

# GRF-SPaC; the REDUCTIONS project; and SDGs from a SCP perspective

NARSPAC meeting

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This presentation will give brief updates on:

1. The Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption (GRF-SPaC)
2. The REDUCTIONS project; also called “Towards Reductions” or “Absolute Reductions”
3. SCP as a Sustainable Development Goal; or as part of the SDG framework

# 1. GRF-SPaC mission

- The Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption (GRF-SPC) was created by and for the community of researchers and practitioners engaged in research on the worldwide transition to sustainable production and consumption systems.
- GRF-SPC strives to develop and strengthen methods of fundamental and applied research to achieve a deeper understanding of the possibilities and barriers to systemic change.

# GRF-SPaC activities

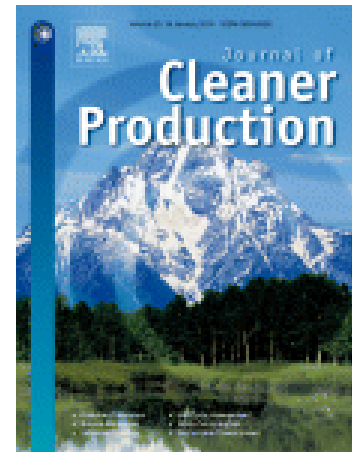
- GRF-SPaC launched in 2011, initially as part of 10YFP of UNEP: organized several side events/
- Inaugural workshop Rio de Janeiro 2012: 90 participants; 40 papers; JCP Special Volume Jan 2014
- October 2012 Beijing workshop as part of World Resources Forum
- March 2013 workshop GRF-SPC REDUCTIONS project at Wuppertal Institute
- July 2013 launch GRF-S. Africa at ISDRC19, Stellenbosch, S. Africa
- October 2013 session at WSSF conference Montreal, Canada
- 8-11 June 2014 2<sup>nd</sup> International conference, Fudan University, Shanghai

# ESPM



# GRF-SPaC

- Special Issue Journal of Cleaner production, Jan. 2014:  
“Sustainable production, consumption, and livelihoods:  
global and regional research perspectives”



- Listserve
- Website <http://grf-spc.weebly.com/>
- Co-sponsored by SCORAI, ISF, OneEarth, WRF, IGES, and many others

THE 2014  
**GLOBAL**  
RESEARCH FORUM  
Sustainable Production and Consumption

Keynote Speakers | 主讲人



William E. REES



ZHU Dajian



Ashish KOTHARI



Zhang Zongyi

The Second Biannual GRF–SPaC conference,  
***Global Transitions to Sustainable Production and Consumption Systems***

**June 8 - 11, at Fudan University, Shanghai, China,**

will be a forum to present and discuss new research outcomes from the Asia-Pacific region as well as from Latin America, Africa, Europe, and North America.

The conference will take stock of new issue framings and explore emerging research questions.

## 2. GRF-SPaC project: Towards absolute REDUCTIONS

Reducing Environmental Degradation &  
Unsustainable Consumption Trends & Impacts  
On Nature & Society:

*Research, Policy and Practice*



# Objectives

- to identify, describe and analyze approaches to reduction in material throughput in production-consumption systems.
- to demonstrate material and energy reductions that could be applied to different sectors and intervention nodes,
- to highlight effective characteristics and implementation mechanisms of reduction policies and/or practices,
- and suggest approaches on how to measure reductions.

# Focus on three intervention nodes:

- Reduction in resource extraction and production (e.g. to achieve decoupling or resource efficiency, capping, non-use)
- Reduction in (quantity of material) use and consumption (e.g. sustainable lifestyles, non-use)
- Reduction of waste generation (e.g. through design for environment (DfE), or 3Rs)

Factors from the above are then embedded in a larger macro framework driving consumption, in order to understand the role of institutions, design of processes and infrastructure, and broader system dynamics in which consumption is entrenched.

# The REDUCTIONS project

- Exploratory project to frame reductions
- Analyse science-based concepts, case studies and frameworks;
- bring together knowledge from a number of disciplines and communities
- Int. expert panel
- (Limited) funding from the Japanese government

## Intervention nodes

- Reduction in resource use
- Reduction in (quantity of material) consumption
- Reduction of waste generation and pollution

An activity of IGES, the Global Research Forum on SCP (GRF), the World Resources Forum, Wuppertal Institute, Tellus Institute, .....



## **Towards reductions:**

Reducing Environmental Degradation & Unsustainable Consumption Trends & Impacts On Nature & Society:  
Research, Policy and Practice Workshop

**Institute for Global Environmental Strategies and One Earth**

Hosted at the Wuppertal Institute – 18 – 19 March 2013

**A project of the Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption**

# **WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT**

# World Resources Forum, Davos, Oct 7-9, 20013

- **Absolute Reductions**

- Time: **Wednesday, October 9, 11:00 - 13:00**
- Moderator: Philip Vergragt (Tellus Institute, Boston; and Clark University, Worcester, USA; and GRF-SPaC coordinator)
- Lewis Akenji (IGES, Japan): The Absolute REDUCTIONS project: introduction
- Halina Brown (Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA): Conceptual framework for REDUCTIONS project
- Sylvia Lorek (SERI Germany), Absolute reductions and the Good Life
- Philip Vergragt, Examples of new economic and business models in advancing absolute resource reduction
- Paul Ekins (University College of London, Institute for Sustainable Resources): Discussant

# Next steps – planned publications

## **Special Volume J. Cleaner Prodn**

- Analysis and case studies
- Defining boundaries
- Measurement/accounting approaches
- Substitutability of resources
- Political and economic implications of absolute reductions
- Anticipating unintended consequences/rebounds
- implications for developing economies

## **Policy/Technical briefs/pubs**

- Assessment of current scientific knowledge
- Synthesis of messages for policy makers
- Policy frameworks for reductions
- Questions for research...

# Project consortium

## Members...

- Global Research Forum for SCP
- Institute for Global Environmental strategies Japan
- World Resources Forum
- OneEarth
- Tellus Institute
- SERI
- Clark University
- Wuppertal Institute
- .....

## Work packages

- Framing
- Targets and Indicators
- Case studies
- Sustainability transitions
- Policy and governance
- Economic system, institutions, culture
- Communication and outreach

### 3. SDGs from a SCP perspective: general

SDGs will likely be structured in the following manner:

- overall vision and objectives to guide implementation
- a limited number (probably not more than 10) of integrated main goals
- a set of subsidiary goals under each of the integrated goals
- targets and indicators for each goal or subsidiary goal
- a monitoring framework for tracking progress during implementation.

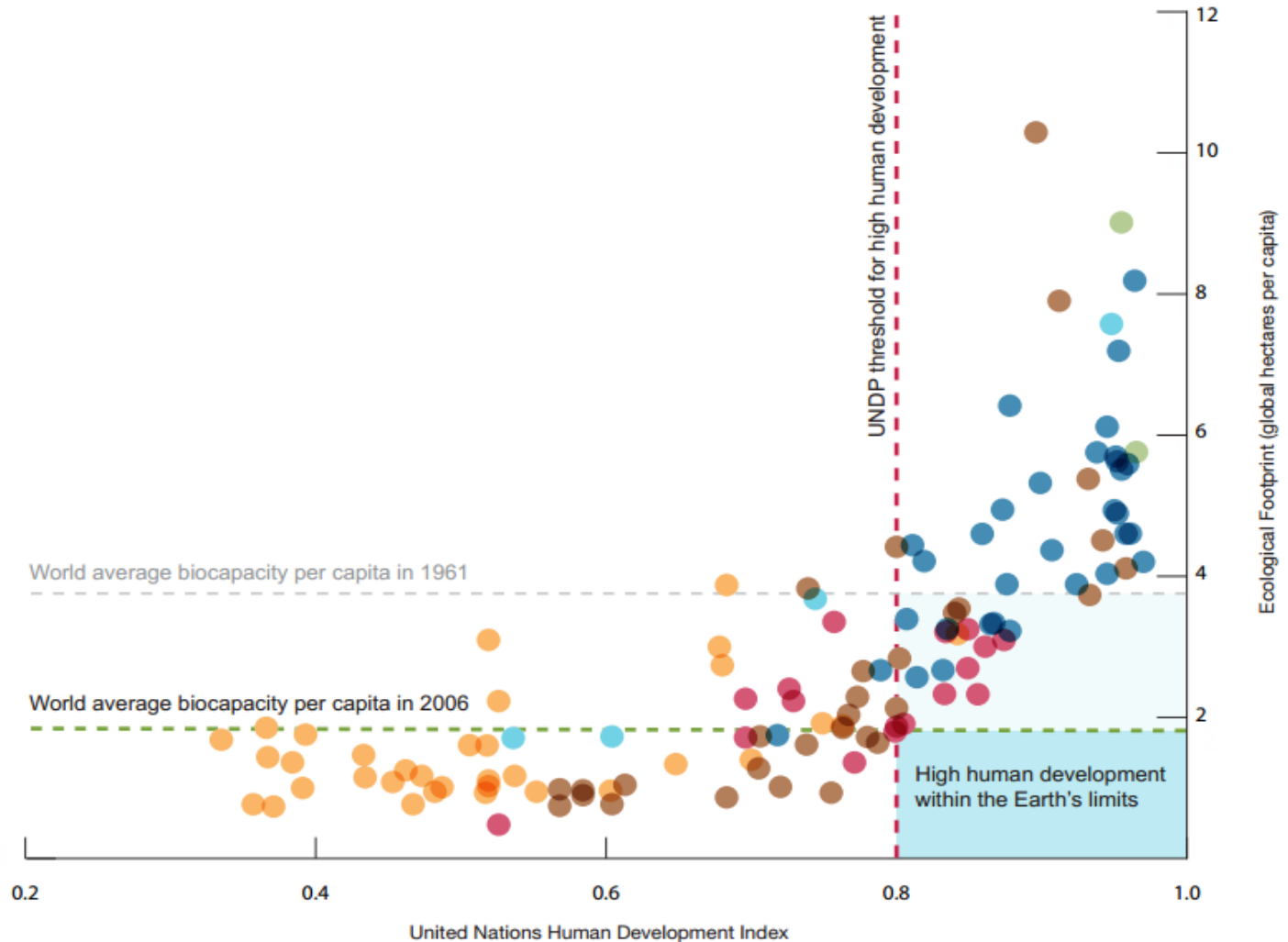


# SDGs from a SCP perspective: framing

SCP can be framed as having two broad and interrelated objectives (Akenji, 2013):

- achievement of well-being for all people, and
- keeping negative environmental impacts of socio-economic activities to within carrying capacity.

# Ecological footprint and HDI for nations, 2006



# Multiple challenges for SCP

- For developing countries: increase well-being while not overshooting ecological footprint beyond fair earth share
- For developed countries: reduce ecological footprint while maintaining well-being

	High Ecological Footprint	Low Ecological Footprint
High Human Development Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Ecological Overshoot"</li><li>• Goals: maintain HDI and reduce footprint</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overarching goal for all nations: high HDI and low footprint</li></ul>
Low Human Development Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Twin Challenge"</li><li>• Goals: increase HDI and reduce footprint</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "HDI Deficient"</li><li>• Goals: increase HDI and maintain footprint</li></ul>

# SDGs from a SCP perspective: indicators

Framing it this way, we basically need a broad set of 2 indicators for a SCP goal:

- Human Development Index or similar indicator for human wellbeing
- Ecological footprint or similar indicator for environmental pressure

A possible formulation of a SDG Goal:

- *“Production of material goods, and consumption patterns and lifestyles, should be transformed, to ensure human well-being for all including future generations, to create sustainable livelihoods for all, while remaining within the earth’s carrying capacity. This necessitates addressing the cultural and economic drivers of unsustainable consumption patterns, to achieve a transformation to a post-consumerist culture as well as a transformation beyond the economic growth paradigm”*

# SDG on SCP: proximate targets

- As a first approximation, SCP can be represented by three major sectors: food, housing and transportation.
- For each of these, targets can be formulated:

	Ecological Overshoot	HDI deficient	Twin Challenge
Food	Reduce the impact of food production and consumption	Increase food production and consumption	Combination of both EF and HDI targets
Housing	Reduce the impact of housing	Increase housing availability	Combination of both EF and HDI targets
Transportation	Reduce the impact of transportation	Ensure adequate transportation systems	Combination of both EF and HDI targets

# Is a stand-alone goal for SCP desirable?

- Yes: because:
  - high visibility
  - Communicates (non-material) wellbeing
  - Addressing consumers directly
  - Provides target for 10YFP
- No, because:
  - SCP is cross-cutting
  - Overlap with other goals
  - SCP could become “silo”
  - Overlap with 10YFP

# Is a stand-alone goal for SCP desirable?

Advantages	Disadvantages
Puts a pointed focus on SCP as a core objective of SD and an area for action	May overlap and compete with other SD goals since SCP, as an overarching and cross-cutting approach to SD, is a part of all other sustainability goals
Broadens the number of international high profile mandates directly addressing SCP	Requires careful coordination with the 10YFP to avoid duplication and unproductive competition
Makes it easier to highlight well-being as the primary objective of consumption and production	Limitations of precise indicators and lack of data for measuring concrete targets, especially as regards social aspects, might make implementation difficult
Makes it easier to communicate SCP to all stakeholders, including individual consumers and citizens	Could establish SCP as a siloed activity to be dealt with in isolation from other areas.
Makes it easier to endorse actions by citizens-consumers aimed at both increasing wellbeing and reducing ecological burden	Might be regarded mainly as an environmental goal with implementation responsibility assigned to government bodies with limited resources and weak influence in the policy process



# Metrics to measure progress: how to choose? Examples:

- Wellbeing:
  - Human Development Index (UN)
  - Gross National Happiness Indicator (Bhutan)
  - National Accounts of Well-being (NEF)
  - Better Life Index (OECD)
  - Others.....
- Equity
  - GINI coefficient
- Environment
  - Ecological Footprint
  - Inclusive LCA
  - Material Flow Analysis; material footprint
  - Others.....

# Conclusions

1. GRF-SPaC is presently the global network of researchers on SCP systems: including well-being; post-consumerist culture; and new economics
  - SCP is systemic issue
  - GRF 2014 conference will address “transitions to systemic change”
1. REDUCTIONS is GRF’s flagship project; researching the potentials for absolute reductions in energy and materials
  - We are working on a special issue for the JCP, including case studies and an overarching framework
2. A SDG for SCP is desirable as either stand-alone or cross-cutting goal.

# Thank you

- [www.scorai.org](http://www.scorai.org)
- <http://grf-spc.weebly.com/>
- <https://www.confmanager.com/main.cfm?cid=2724&nid=16327>
- [pvergragt@tellus.org](mailto:pvergragt@tellus.org)