



Limits to Ignorance: The Challenges of Informed Humanity

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Overcoming
Ignorance:

NGOs and
Civic
Engagement

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by

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Overcoming
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The Club of Rome's trademark

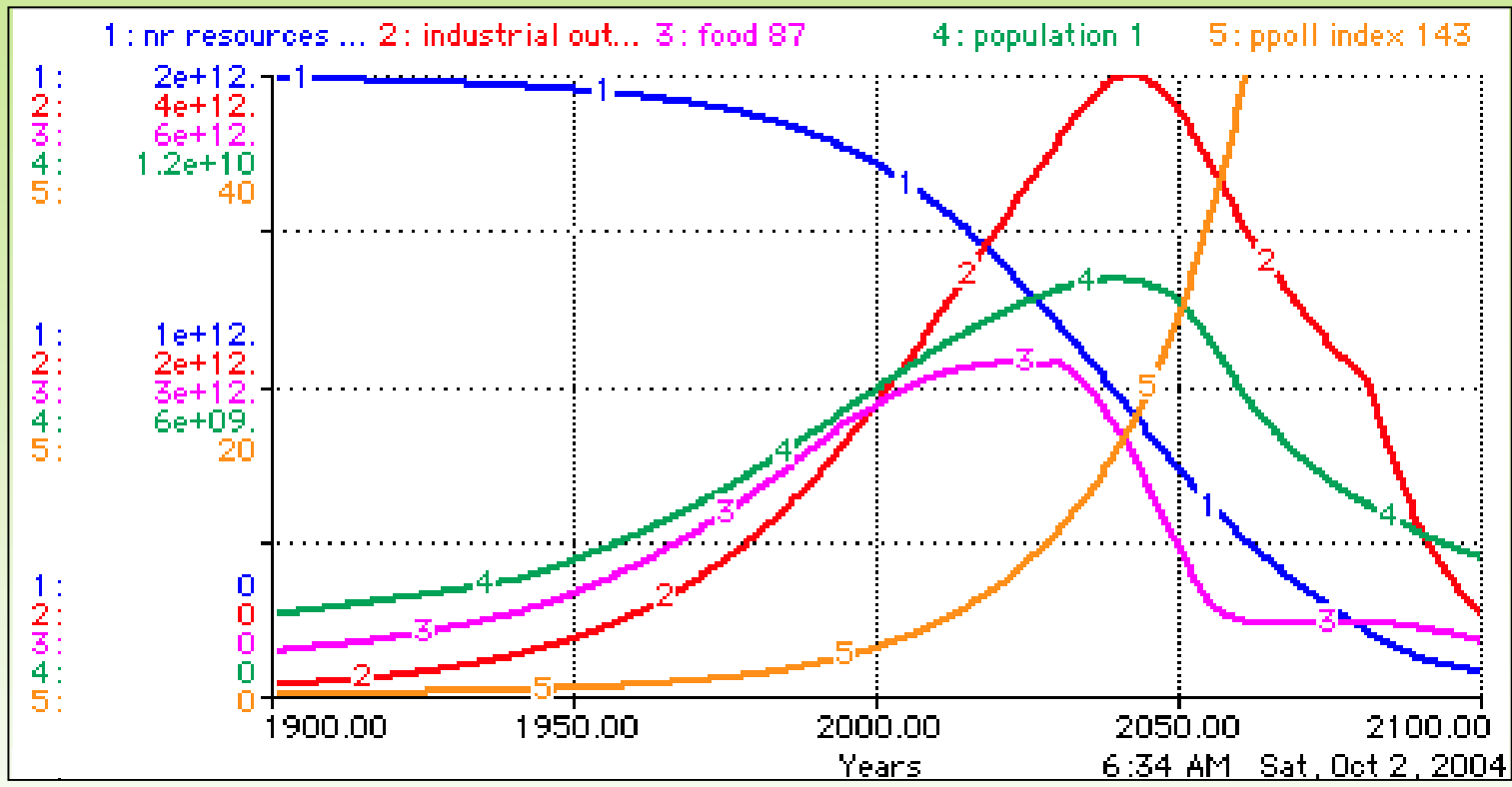
- Limits to Growth, 1972
- Population + resources
+ production + food + pollution
- Overshoot and collapse ca. 2050
- Beyond the Limits, 1992
- Limits to Growth III, 2004

Conclusion:

still on schedule



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Source: Limits to Growth - the 30-Year Update



"Resource and emission constraints have created many crises since 1972, exciting the media, attracting public attention, and arousing politicians. ... All of them illustrate and are consistent with our basic conclusion that physical growth constraints are an important aspect of the global policy arena for the twenty-first century."

From: Limits to Growth - the 30-Year Update, page xvii



"For those who respect numbers, we can report that the highly aggregated scenarios of World3 still appear, after 30 years, to be surprisingly accurate. The world in the year 2000 had the same number of people (about 9 billion - up from 3.9 billion in 1972) that we had projected in the 1972 standard run of World3. Furthermore, that scenario showed a growth in global food production (from 1.8 billion tons of grain equivalent per year in 1972 to 3 billion in 2000) that matches history quite well."

From: Limits to Growth - the 30-Year Update, page xviii



To tighten limits

- Arms race, war, poverty
- Ignorance, terrorism
- Competition vs. cooperation
- Waste and squander
(no kerosine VAT, low budget air, US-4WD, Russian gas and oil production and transport)
- Global Casino, flash capital
- Free-market ideologists

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To stretch limits

- Energy saving projects
- New energy systems
- Ecotaxation (labour → materials)
- Tobin tax (on flash capital)
- Information, internet
- People Planet Profit
- Socially responsible investment (SRI)
- GRI, CSR, ...
- GMOs

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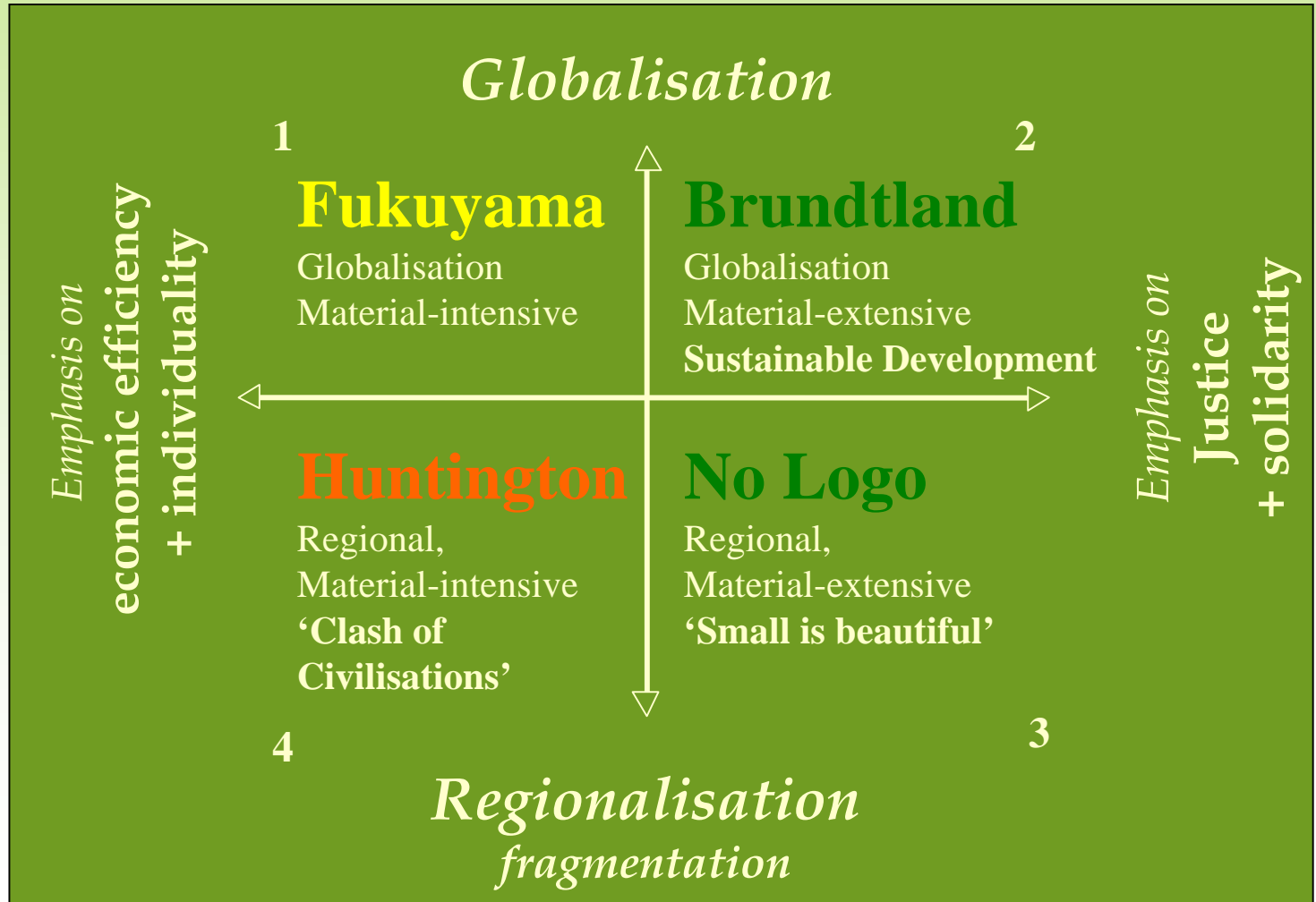
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To move from failure to success

The world does not have one mental model; there are at least four

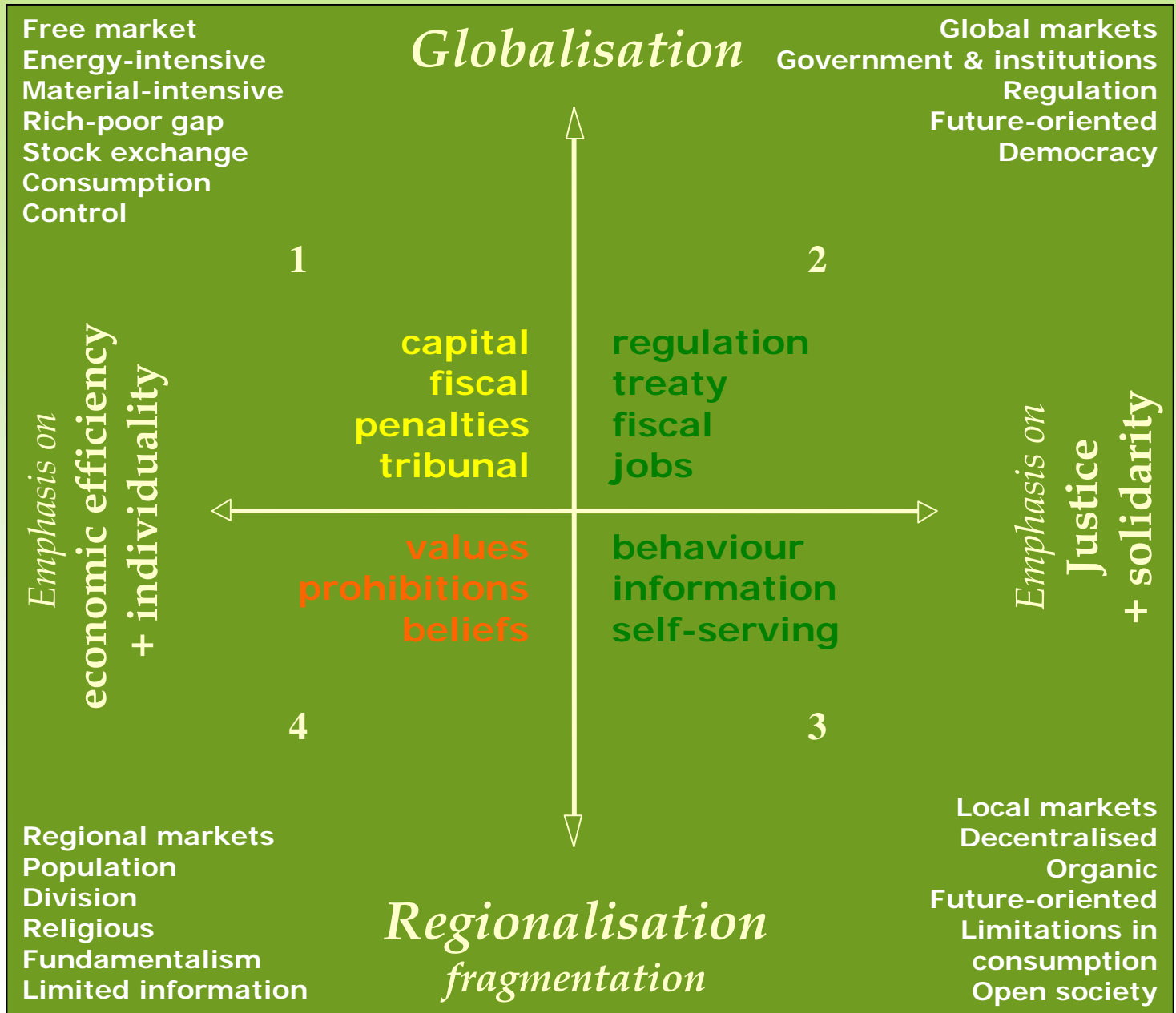
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source: RIVM, the Netherlands



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Change in (1) driven by

- Financial stress
- Stock exchange failure or success
(Dow Jones Sustainability
Performance Index)
- The Internet Tribunal
(consumers, NGOs, science)
- Competitors, markets
- Fiscalities
- Regulation



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Change in (2) driven by

- Education
- Freedom of information
- Emancipation
- Leadership
- Technical breakthroughs
- Oil shortage
- European alliances
- Internet



Change in (3) driven by

- Democracy
- Fiscalities
- Consumer power
- Regulation
- Employment
- Justice, solidarity
- Internet

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Change in (4) driven by

- Regionalisation
- Individualism
- Ethics, purity
- Regulation
- Thrift
- Trust, responsibility

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Conclusion

- Civic engagement is not one system
- It does not work in non-matching mental models
- Ignorance is inherently present in all mental models, including the top
- The largest momentum is to be created with new leadership in model 1 (Fukuyama) and 4 (Huntington)
- Currently, the dominant models of 1 and 2 take a direction opposite to what is needed