

## UN Charter for Ecological Justice - Transcript for the Animation

The brief [animation](#) introducing the Charter for Ecological Justice was released on 1 September 2023. The animation was developed by [Insurgent Vision](#), the concept by [Poems for Parliament](#) and the narration by David Edwardson.

### The Transcript in English follows

Humanity started exceeding the carrying capacity of Earth in 1925 when our population reached 2 billion. This is reflected in the steady rise in background extinction rates and the decline of the insect population since that time. At the moment our definition of Ecological Overshoot does not leave any biocapacity for other life forms. When the global population reached 4 billion in the 1970s we were already exploiting all the available biocapacity for our own purposes. For biodiversity to be able to flourish again a sustainable human population is likely to be less than 2 billion. We need to bear in mind that the total biocapacity of Earth is now shrinking rapidly due to climate change.

There are three key drivers to the ecological damage caused by humanity. These three drivers are: population size, the affluence of the population and the extent of their dependence on technology. This scientific insight was arrived at in the 1970s and is known as the IPAT equation. It informs us that the ecological footprint of an individual will usually increase with their affluence and the amount of technology that they rely upon for survival.

- 1) Using the data from the Global Footprint Network, we see that in 2018 the Earth offered about 12 billion hectares of productive surface area. These are referred to as global hectares. With climate change the number of global hectares is falling rapidly. Reserving half of Earth's biocapacity to maintain biodiversity leaves less than 6 billion global hectares.
- 2) 2.14 global hectares is considered adequate for one human to live a fulfilled life. According to this benchmark, those above and below this level of consumption are already over-exploiting their available natural resources at a rate that is nearly four times the biocapacity that they have available in their respective countries.
- 3) The global population is fairly evenly split between high and low consumption, although the low consumers are squeezed into a much smaller area.
- 4) With a fairly distributed global average consumption of 2.14 global hectares per capita, the Earth might have been able to sustain 2.9 billion people in the past.

Today, in 2023 virtually every country in the world is exceeding the natural resources available within their borders; consequently, we are witnessing rapidly escalating ecosystems collapse.

Whichever way we look at the data, it is quite clear that our persistence with growth economics has resulted in massive global problems due to overconsumption and overpopulation.

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Our Declaration of Human Rights ignores the fact that our survival depends on healthy ecosystems. This can cause us to make unwise judgements.

Growth economics is perpetuated through modern education and coercive consumerism. Adults aspire to financial wealth and parenthood; they do not realise the scale and speed of climate breakdown and ecosystems collapse. They believe that technology and money are solutions; but these are tools that can destroy ecosystems.

The Ubuntu philosophy teaches us the joy of sharing fairly within our peer-group. By extending this philosophy to embrace all of life on Earth, we can steer a wiser path forward.

The UN Charter for Ecological Justice provides a formal definition for humanity to respect the carrying capacity of Earth.

For a full understanding of the Charter that is proposed please download the 'Roadmap to Ecological Justice' from the SSRN website.