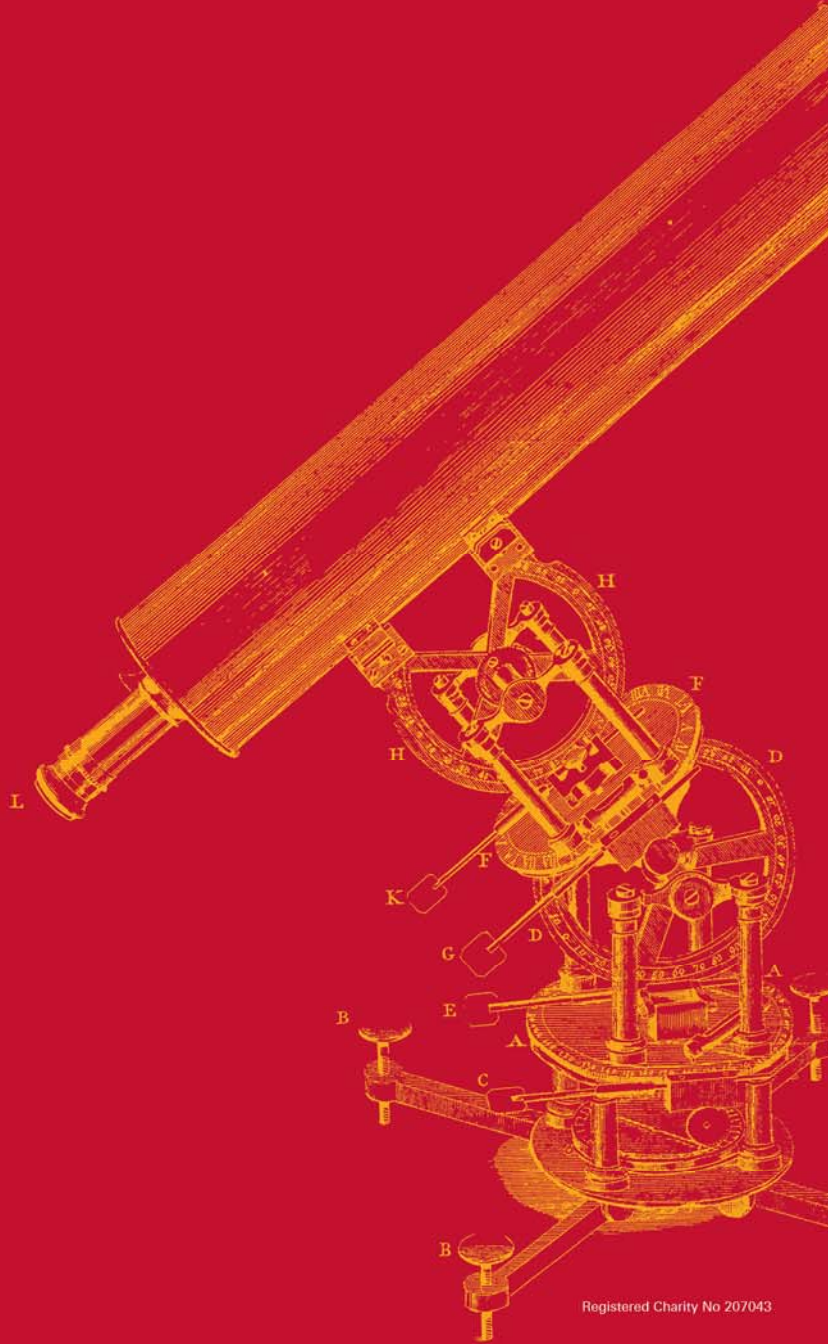


Resilience of people and the planet

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What is changing?

The 21st century is a critical period for people and the planet:

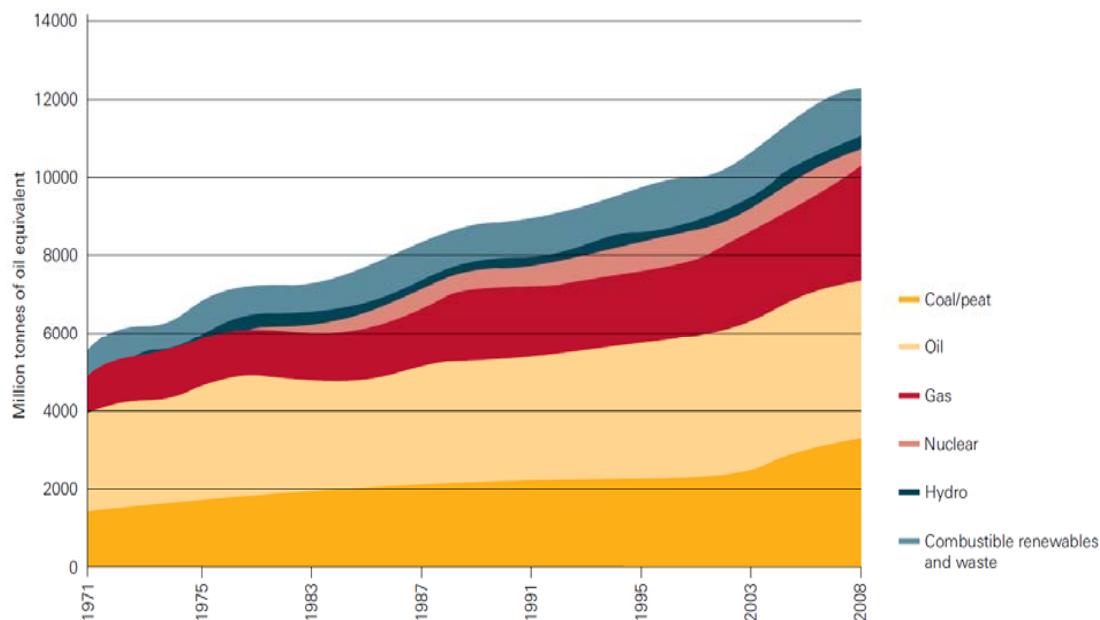
- Continued growth and widespread changes in the world's human population.
- Unprecedented and increasing levels of consumption, unequally distributed.
- Profound challenges to human health and wellbeing, and to the natural environment

Population pressures

- The global population reached 7 billion in 2011. It's expected to reach between 8 and 11 billion by 2050.
- The global population is becoming older and more urban than ever before.
- People are migrating to seek out new opportunities.

Consumption of material resources

- Consumption of water, food, energy and minerals have grown rapidly in recent years, both overall and per capita.



Source: IEA 2010

- World total energy supply by fuel, 1971 to 2008

Urbanisation

- Globally: 29% of people lived in urban areas in 1950, 49% in 2005; 69% expected by 2050.
- Fastest rates of urbanisation seen in the Least Developed Countries.
- Unplanned urbanisation without socioeconomic development leads to slums.
- Slum settlements are characterised by poor housing, social services, basic amenities, insecurity and poor health outcomes.

Ageing

- Globally: 5% of the population was over the age of 65 in 1950, 9% in 2010; expected to reach 20% in 2050.
- Health age is more important than chronological age.
- The very old and very young are most vulnerable to disasters.

Migration

- Globally: estimated 156 million migrants in 1990, 214 million in 2010.
- In 2010, around 8% of migrants were refugees.
- The environmental migrant: those most vulnerable to environmental change are likely to be those least able to migrate.

Environmental limits

It is the combination of both population and consumption that determines the impact on the planet



The costs of disasters:

- Losses from and costs of disasters are rising.
- Due in part to continued growth in population and infrastructure in vulnerable locations.
- Sea-level rise and climate change may increase risk and impact.

Conclusion

- The most important element of disaster planning is to head off situations before they occur.
- This requires humanity to move back from the boundaries it is reaching.
- The economic virtue of living as close to the limits as possible incurs loss of resilience.

Available at

<http://royalsociety.org/policy/projects/people-planet/report/>

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