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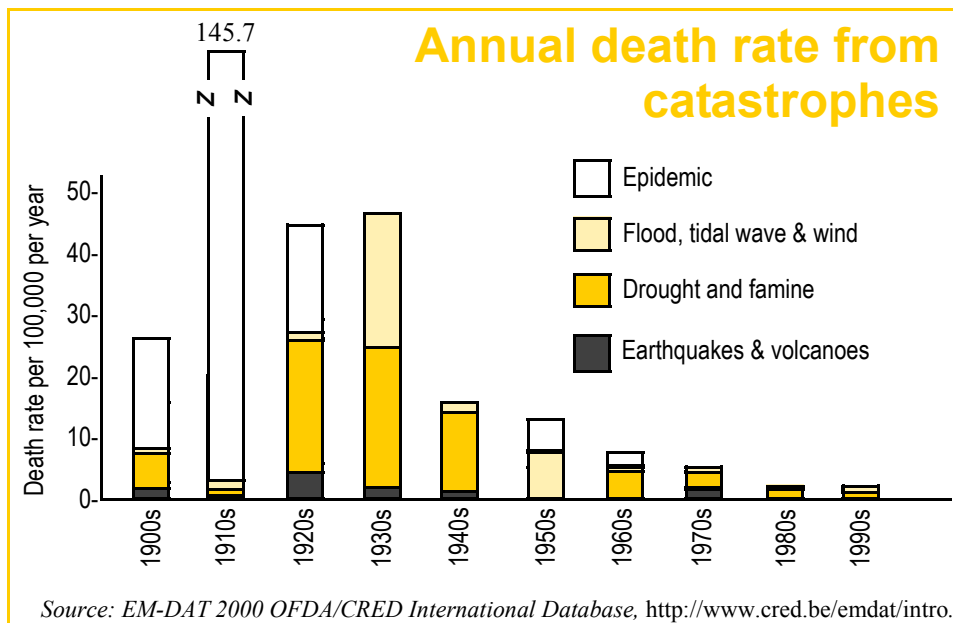
Good News on Earth

We're better off ...

The Earth is a much safer world than at ANY time in human history.

In spite of graphic details in the press and the constant pronouncements by Green groups of an increasing frequency and scale of natural catastrophes, epidemics,

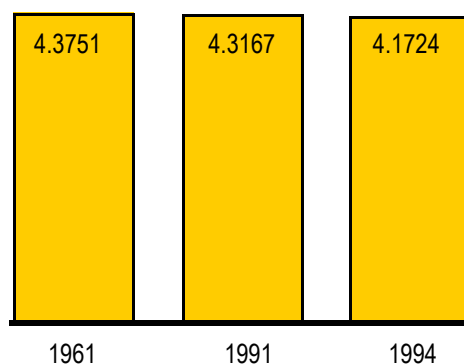
floods, tidal waves and storms, evidence suggests that humans are safer now than ever before. Measures such as better forecasting, disaster preparedness, medicine and less vulnerable populations have created an absolute decline in death rates of 98 per cent since 1900.



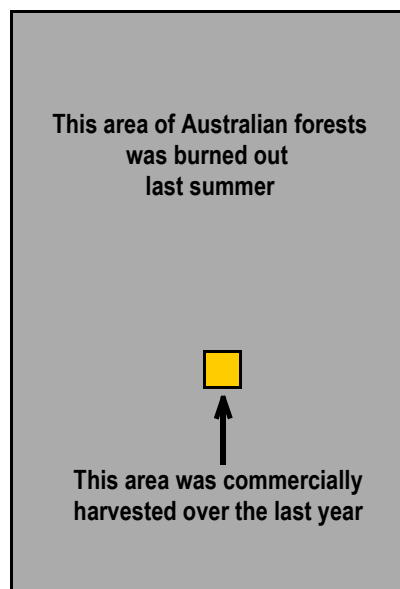
Forest area is not diminishing

Our forests are not under threat. From an historical perspective, about 20 per cent of all forests worldwide have been lost, while about a third of the world's land mass is still covered by forest, and since World War II this area has changed very little.

Overall forest cover in the world's land area in billions of hectares



Source: FAO Production Yearbook 1949-95



Source: Australia's National Association of Forest Industries

Only around 10,000 hectares per annum are harvested in Victoria, compared to 1.34 million hectares burned there this last summer.

Did you know?



That the total US waste throughout the twenty-first century could be deposited in a single square landfill, less than 18 miles on the side. [Source: Bjorn Lomborg, *The Sceptical Environmentalist*, p. 329]

That in France, life expectancy in 1800 was around 30. In Denmark, it was around 44 in 1845. In

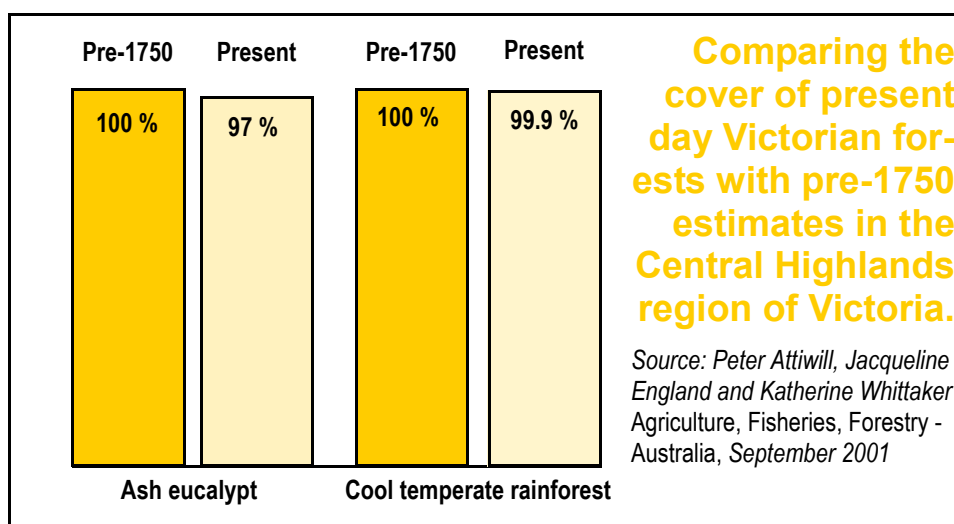
all industrialised countries it is now an average of 77 years, with Japan on 80. [Source: Lomborg, *op. cit.*, p. 50]

That in 2000, food costs less than a third of its price in 1957. Wheat has had a downwards trend ever since 1800, and is now 10 times cheaper than it was 500

... even in Australia !

There is much confusion about Australia's flora and fauna. It is true that less than 0.2 per cent of grasslands in Victoria are left, for instance. But this has happened largely through farming, and largely in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Remarkably, the amount of ash eucalypt, a mainstay of the timber industry, is

largely intact. As for the area of cool, temperate rainforests in the Central Highlands region, just north of Melbourne, from Broadford, to the east of Melbourne, to Noogee, there has been almost no measurable change at all. Peter Attiwell, [Source: Ecology, An Australian Perspective, 2003]



Did you know?



years ago. [Source: World Bank price index for foodstuffs 1957-2000 and Michell B.R. 1988 *British Historical Statistics* Cambridge UP]

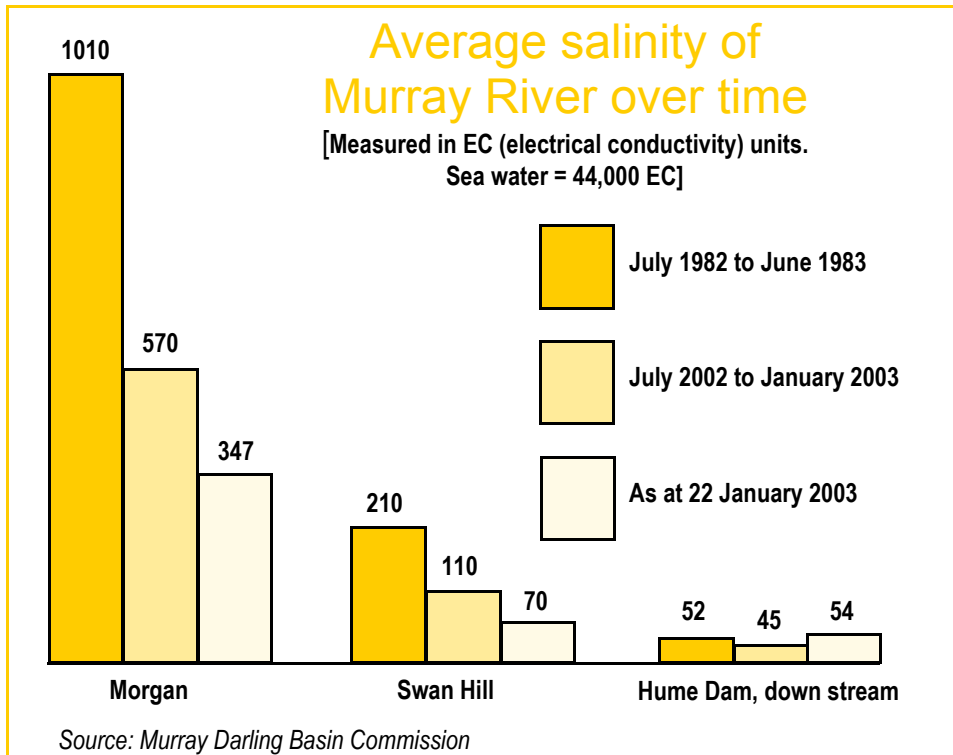
That at a global level, the major problems remain with hunger and poverty. There still remain some 800 million hungry people and some 1.2 billion poor people

in this world. [Source: Lomborg, *op. cit.*, p. 328]

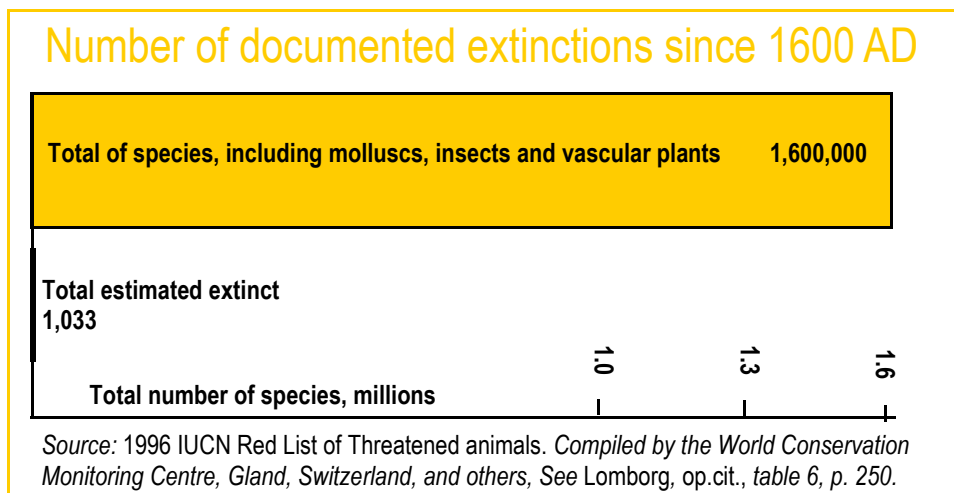
That the proportion of starving people in the world has fallen from 35 per cent to 18 per cent. [Source: Lomborg, *op. cit.*, p. 67]

That 86 per cent of the Amazon rainforest is still intact. [Source: Lomborg, *op. cit.*, p. 255]

The Murray is not getting saltier



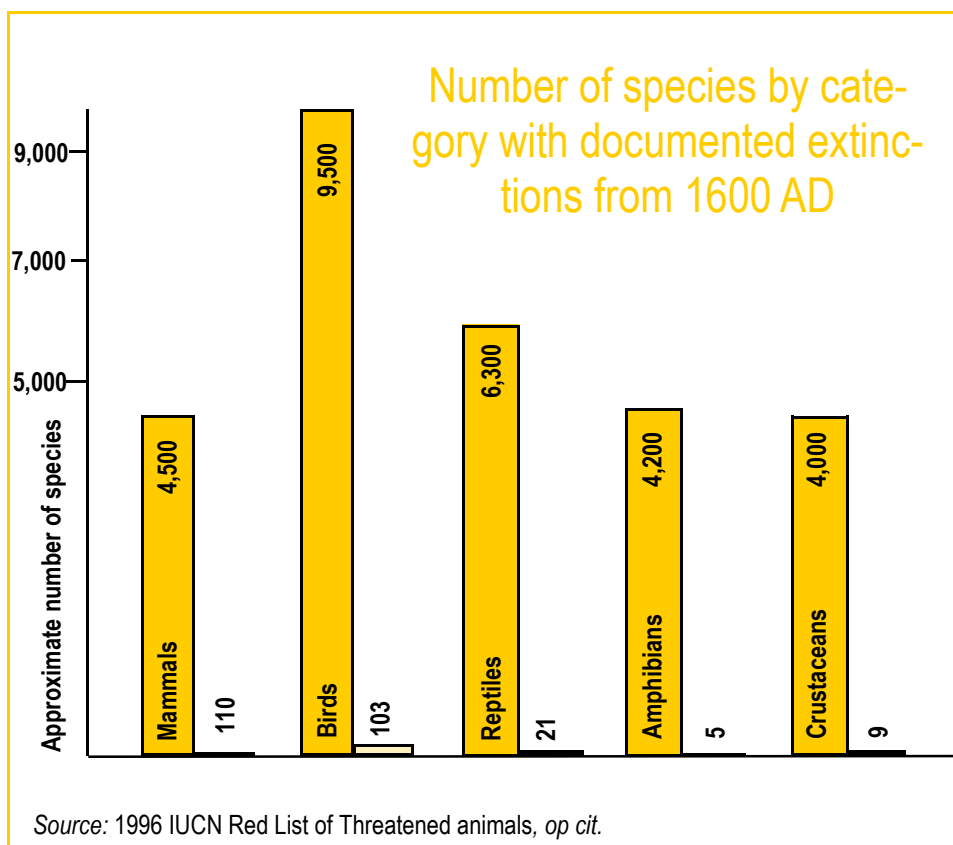
... nor are species dying out so fast



Forty thousand a year? No way !

There have been extravagant claims of 40,000 species becoming extinct every year. Nowhere has there been proof of such catastrophic loss. This figure was created by models and predictions that have no correlation with actual observation or careful calculation. Because of the considerable variations in the estimated number of species, it is best to discuss extinc-

tion in terms of percentage loss over a given time. This turns out to be only 0.7 per cent per 50 years, not the 25-100 per cent claimed by the alarmists. It is a problem but not a catastrophe. Facing this fact is important when we have to make tough choices on where to do the most good with our limited resources. [Source: Lomborg, *op. cit.* pp. 250-7]

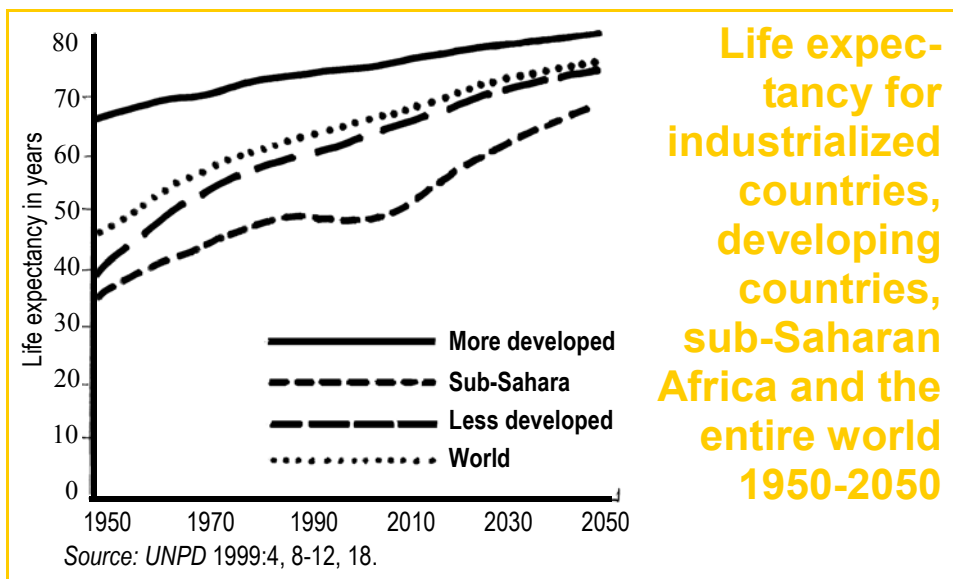


... and for All Mankind

Living longer and better

At the beginning of the twentieth century, many developing countries had life expectancy levels reminiscent of the Stone Age. In 1906, life expectancy in India was about 25. In China, in 1930, people only lived an average of 24 years. Even in Chile, a relatively more advanced developed country, life ex-

pectancy was only 31 years in 1909. More than 85 per cent of all the world's inhabitants can expect to live for at least 60 years—more than twice as long as people were expected to live on average just one hundred years ago. Incredible progress. [Source: Lomborg, *op. cit.*, p. 53]

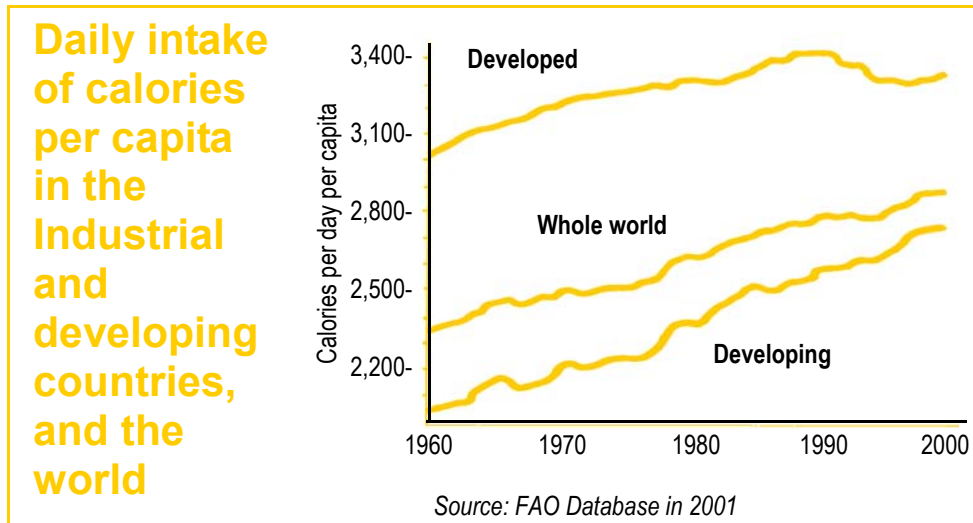


... and with more food

In spite of a huge increase in global population, food production has increased even more. In fact, the United Nations claims an increase of 23 per cent more food per capita than in 1961. Calorie intake has also increased, notably in

the developing world, by an impressive 38 per cent. All of this means that less people proportionally, are starving. In fact, 2 billion more people do not go hungry. [Source: FAO Database in 2001 <http://apps.fao.org/>]

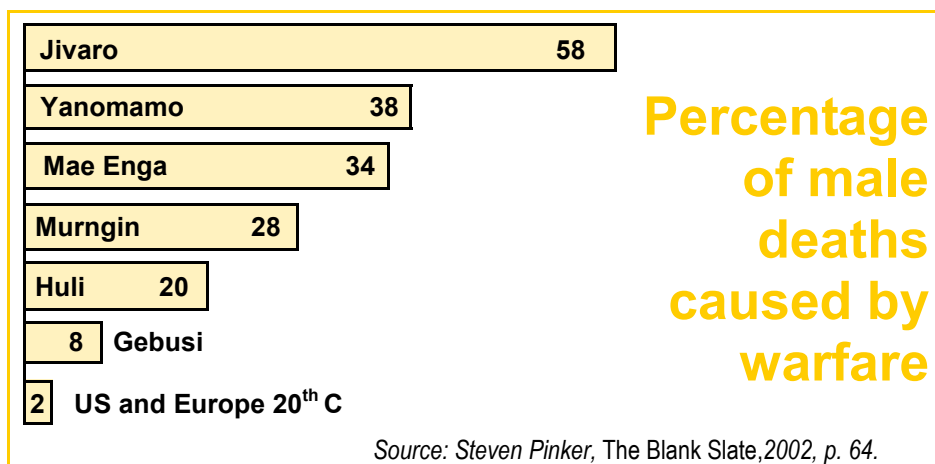
... than ever before



... even considering the two Wars

Although hard to believe, the number of male deaths in Europe and the US, including all those who died in the two World Wars, whilst high in absolute numbers, is tiny compared to the *proportion* of

those who have died in inter-tribal warfare through most of human history. Anthropological calculations estimate that 64 per cent of hunter-gatherer societies were at war at least once every two years.





 **The Ocean**

Local government, industry, community groups and companies now give more attention to urban storm-water management and prevention of litter pollution of coastal waters.

A further 17.6 million hectares of marine protected areas have been established since 1996. [Source: State of the Environment 2001, *Environment Australia*.]

 **Cleaner air**

In rural and regional Australia, levels of most pollutants are well below actual or proposed standards.

In spite of the huge increase in cars in Australia's biggest cities, ur-

ban ambient sulfur dioxide concentrations rarely exceeded environmental air values, and the maximum value of hourly ozone concentrations—providing estimates of photo-chemical smog—has declined steadily. [Source: State of the Environment 2001, *Environment Australia*]

 **Water improves in rivers**

Salt levels in the Murray River system have declined unambiguously over the last twenty years, due to the successful application of technology. [Source: Murray Darling Basin Commission]

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