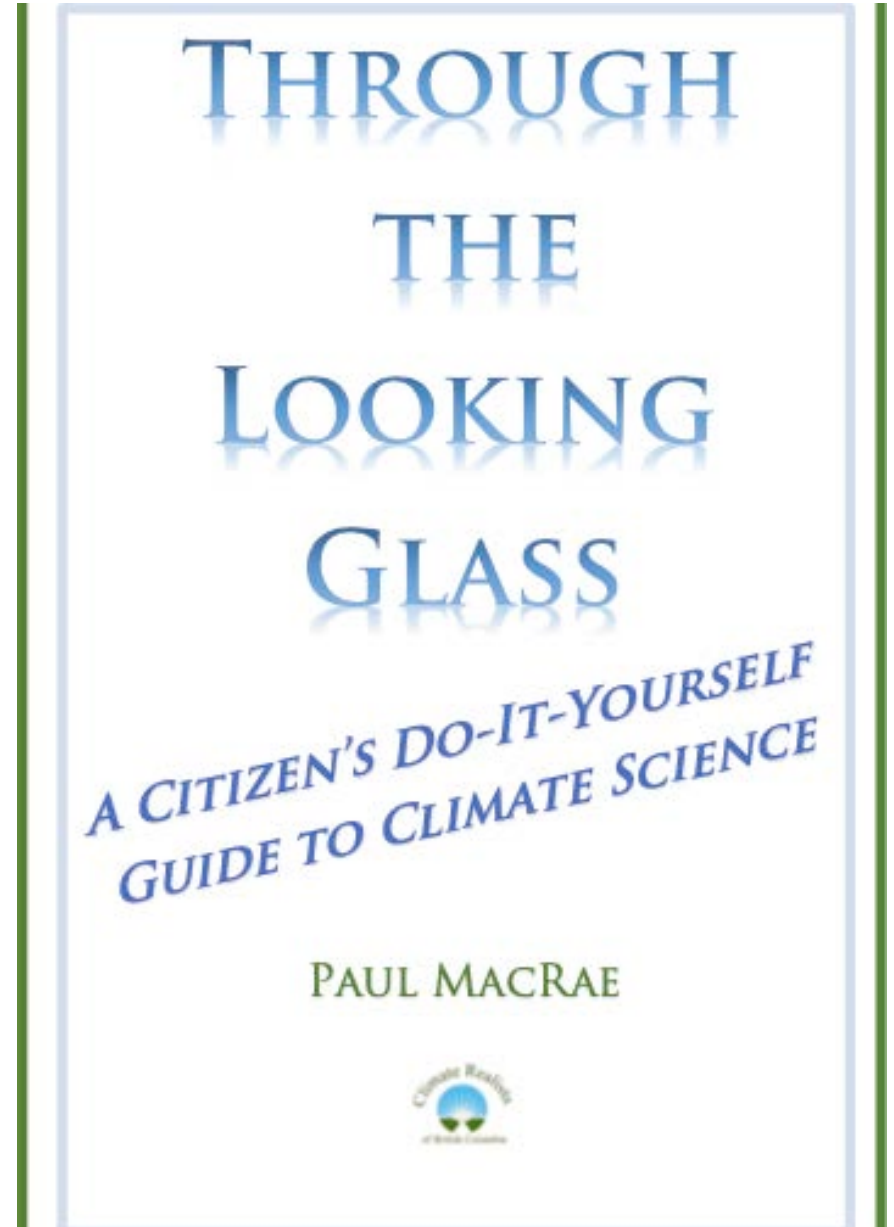


# A few thoughts of my own from **Through the Looking Glass....**

“With a true view all the facts  
harmonize, but with a false one the  
facts soon clash.”

— Aristotle, *Nicomachian Ethics*,  
Book I, Section 8

Is there a “true view” that makes the  
climate/Net Zero “facts” harmonize?





## Here's the IPCC's ideal society (Scenario SSP1)

‘The emphasis on economic growth shifts toward a broader emphasis on human well-being. Driven by an increasing commitment to achieving development goals, inequality is reduced both across and within countries. Consumption is oriented toward low material growth and lower resource and energy intensity.’

## ‘Re-enchantment’ sounds remarkably similar to Marx...

‘In communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wants, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.’

- Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, “Feuerbach,”

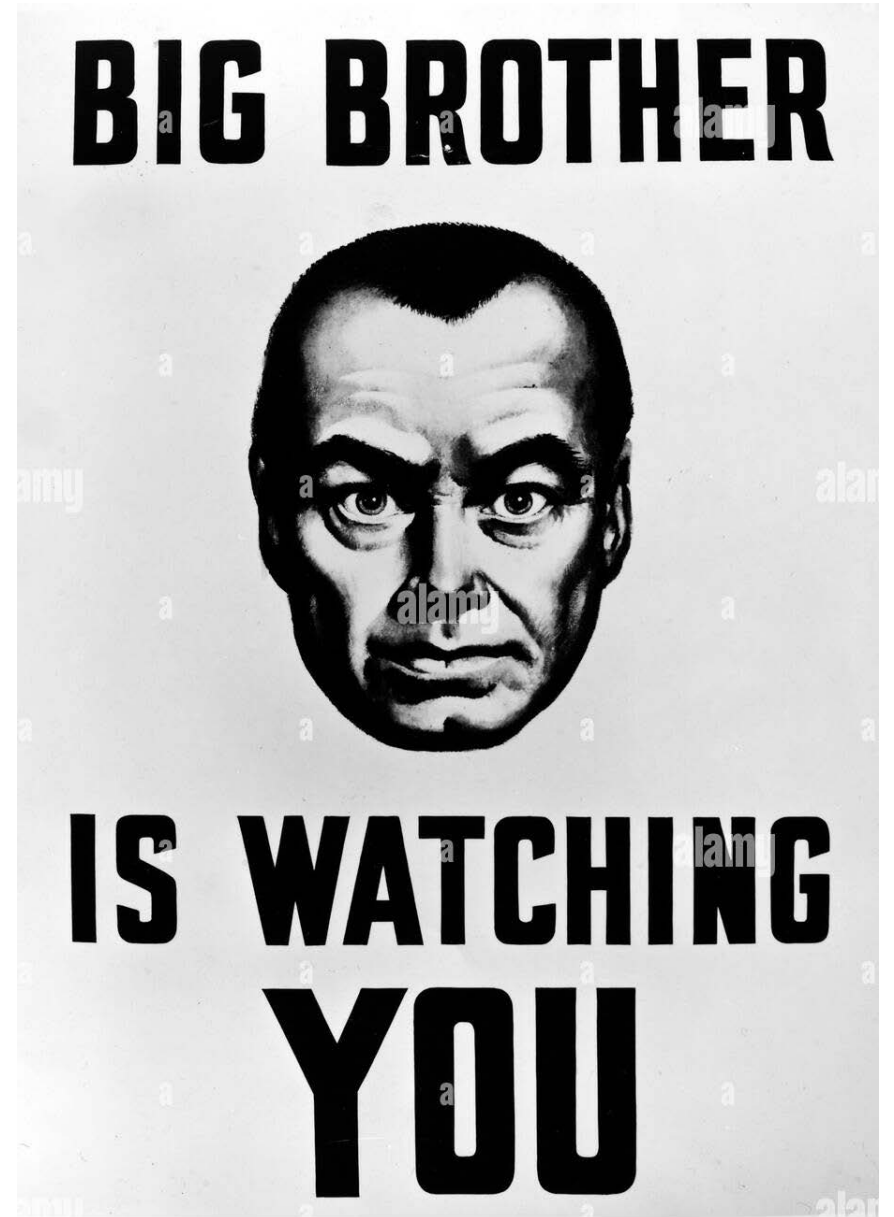


# Finding a 'true view'

'With a true view all the facts harmonize but with a false view the facts soon clash'

Call me a conspiracy theorist, but the 'true view' that 'harmonizes' the entire 'climate crisis' program of the United Nations and its affiliates is that they hope to revive the dream of Marxism through some kind of global socialism that will rob us of our freedom, our individuality, our lifestyles and our human rights

Climate is just the excuse



# Thank you



Are there any questions?

# Help Support us with a Donation



# Thank You!