affluence in environmental science

Affluence in Environmental Science: A Double-Edged Sword

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Abstract: This article explores the multifaceted relationship between affluence and environmental science. We examine how affluence fuels both environmental degradation and the capacity for innovative solutions. The discussion delves into the ethical considerations surrounding unequal access to environmental resources and technologies, highlighting the crucial role of affluence in shaping the future of environmental sustainability.

1. The Paradox of Affluence in Environmental Science

The concept of "affluence in environmental science" presents a complex paradox. On one hand, affluence – the abundance of wealth and resources – drives much of the environmental damage we witness today. High consumption levels, fueled by affluence in developed nations, are directly responsible for increased greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion. This is often referred to as the "ecological footprint" of affluence. The higher the level of affluence, the larger the footprint, highlighting the negative aspects of affluence in environmental science.

However, affluence also provides the financial resources, technological innovation, and institutional capacity necessary to address these environmental challenges. Advanced research, the development of clean technologies, and the implementation of effective environmental policies all

require substantial financial investment – an investment often only possible in affluent societies. Therefore, understanding affluence in environmental science necessitates acknowledging this dual role.

2. Affluence and Technological Innovation

One of the most significant contributions of affluence to environmental science is its role in fostering technological innovation. Affluent nations have the resources to invest heavily in research and development of cleaner energy sources, more efficient resource management techniques, and pollution control technologies. This includes investments in renewable energy (solar, wind, geothermal), advanced waste management systems, and precision agriculture to minimize environmental impact. Without affluence driving these advancements, progress in mitigating environmental damage would be significantly hampered. The development and deployment of these technologies are directly impacted by the levels of affluence in environmental science.

3. Affluence and Environmental Policy

Effective environmental policies are also heavily reliant on affluence. The implementation of stringent environmental regulations, the creation of protected areas, and the enforcement of environmental laws all require significant financial resources and administrative capacity. Affluent nations are better positioned to invest in environmental monitoring, enforcement agencies, and public awareness campaigns, leading to more robust environmental protection. The influence of affluence in environmental science extends to shaping policies that directly impact the environment.

4. The Unequal Distribution of Environmental Benefits and Burdens

A critical aspect of understanding affluence in environmental science lies in acknowledging the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. While affluence enables some societies to invest in environmental protection and enjoy cleaner environments, it often comes at the expense of others. The production and consumption patterns of affluent nations often displace environmental costs onto less affluent regions, leading to environmental injustice. This includes the outsourcing of polluting industries, the unequal access to clean water and sanitation, and the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable populations. Addressing this inequality is central to achieving environmental justice and sustainable development, understanding the interplay of affluence in environmental science.

5. The Ethical Dimensions of Affluence in Environmental Science

The ethical implications of affluence in environmental science are profound.

The question of responsibility – who bears the burden of environmental damage and who benefits from environmental protection – remains a central point of contention. The overconsumption patterns of affluent societies contribute significantly to global environmental problems, raising questions of intergenerational equity and global justice. Ethical considerations must be integrated into environmental policy and practice to ensure a fair and sustainable future for all. Affluence in environmental science demands a responsible and ethical approach to resource management and technological advancement.

6. Moving Towards Sustainable Affluence

The challenge lies not in abandoning affluence but in transforming it into a force for sustainable development. This involves shifting from a linear "take-make-dispose" economic model to a circular economy that minimizes waste and maximizes resource efficiency. It also requires investing in sustainable technologies, promoting responsible consumption patterns, and ensuring equitable access to environmental resources and benefits. The concept of "sustainable affluence" implies a shift in societal values, emphasizing quality of life over material consumption. A key aspect of affluence in environmental science focuses on evolving towards sustainability.

Conclusion

Affluence in environmental science is a double-edged sword. While it fuels environmental degradation, it also provides the resources and capacity for innovative solutions. Addressing the ethical dimensions of affluence, promoting sustainable consumption patterns, and ensuring equitable access to environmental benefits are crucial for navigating this complex relationship and creating a truly sustainable future. The future of environmental science hinges on effectively harnessing the potential of affluence while mitigating its negative impacts.

FAQs:

1. What is the ecological footprint of affluence? The ecological footprint measures the impact of human activities on the environment, reflecting the amount of natural resources consumed and waste generated. Affluent societies generally have larger ecological footprints due to higher consumption levels.

1. How does affluence contribute to climate change? Affluence drives high energy consumption, contributing significantly to greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, industry, and energy production.

1. What role does technological innovation play in mitigating environmental problems? Technological advancements are vital in developing cleaner energy sources, more efficient resource management techniques, and pollution control technologies.

1. What is environmental justice, and how does affluence relate to it? Environmental justice addresses the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, often linked to disparities in wealth and power. Affluent societies often benefit from cleaner environments while less affluent societies bear the brunt of environmental damage.

1. What are some examples of sustainable consumption patterns? Sustainable consumption involves reducing waste, choosing environmentally friendly products, supporting local and sustainable businesses, and minimizing energy and water use.

1. What is a circular economy? A circular economy aims to minimize waste and maximize resource efficiency by keeping materials in use for as long as possible.

1. How can we promote equitable access to environmental benefits? Equitable access requires policies that address social and economic inequalities, ensuring everyone has access to clean water, sanitation, and a healthy environment.

1. What is the role of government in addressing the challenges of affluence and the environment? Governments play a crucial role in implementing environmental regulations, investing in research and development, and promoting sustainable practices.

1. How can individuals contribute to a more sustainable future? Individuals can make a difference by adopting sustainable lifestyles, supporting

environmental organizations, and advocating for responsible environmental policies.

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consumers not to aspire to be like the old ones. Cogent in its analysis, The New Consumers issues a timely warning of a major and developing environmental trend, and suggests valuable strategies for ameliorating its effects.

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wealthy individuals and societies use far too much of the earth's resource base and should scale back their appetites to preserve the environment for future generations and allow a decent life for the rest of the world. Other observers see affluence as the way to escape environmental threats: economic development increases public pressure for environmental protection and makes capital available for environmentally benign technologies. The arguments are fed by conflicting beliefs, values, hopes, and fearsâ€but surprisingly little scientific analysis. This book demonstrates that the relationship of consumption to the environment needs careful analysis by environmental and social scientists and conveys some of the excitement of treating the issue scientifically. It poses the key empirical questions: Which kinds of consumption are environmentally significant? Which actors are responsible for that consumption? What forces cause or explain environmentally significant consumption? How can it be changed? The book presents studies that open up important issues for empirical study: Are there any signs of saturation in the demand for travel in wealthy countries? What is the relationship between environmental consumption and human well-being? To what extent do people in developing countries emulate American consumption styles? The book also suggests broad strategies that scientists and research sponsors can use to better inform future debates about the environment, development, and consumption.

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technological development, the structure of economic decision-making, the direction of government funding, and the dropping of trade barriers in North America and Europe.

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growth, this exemption should be considered illusory at best. This book is an essential read for all scientists and economists who have recognized the urgent need for a more scientific, empirical, and unified approach to economics in an energy-constrained world, and serves as an ideal teaching text for the growing number of courses, such as the authors' own, on the role of energy in society.

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prices, addressing poverty and inequality in the Philippines remains a challenge. The proportion of households living below the official poverty line has declined slowly and unevenly in the past four decades, and poverty reduction has been much slower than in neighboring countries such as the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Economic growth has gone through boom and bust cycles, and recent episodes of moderate economic expansion have had limited impact on the poor. Great inequality across income brackets, regions, and sectors, as well as unmanaged population growth, are considered some of the key factors constraining poverty reduction efforts. This publication analyzes the causes of poverty and recommends ways to accelerate poverty reduction and achieve more inclusive growth. it also provides an overview of current government responses, strategies, and achievements in the fight against poverty and identifies and prioritizes future needs and interventions. The analysis is based on current literature and the latest available data, including the 2006 Family Income and Expenditure Survey.

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affluence in environmental science: A Climate of Injustice J. Timmons Roberts, Bradley Parks, 2006-11-22 The global debate over who should take action to address climate change is extremely precarious, as diametrically opposed perceptions of climate justice threaten the prospects for any long-term agreement. Poor nations fear limits on their efforts to grow economically and meet the needs of their own people, while powerful industrial nations, including the United States, refuse to curtail their own excesses unless developing countries make similar sacrifices. Meanwhile, although industrialized countries are responsible for 60 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, developing countries suffer the worst and first effects of climate-related disasters, including droughts, floods, and storms, because of their geographical locations. In A Climate of Injustice, J. Timmons Roberts and Bradley Parks analyze the role that inequality between rich and poor nations plays in the negotiation of global climate agreements. Roberts and Parks argue that global inequality dampens cooperative efforts by reinforcing the structuralist worldviews and causal beliefs of many poor nations, eroding conditions of generalized trust, and promoting particularistic notions of fair solutions. They develop new measures of climate-related inequality, analyzing fatality and homelessness rates from hydrometeorological disasters, patterns of emissions inequality, and participation in international environmental regimes. Until we recognize that reaching a North-South global climate pact requires addressing larger issues of inequality and striking a global bargain on environment and development, Roberts and Parks argue, the current policy gridlock will remain unresolved.

affluence in environmental science: Plundering Paradise Robin Broad, John Cavanagh, 2023-11-10 This gripping portrait of environmental politics chronicles the devastating destruction of the Philippine countryside and reveals how ordinary men and women are fighting back. Traveling through a land of lush rainforests, the authors have recorded the experiences of the people whose livelihoods are disappearing along with their country's natural resources. The result is an inspiring, informative account of how peasants, fishers, and other laborers have united to halt the plunder and to improve their lives. These people do not debate global warming—they know that their very lives depend on the land and oceans, so they block logging trucks, protest open-pit mining, and replant trees. In a country where nearly two-thirds of the children are impoverished, the reclaiming of natural resources is offering young people hope for a future. Plundering Paradise is essential reading for anyone interested in development, the global environment, and political life in the Third World.

affluence in environmental science: *Population, Land Use, and Environment* National Research Council, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, Center for Economics,

Governance, and International Studies, Committee on the Human Dimensions of Global Change, Panel on New Research on Population and the Environment, 2005-10-15 Population, Land Use, and Environment: Research Directions offers recommendations for future research to improve understanding of how changes in human populations affect the natural environment by means of changes in land use, such as deforestation, urban development, and development of coastal zones. It also features a set of state-of-the-art papers by leading researchers that analyze population-land useenvironment relationships in urban and rural settings in developed and underdeveloped countries and that show how remote sensing and other observational methods are being applied to these issues. This book will serve as a resource for researchers, research funders, and students.

affluence in environmental science: The Population Bomb Paul R. Ehrlich, 1971

affluence in environmental science: *Ecosystems and Human Well-being* Joseph Alcamo, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (Program), 2003 Ecosystems and Human Well-Being is the first product of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, a four-year international work program designed to meet the needs of decisionmakers for scientific information on the links between ecosystem change and human well-being. The book offers an overview of the project, describing the conceptual framework that is being used, defining its scope, and providing a baseline of understanding that all participants need to move forward. The Millennium Assessment focuses on how humans have altered ecosystems, and how changes in ecosystem services have affected human well-being, how ecosystem changes may affect people in future decades, and what types of responses can be adopted at local, national, or global scales to improve ecosystem management and thereby contribute to human well-being and poverty alleviation. The program was launched by United National Secretary-General Kofi Annan in June 2001, and the primary assessment reports will be released by Island Press in 2005. Leading scientists from more than 100 nations are conducting the assessment, which can aid countries, regions, or companies by: providing a clear, scientific picture of the current sta

affluence in environmental science: Global Environmental Change National Research Council, Policy Division, Board on Sustainable Development, Committee on Global Change Research, 1999-09-14 How can we understand and rise to the environmental challenges of global change? One clear answer is to understand the science of global change, not solely in terms of the processes that control changes in climate and the composition of the atmosphere, but in how ecosystems and human society interact with these changes. In the last two decades of the twentieth century, a number of such research effortsâ€supported by computer and satellite technologyâ€have been launched. Yet many opportunities for integration remain unexploited, and many fundamental questions remain about the earth's capacity to support a growing human population. This volume encourages a renewed commitment to understanding global change and sets a direction for research in the decade ahead. Through case studies the book explores what can be learned from the lessons of the past 20 years and what are the outstanding scientific questions. Highlights include: Research imperatives and strategies for investigators in the areas of atmospheric chemistry, climate, ecosystem studies, and human dimensions of global change. The context of climate change, including lessons to be gleaned from paleoclimatology. Human responses toâ€and forcing ofâ€projected global change. This book offers a comprehensive overview of global change research to date and provides a framework for answering urgent questions.

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and beneficial.

affluence in environmental science: *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Sociology* George Ritzer, 2016-09-26 Featuring a collection of original chapters by leading and emerging scholars, The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Sociology presents a comprehensive and balanced overview of the major topics and emerging trends in the discipline of sociology today. Features original chapters contributed by an international cast of leading and emerging sociology scholars Represents the most innovative and 'state-of-the-art' thinking about the discipline Includes a general introduction and section introductions with chapters summaries by the editor

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value and scope of different methods. Ideal as a course text for students, this book will also be of interest to researchers and consultants in the environmental sciences.

affluence in environmental science: *Flammable* Javier Auyero, Debora Alejandra Swistun, 2009-04-10 Surrounded by one of the largest petrochemical compounds in Argentina, a highly polluted river that brings the toxic waste of tanneries and other industries, a hazardous and largely unsupervised waste incinerator, and an unmonitored landfill, Flammable's soil, air, and water are contaminated with lead, chromium, benzene, and other chemicals. So are its nearly five thousand sickened and frail inhabitants. How do poor people make sense of and cope with toxic pollution? Why do they fail to understand what is objectively a clear and present danger? How are perceptions and misperceptions shared within a community? Based on archival research and two and a half years of collaborative ethnographic fieldwork in Flammable, this book examines the lived experiences of environmental suffering. Despite clear evidence to the contrary, residents allow themselves to doubt or even deny the hard facts of industrial pollution. This happens, the authors argue, through a labor of confusion enabled by state officials who frequently raise the issue of relocation and just as frequently suspend it; by the companies who fund local health care but assert that the area is unfit for human residence; by doctors who say the illnesses are no different from anywhere else but tell mothers they must leave the neighborhood if their families are to be cured; by journalists who randomly appear and focus on the most extreme aspects of life there; and by lawyers who encourage residents to hold out for a settlement. These contradictory actions, advice, and information work together to shape the confused experience of living in danger and ultimately translates into a long, ineffective, and uncertain waiting time, a time dictated by powerful interests and shared by all marginalized groups. With luminous and vivid descriptions of everyday life in the neighborhood, Auyero and Swistun depict this on-going slow motion human and environmental disaster and dissect the manifold ways in which it is experienced by Flammable residents.

affluence in environmental science: More from Less Andrew McAfee, 2019-10-08 From the coauthor of the New York Times bestseller The Second Machine Age, a paradigm-shifting argument “full of fascinating information and provocative insights” (Publishers Weekly, starred review)—demonstrating that we are increasing prosperity while using fewer natural resources. Throughout history, the only way for humanity to grow was by degrading the Earth: chopping down forests, polluting the air and water, and endlessly using up resources. Since the first Earth Day in 1970, the focus has been on radically changing course: reducing our consumption, tightening our belts, and learning to share and reuse. Is that argument correct? Absolutely not. In More from Less, McAfee argues that to solve our ecological problems we should do the opposite of what a decade of conventional wisdom suggests. Rather than reduce and conserve, we should rely on the cost-consciousness built into capitalism and the streamlining miracles of technology to create a more efficient world. America—a large, high-tech country that accounts for about 25% of the global economy—is now generally using less of most resources year after year, even as its economy and population continue to grow. What’s more, the US is polluting the air and water less, emitting fewer greenhouse gases, and replenishing endangered animal populations. And, as McAfee shows, America is not alone. Other countries are also transforming themselves in fundamental ways. What has made this turnabout possible? One thing, primarily: the collaboration between technology and capitalism, although good governance and public awareness have also been critical. McAfee does warn of issues that haven’t been solved, like global warming, overfishing, and communities left behind as capitalism and tech progress race forward. But overall, More from Less is a revelatory and “deeply engaging” (Booklist) account of how we’ve stumbled into an unexpectedly better balance with nature—one that holds out the promise of more abundant and greener centuries ahead.

affluence in environmental science: One Earth, One Future National Academy of Sciences, Ruth S. DeFries, Cheryl Simon Silver, 1992-02-01 Written for nonscientists, One Earth, One Future can help individuals understand the basic science behind changes in the global environment and the resulting policy implications that the population of the entire planet must face. The volume describes the earth as a unified systemâ€exploring the interactions between the atmosphere, land, and water

and the snowballing impact that human activity is having on the systemâ€and presents perspectives on policies and programs that can both develop and protect our natural resources. One Earth, One Future discusses why such seemingly diverse issues as historical climate change, species diversity, and sea-level rise are part of a single pictureâ€and how human activity is the critical element in that picture. The book concludes with practical examinations of economic, security, and development questions, with a view toward achieving improvements in quality of life without further environmental degradation. One Earth, One Future is must reading for anyone interested in the interrelationship of environmental matters and public policy issues.

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Affluence, and Technology - JSTOR*
We illustrate plasticity by assessing each driving force fora variety of environmental impacts. Results. We demonstrate that population, affluence, and technology have different potentials …

OPEN Scientists warning on af uence - Nature
We provide evidence from the literature that consumption of af uent households fl worldwide is by far the strongest determinant and the strongest accelerator of increases of global environmental...

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environmental problems are related to fiscalefl. Growth in Population and Affluence have exceeded improvements in Technology. Furthermore the terms in the equation are highly …

Living in an exponential age: WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL …
Environmental science is a study of how the earth works, how we interact w/ the earth and how we deal with environmental problems. The environment is the sum of all living (biotic) and …

RESEARCH COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH …
affluence. A curvilinear relationship has been observed between affluence (usually measured as gross domestic product [GDP] per capita) and some types of environ-mental impact, …

Have increases in population, affluence and technology …
affluence, consumption and technological change, human well-being has never been higher, and in the last century it advanced whether trends in environmental quality were up or down. With …

National affluence, economic growth, and environmental …
Does a nation‟s position of affluence in relation to other nations have a causal impact on environmental attitudes within that nation? Does a nation‟s level of economic growth or …

Rethinking the interplay between affluence and vulnerabilit y …
Affluence and vulnerability are often seen as opposite sides of a coin—with affluence generally understood as reducing forms of vulnerability through increased resilience and adaptive capacity.

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The current preliminary empirical results significantly indicate varying impacts of population, affluence, and technology on both GHG and CO 2 emissions at different income levels but …

Affluence Definition Environmental Science (book)
glossary discusses some of the environmental and demographic messes of today from a multidimensional perspective of economics sociology science and technology and wherever …

Social Science Library: Frontier Thinking in Sustainable …
Will those who live in a sustainable future society feel affluent, or will they be constantly struggling to conserve resources? What is the role of the present-day practice of recycling in creating a …

Environmental consequences of population, affluence and …
This paper examines the short-run and long-run effects of economic, sociological and energy factors on environmental degradation in 28 European countries.

The Affluence–Technology Connection in the Struggle for …
affluence – delivering faster and higher quantities of goods and services – tends to outdo the potential gains. 1 This affluence–technology connection lies at the root of our global …

Overconsumption and growth economy key drivers of …
In their review, published today in Nature Communications and entitled Scientists' Warning on Affluence, the researchers have summarized the available evidence, identifying possible …

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New consumers: The influence of affluence on the …
Dec 31, 2002 · Growing consumption can cause major environmental damage. This is becoming specially significant through the emergence of over 1 billion new consumers, people in 17 …

The Varied Influence of SES on Environmental Concern
the generality of theories of postmaterialism, affluence, and global environmentalism. Methods– This study specifies how the individual-level influence of SES varies across national contexts …

correspondence How affluence could be good for the …
argued that environmental impact is proportional to population times affluence. But as far as land requirements are concerned, it appears to be propor-tional to population divided by...

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Plausible evidence is provided in this paper that changes in both the quality of natural environments and the status of residents' health is strongly related to social structures that …

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Direct correspondence to: Fred Pampel, Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado, Boulder CO 80309-0483 (fred.pampel@colorado.edu). Data and coding will be shared for …

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AP Environmental Science Practice Exam 107 (iv) One way that acid deposition can be reduced is by using scrubbers at coal-fired power plants to remove the pollutants that lead to its formation. …

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environmental conditions increases environmental concern as suggested by the objective problems hypothesis, while for the wealthy, a decline in environmental conditions is associated …

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is mixed. Initially, in the rich countries, affluence and tech-nology worsened environmental quality, but eventually they provided the methods and means for cleaning up the environment. As a …

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An IPAT-type Model of Environmental Impact Based on Stochastic Di□erential Equations Emilio Zagheni1 Francesco C. Billari2 1Department of Demography UC Berkeley 2Institute of …

Tom VanHeuvelen - University of Minnesota Twin Cities
cohort Analysis of Affluence and Environmental Concern.Social Science Research. 82. 72-91. VanHeuvelen, Tom and VanHeuvelen, Jane. 2019. The (Economic) Development of Healthy …

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A framework for sustainability science: A renovated IPAT …
Although dimensionally correct, measuring affluence as gal-lons of beer per

capita surprises. Beer is really taste, not affluence. Bottles per gallon scarcely indicate technology. Bot-tles of inert …

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Answer - The IPAT Framework
environmental impacts while also ensuring a robust economy and equitable treatment of diverse ... society's environmental impact (I) is a function of its population size (P), affluence (A), and …

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5 2) *** environmental impact is proportional to population size and affluence of lifestyle, mitigated by stewardship *** 3) what to do: stabilize population size, decrease consumption, increase …

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Ecological Footprint: Environmental impact of a society or individual person. I = P×A×T: Used to determine humans' impact on the environment. I: Total Impact P: Population size A: Affluence …

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the possible side effects, western science may actu-ally be considered a principal causative factor of many current environmental problems (2, 3). Considering that environmental science …

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determined their affluence. Environmental concern was measured by respondent's answer to multiple questions pertaining to their willingness to pay for the environment. The results of …

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Global Environmental Science. Urban Studies 46(2): 413-427. Harlan, Sharon L., Anthony J. Brazel, G. Darrel Jenerette, Nancy S. Jones, Larissa Larsen, Lela Prashad and William L. …

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and the affluence-based postmaterialist values at the individual level. In research that compares three waves of the WVS and the 1992 Health of the Planet (HOP) survey, they find that …

Acceptance of Higher Taxes for the Environment: A Cross
The impact of economic affluence is developed from the environmental economics literature that predicts a positive connection between affluence and environmental concern (Diekmann and …

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inconsistent and often negative correlations between national affluence and environmental concern. The current article compares results from three waves of the "World Values Survey" …

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1 Department of Geography and Rural Development, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana 2 School of Environmental Science, University of Hull, Hull, UK. …

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Table 1. Symbols for environmental impacts and the actors and forces that affect them, exemplified by energy emission Category Symbol Actors Dimension Impact I All Emission …

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(HOP) and conclude that environmental concern is a global phenome-non and that it is even negatively correlated with country-level wealth. The affluence hypothesis (e.g., Baumol et al. …

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