

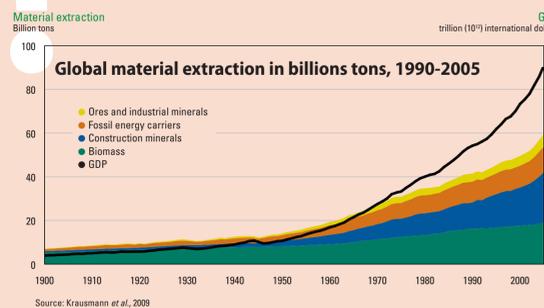
resourcecapcoalition



The Resource Cap Coalition (RCC) is an open platform for organisations advocating a global resource cap. The RCC was initiated by ANPED, CEEweb for Biodiversity and Ecologistas en Acción in 2010. It lobbies for a resource use cap with a view to ensuring social justice and staying within the earth's carrying capacity. It also provides a discussion platform for developing appropriate tools to achieve its aims.

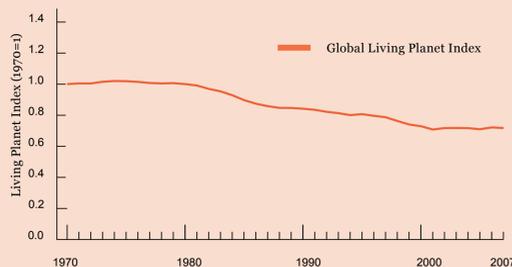
Why do we need to cap our resource use?

Global resource consumption is soaring, with 34 times more material resources being extracted now than one hundred years ago.



Both the process of extraction itself, and the inevitable associated production of waste, place growing pressure on the Earth's ecosystems. This in turn diminishes their ability to perform functions such as climate regulation, food provision and water purification, which underpin all economic and social processes.

In this way, our livelihood, cultural heritage and general wellbeing are coming under even greater threat. Resource extraction is also contributing to biodiversity loss, which is at the present time between 100 and 1,000 times higher than its natural rate.



Living Planet Index: The global index shows that populations of vertebrate species declined by almost 30 % between 1970 and 2007 (Zoological Society of London/WWF, 2010).

However, the exponential economic growth in industrialized countries, fuelled by increasing resource extraction, did not eliminate social inequalities, hunger and poverty either in Europe or globally. Today we face growing global competition for resources and increases in their prices. This

hits the poor hardest, particularly in impoverished countries but also in rich ones.

Industrial economies such as the European Union (EU) use much more than their fair share of resources, and thus they play a major role in environmental degradation. Moreover, most fossil fuels, minerals, and biomass consumed in Europe are extracted in other countries. Hence the EU owes an "ecological debt" to impoverished countries for the use of their resources and ecological space.

According to the International Resource Panel¹, an absolute reduction of resource use on a global level is necessary to make progress towards a sustainable economy. Under a tough contraction and convergence scenario, industrialized countries should reduce their per capita resource use (average metabolic rate) by 66 – 80 %, while a 10 – 20 % reduction in developing (non-industrialized) countries would be needed.

Such a scenario, which in fact would only mean going back to Year 2000 levels of global resource consumption, would be consistent, in terms of carbon use per capita, with the IPPC recommendation to keep global warming below 2°C.



Source: www.polyip.org.uk

Year	Baseline	Scenario 1: Business as usual	Scenario 2: Moderate contraction and convergence	Scenario 3: Tough contraction and convergence
	2000	2050	2050	2050
World population (Billions)	6.0	8.9	8.9	8.9
World Metabolic rate (Tons/capita/year)	8	16	8	5.5
World Metabolic scale (Billion tons/year)	49	141	70	49
Metabolic rate				
Industrialized High density	13	13	6.5	5
Industrialized Low density	24	24	12	8
Developing High density	5	13	6.5	5
Developing Low density	9	24	12	8

Metabolic scales and rates: overview of scenario analysis²

¹ UNEP (2011) *Decoupling natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic growth*, A Report of the Working Group on Decoupling to the International Resource Panel
² http://www.unep.org/resourcepanel/decoupling/files/pdf/Decoupling_Report_English.pdf

Why are current policy responses insufficient?

Policy efforts addressing resource use focus only on achieving higher efficiency. However, this approach alone will not solve the present and oncoming scarcity and the accompanying social and environmental problems.

Economic growth will relentlessly outstrip efficiency gains, meaning a net rise in resource use. Political decisions must deal with the so-called rebound effect when they target resource efficiency, in order to clamp down on overall resource depletion.

Our proposal

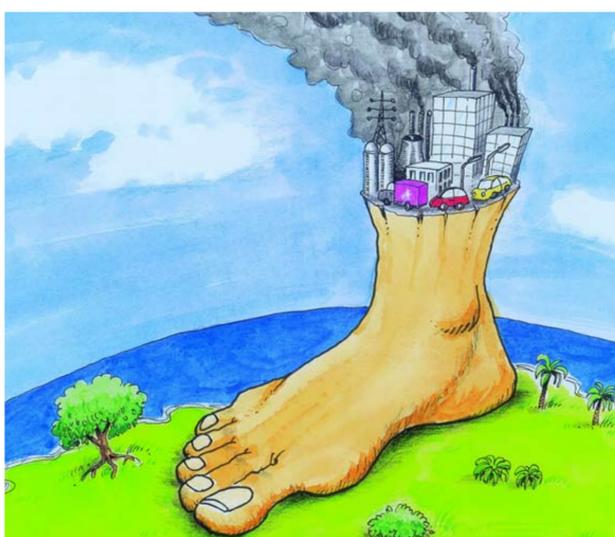
We need to set a cap on the use of resources, including all types of raw materials, if we want to effectively bring down their consumption in the EU and refit our economy inside its ecological space.

What principles should guide such a cap?

The resource cap should:

- ▶ aim to achieve an absolute reduction in resource use,
- ▶ be progressively lowered year by year,
- ▶ be based on an interdisciplinary analysis including sound scientific information and social debate, applying bottom-up approaches as far as possible,
- ▶ be defined through clear indicators and transparency of information,
- ▶ be underpinned by clear rules and strong public support, monitoring and enforcement,
- ▶ transform production and consumption patterns in favour of products and services with low input,

- ▶ contribute to re-localizing the economy with shorter economic cycles, greater self-sufficiency, greater adaptation to local availability of resources and fewer transport needs,
- ▶ fully consider environmental justice and ecological debt (from the North to the South) caused by centuries of social and economic exploitation,
- ▶ take into account social concerns so that the poor, vulnerable and marginalized benefit,
- ▶ better balance the shares of human labour and machine labour,
- ▶ be accompanied by complementary measures (effective regulation of pollution and land use, taxation, basic access guarantees, etc.)
- ▶ not allow any financial speculation within the new structure of resource scarcity.



The Resource Cap Coalition is advocating an overarching regulatory framework that can achieve different objectives. This should include the following tools:

1. Non-renewable energy quota system

The proposed scheme aims to set a cap on non-renewable energy use at EU level based on present use rates. The cap would be lowered progressively year by year.

- ▶ **Quotas** per capita and per sector are assigned with the involvement of all stakeholders. Quota savings can be sold for interest free "quota money", which can be spent in an environmentally and socially **certified market**.
- ▶ A **revolving fund** helps to finance investments in energy efficiency and renewables through interest free loans in quota money, with a payback period adjusted to the energy savings or income generation realised through the investment. This makes such investments accessible to everybody including the poor.
- ▶ An **advisory service** helps all stakeholders to change their behaviour and adapt to the new scheme.

2. Rimini Protocol – An Oil Depletion Protocol

This protocol proposes to limit the national rate of extraction and consumption to the current national (NDR) and global depletion rate (GDR) respectively, depending on whether a particular country is an oil importer or exporter. The idea is to regulate the level to which oil flows should be restricted, in order to soften the reduction of its availability, facilitating the transition to a post-oil society through reducing dependency.