

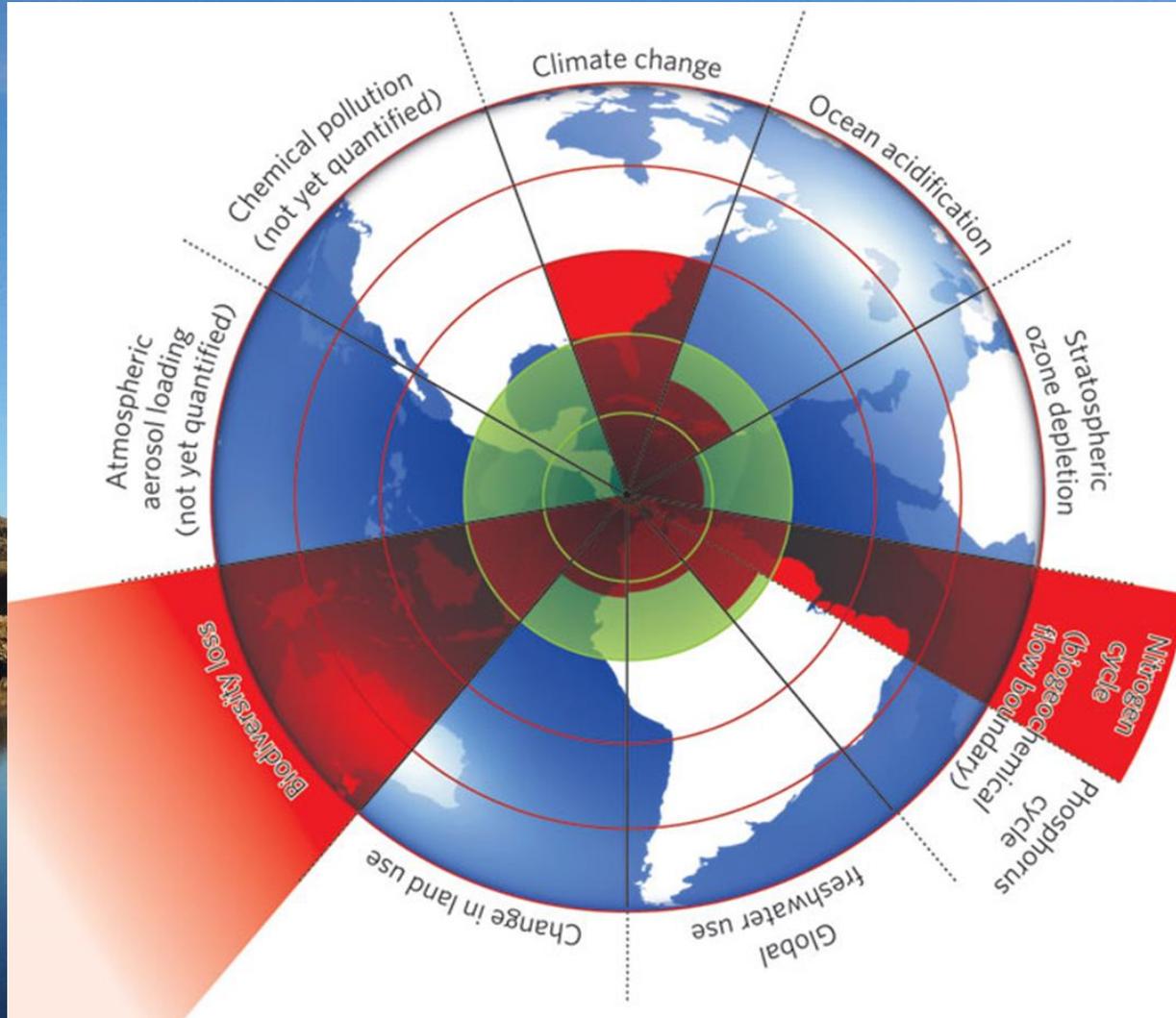
# Flourishing within Limits

## Foundations for a sustainable prosperity

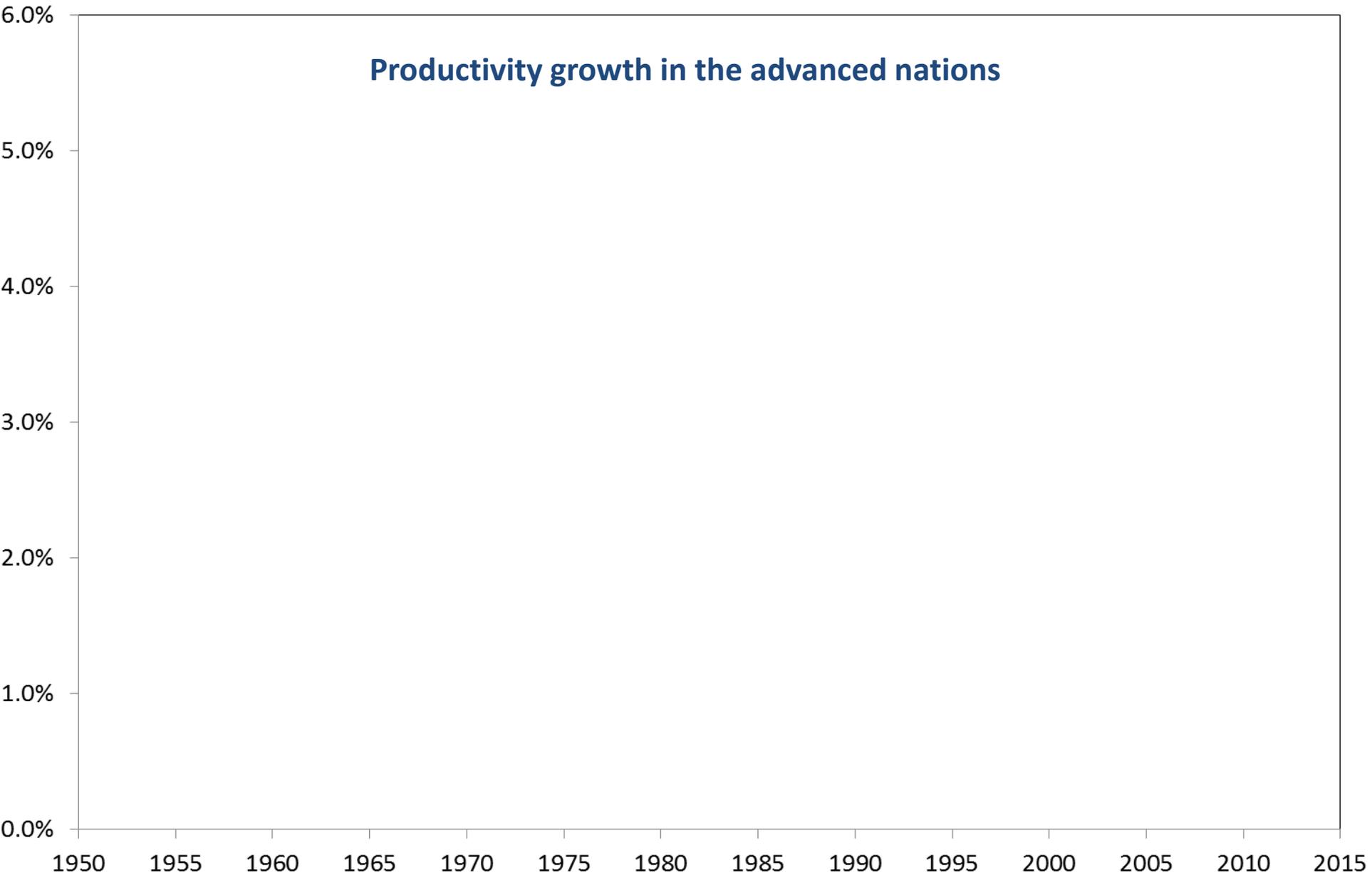
24<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Tim Jackson  
@proftimjackson

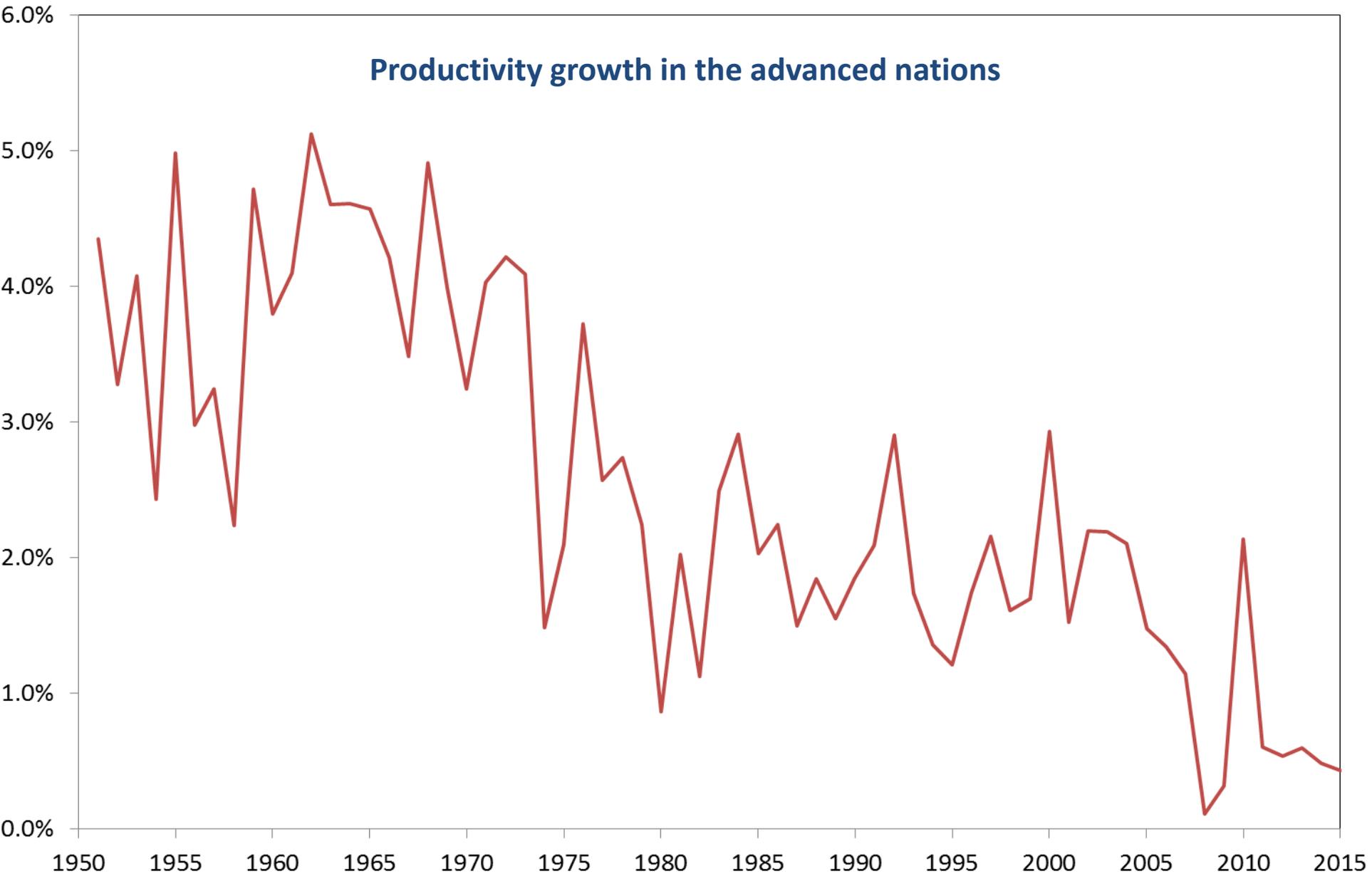
# Limits to Growth?



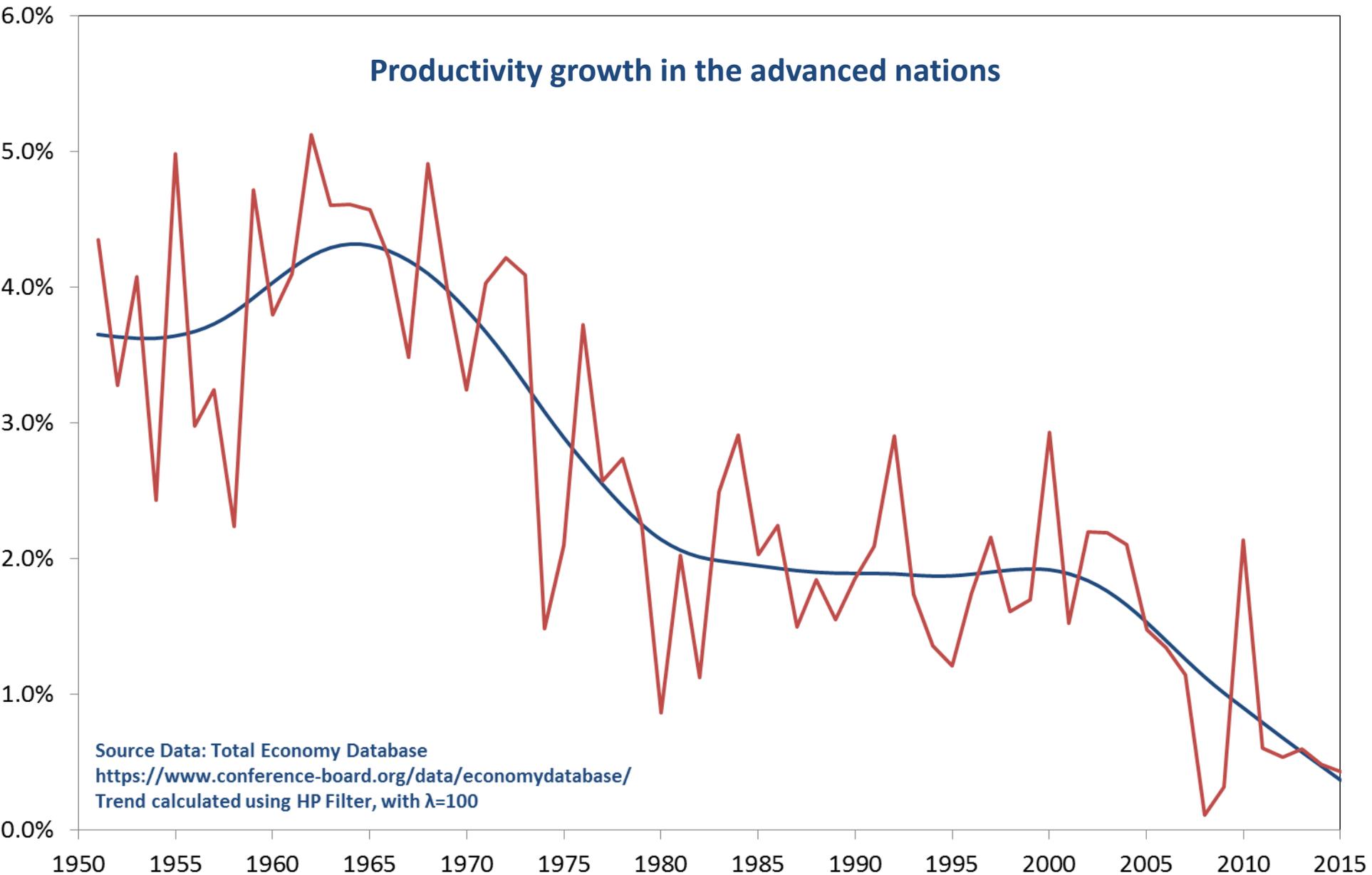
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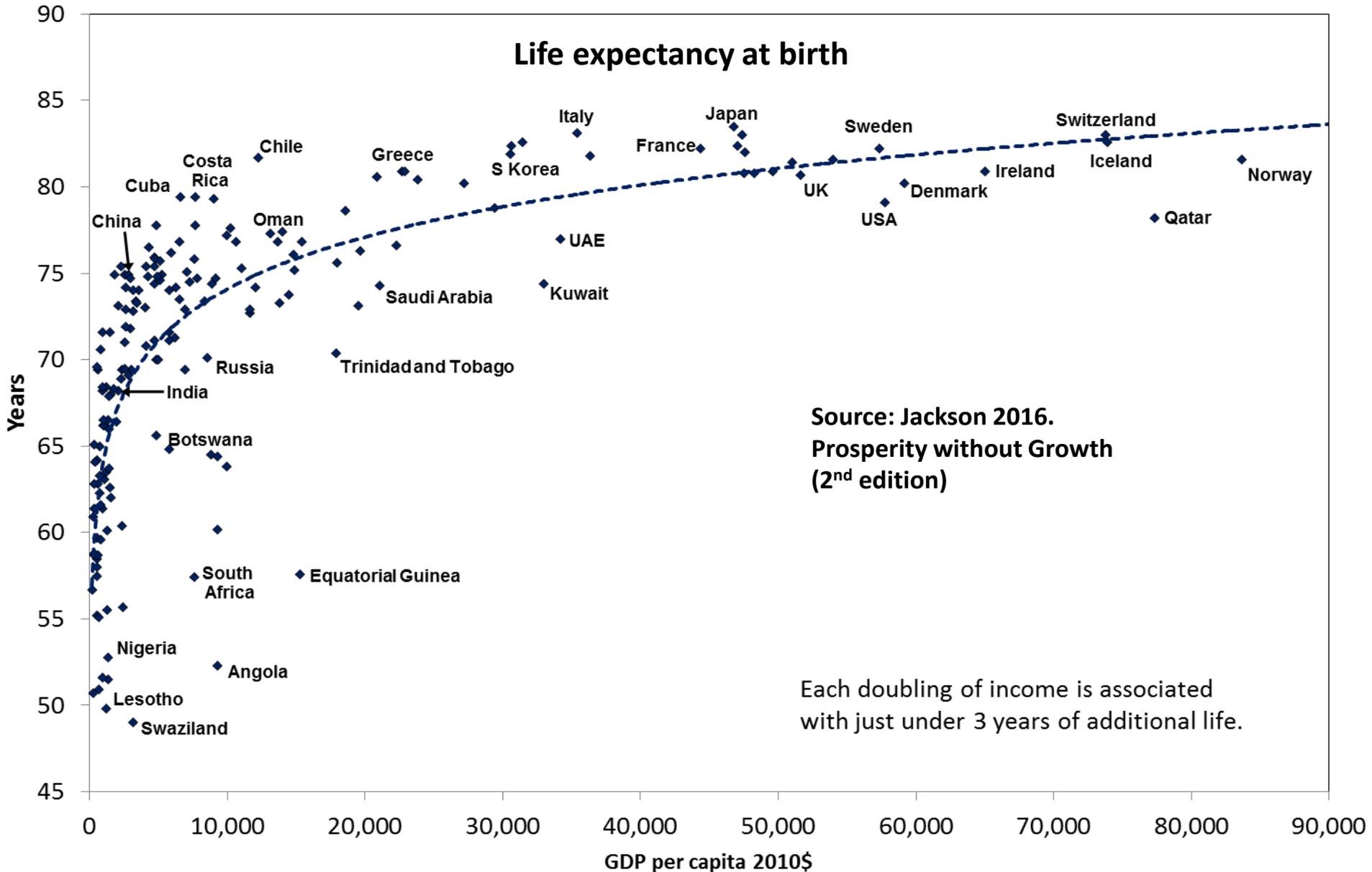
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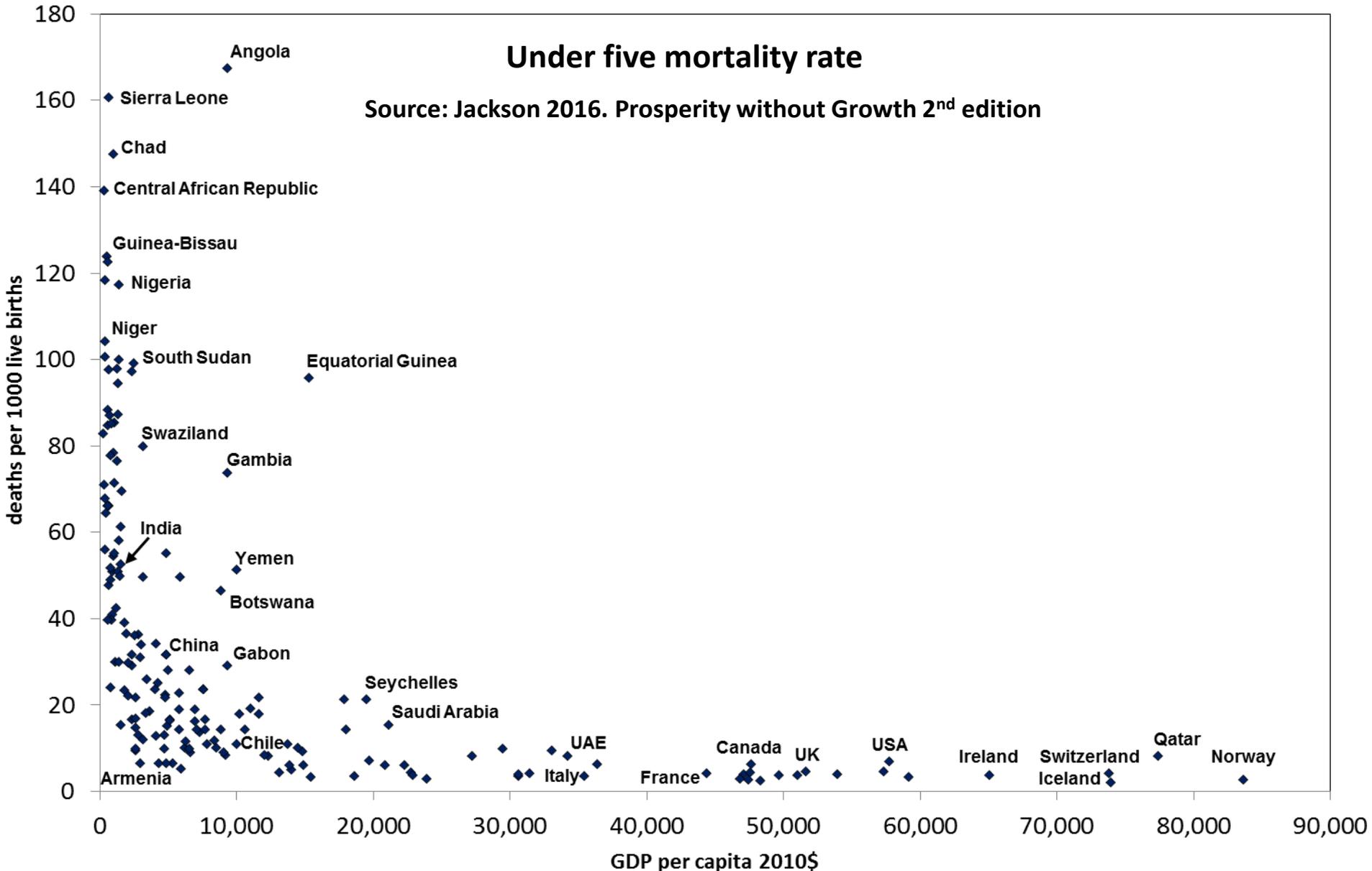
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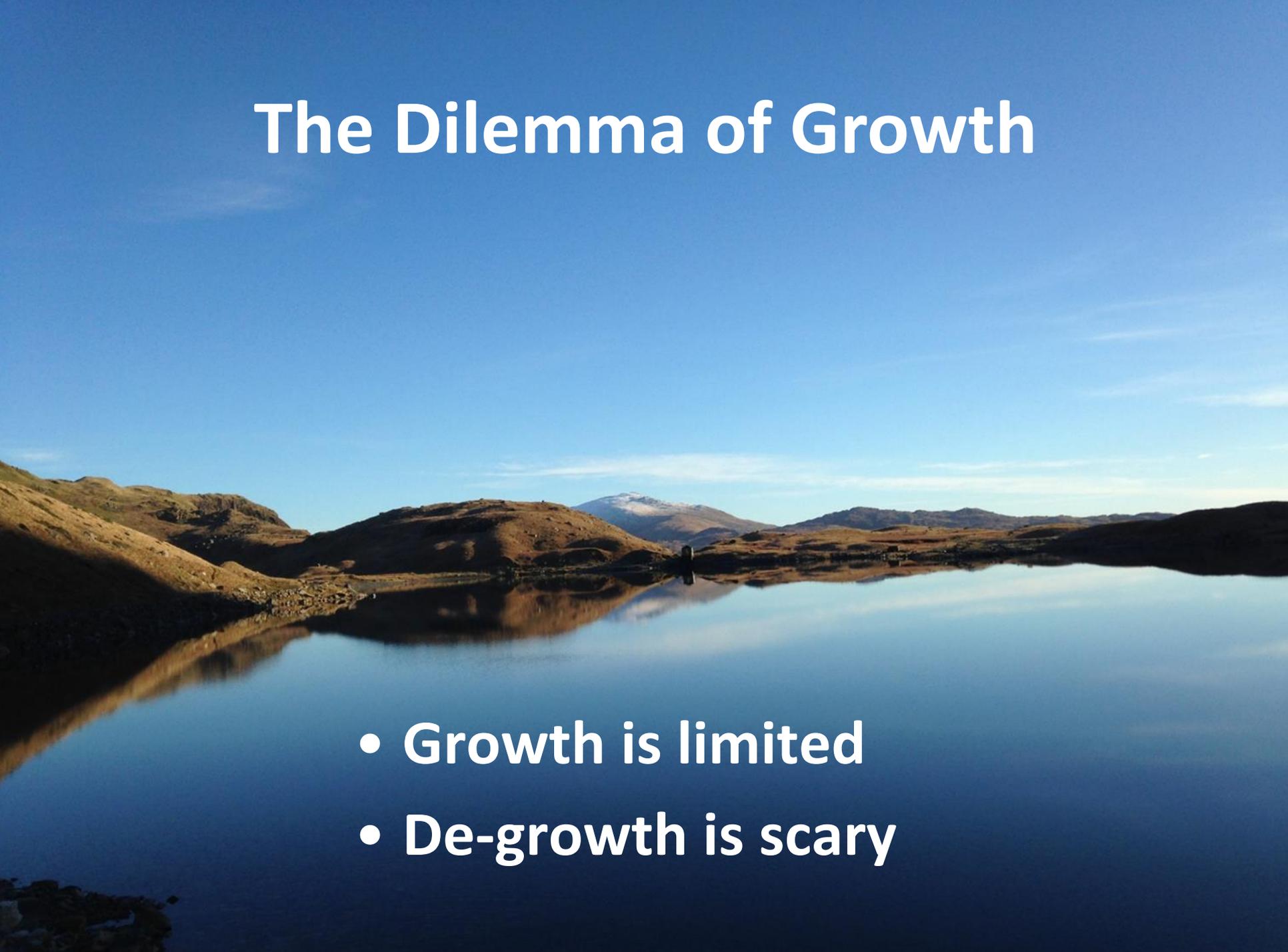
# Flourishing within Limits



# Flourishing within Limits



# The Dilemma of Growth

A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground that perfectly reflects the sky and the surrounding terrain. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue with a few wispy clouds near the horizon. The land consists of rolling hills and mountains, some with patches of snow or light-colored rock. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and serene.

- Growth is limited
- De-growth is scary

# The Dilemma of Growth

‘Our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfactions, our ego satisfactions, in consumption...

We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced, and discarded at an ever increasing pace.’

Victor Lebow 1955

# The Willing Consumer

'Noone's gonna spot you  
across a crowded room and  
say "Wow! Nice Personality"'

Belk et al (2003) 'The Fires of Desire'



*'And I am a material girl.'*

# The Willing Consumer



*'Lord, make me sustainable – but not just yet.'*

'The human animal is a beast that dies. And if he's got money he buys and buys and buys. And I think the reason he buys everything he can is that in the back of his mind, he has the crazy hope that one of his purchases will be life everlasting.'

*Big Daddy Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*  
Tennessee Williams

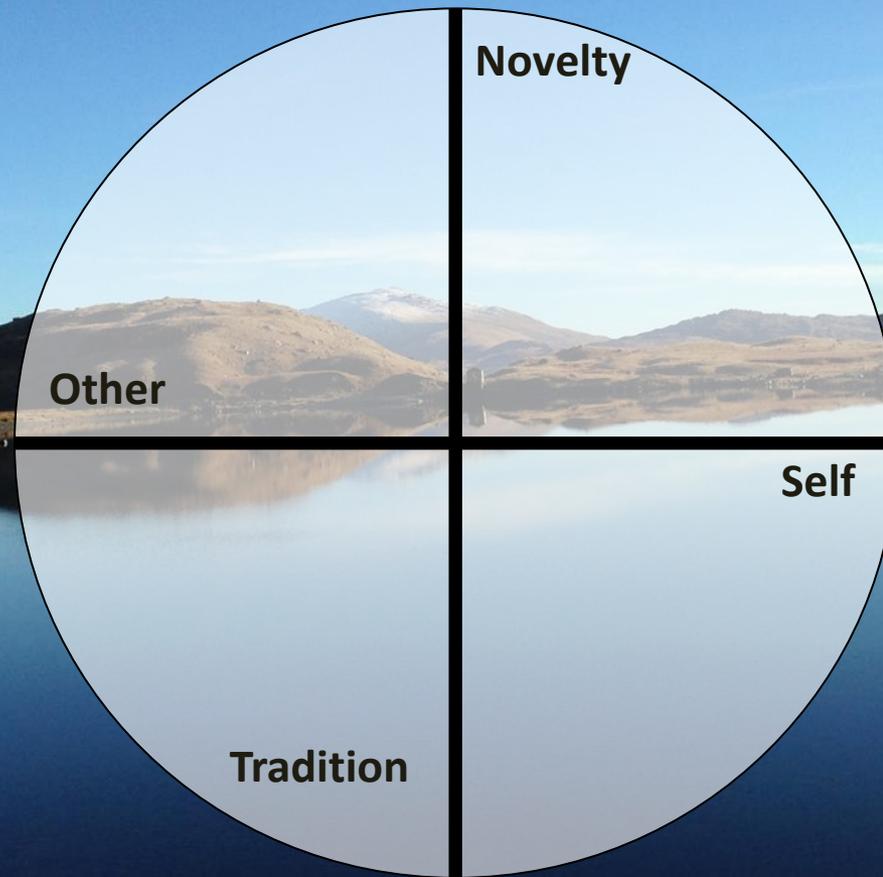
# Beyond Consumerism

“I am not charmed with the ideal of life held out by those who think that the normal state of human beings is that of struggling to get on; that the trampling, crushing, elbowing and treading on each other’s heels, which form the existing type of social life, are the most desirable lot of human kind. . .

The best state for human nature is that which, while no one is poor, no one desires to be richer, nor has any reason to fear being thrust back, by the efforts of others to push themselves forward.”

John Stuart Mill 1848

# Beyond Consumerism



# Regenerative enterprise



# Decent work



# Divest-Invest



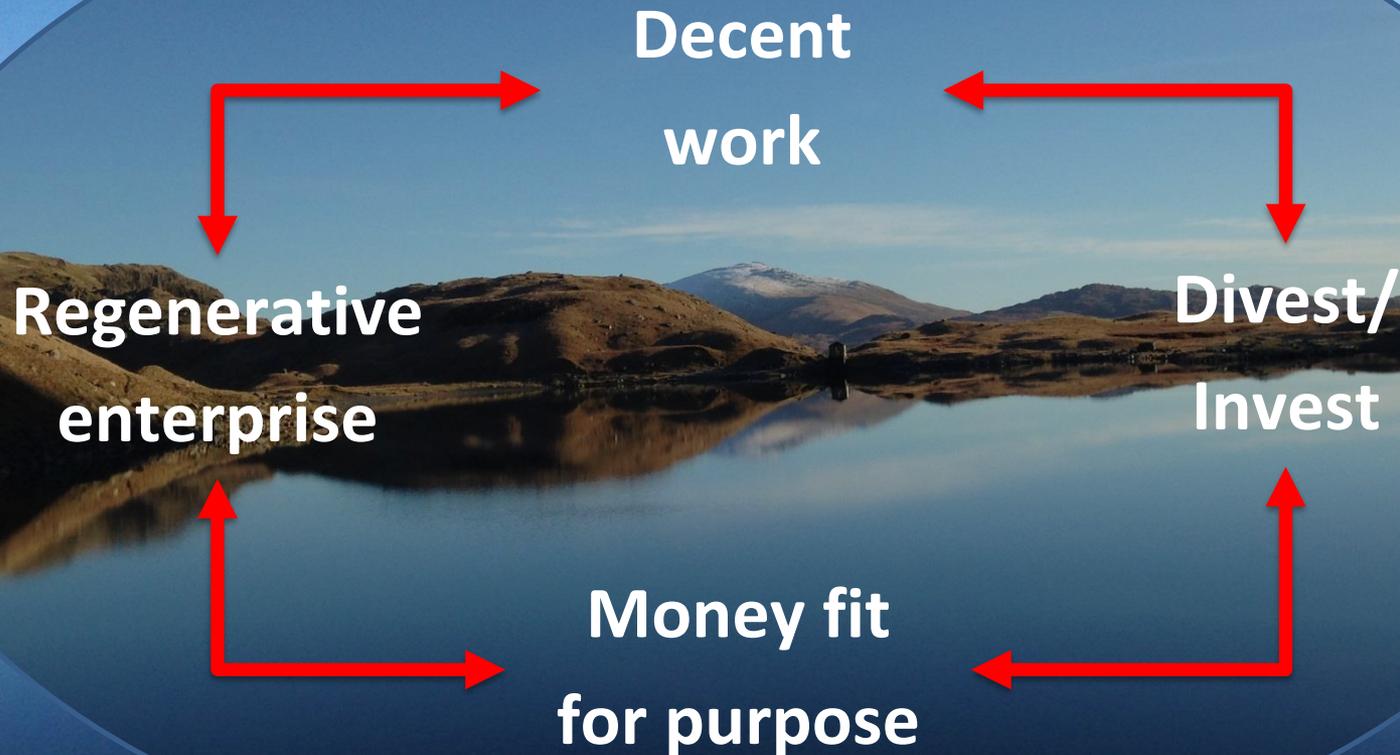
# Money fit for purpose

**GROWTH** IS ABOUT  
MORE THAN  
JUST NUMBERS

**Triodos Bank**  
Europas führende Nachhaltigkeitsbank

‘Sometimes what’s bad for the economy is actually good for society’

# Foundations for Sustainable Prosperity



# Foundations for Sustainable Prosperity

## Open questions

Is full employment possible?

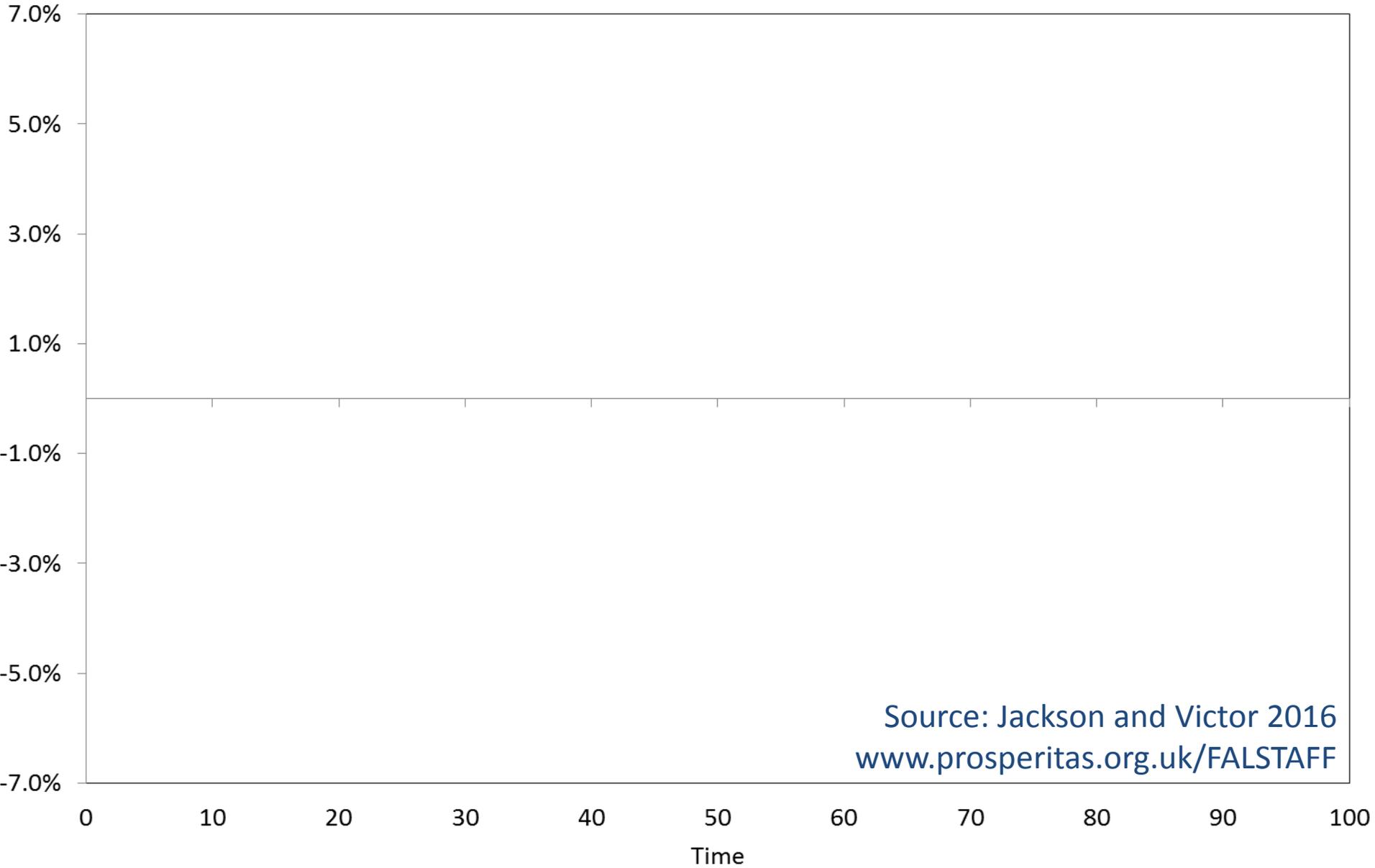
Does slow growth lead to rising inequality?

Does credit create a growth imperative?

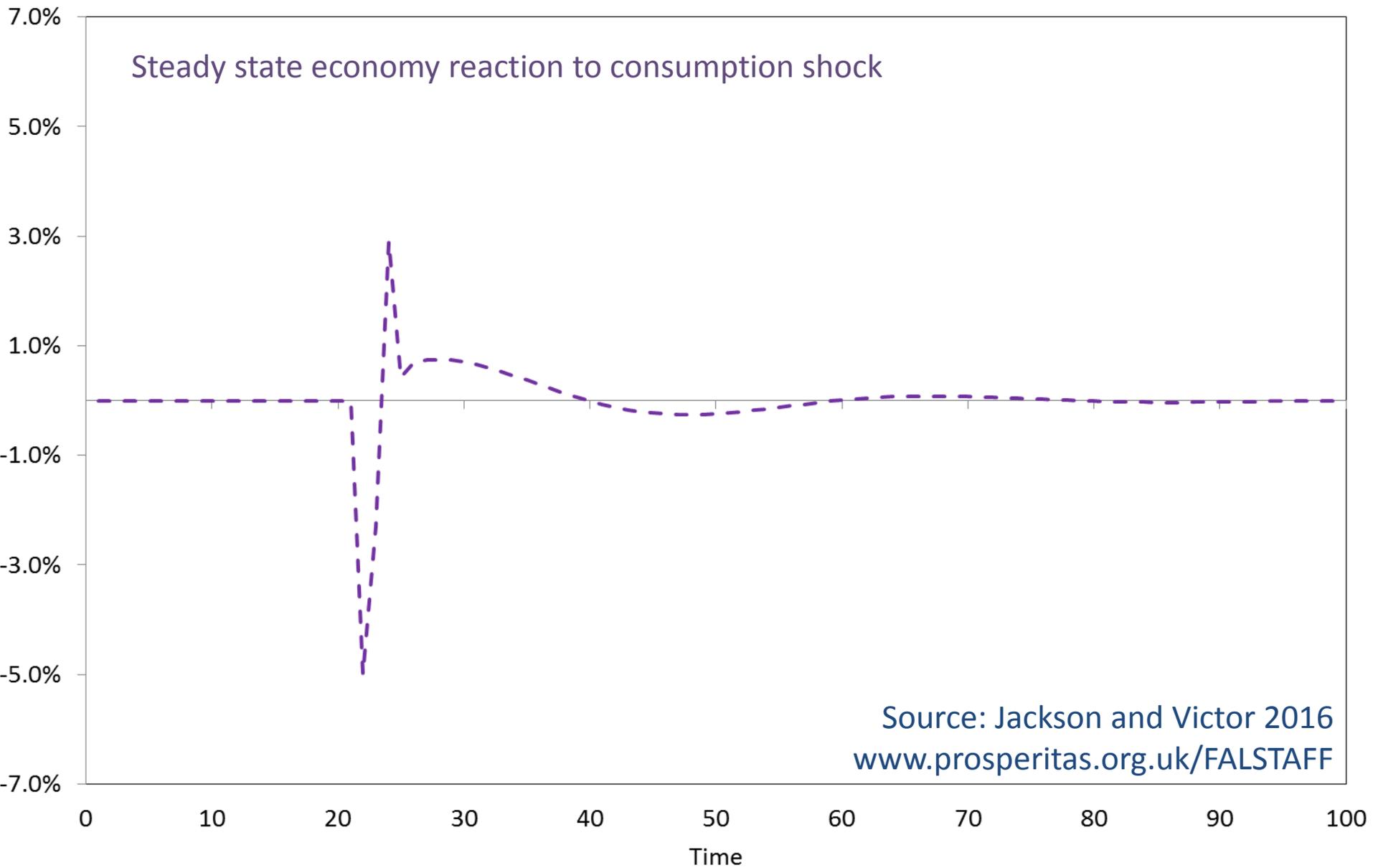
Is low growth inherently unstable?

Is a transition from growth to stationary state possible?

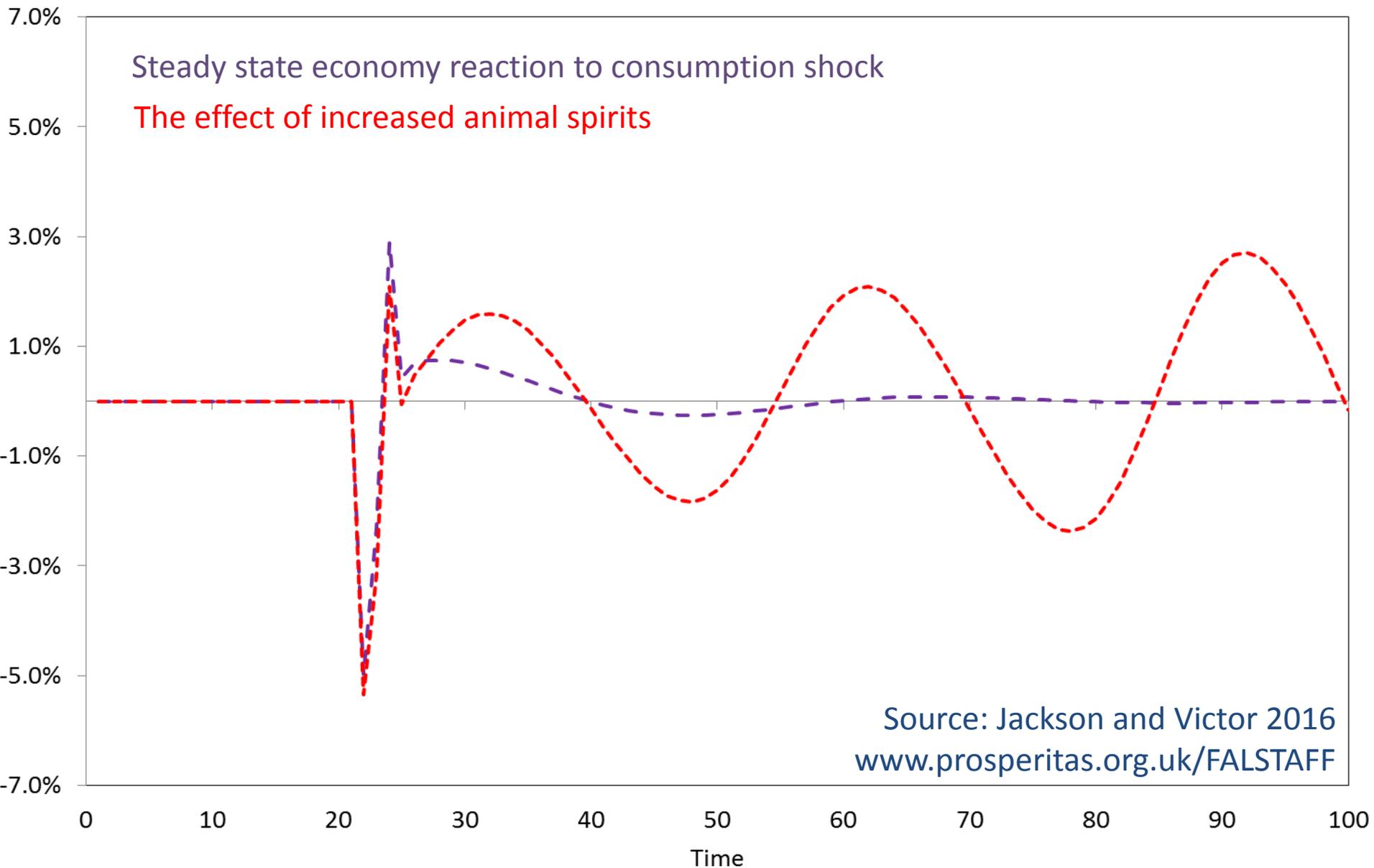
# Does credit create a growth imperative?



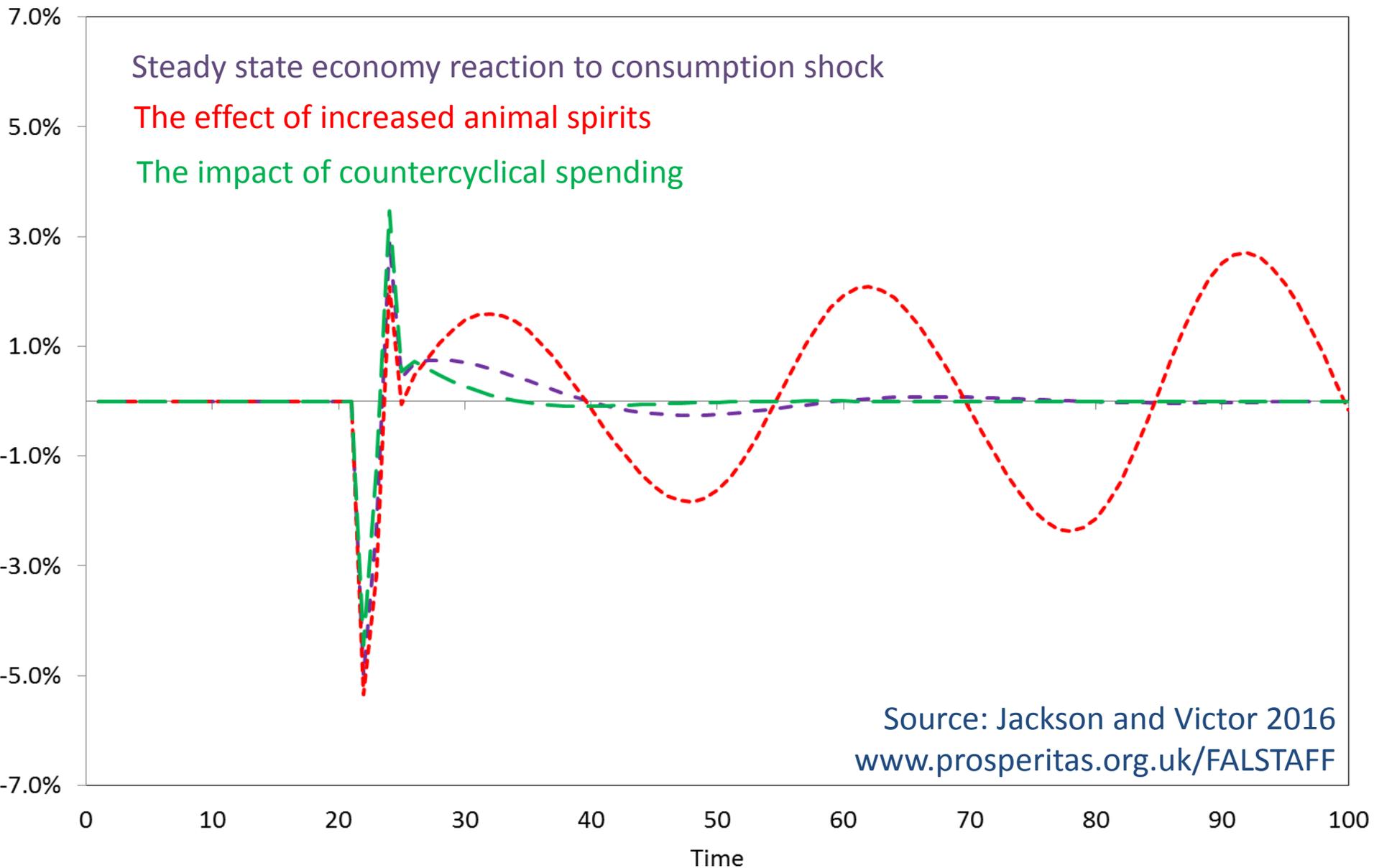
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# Foundations for Sustainable Prosperity

## Open questions

Is full employment possible?

Does slow growth lead to rising inequality?

Does credit create a growth imperative?

Is low growth inherently unstable?

Is a transition from growth to stationary state possible?

**Is it possible to have more fun with less stuff?**

# More fun; less stuff



# More fun; less stuff



# More fun; less stuff



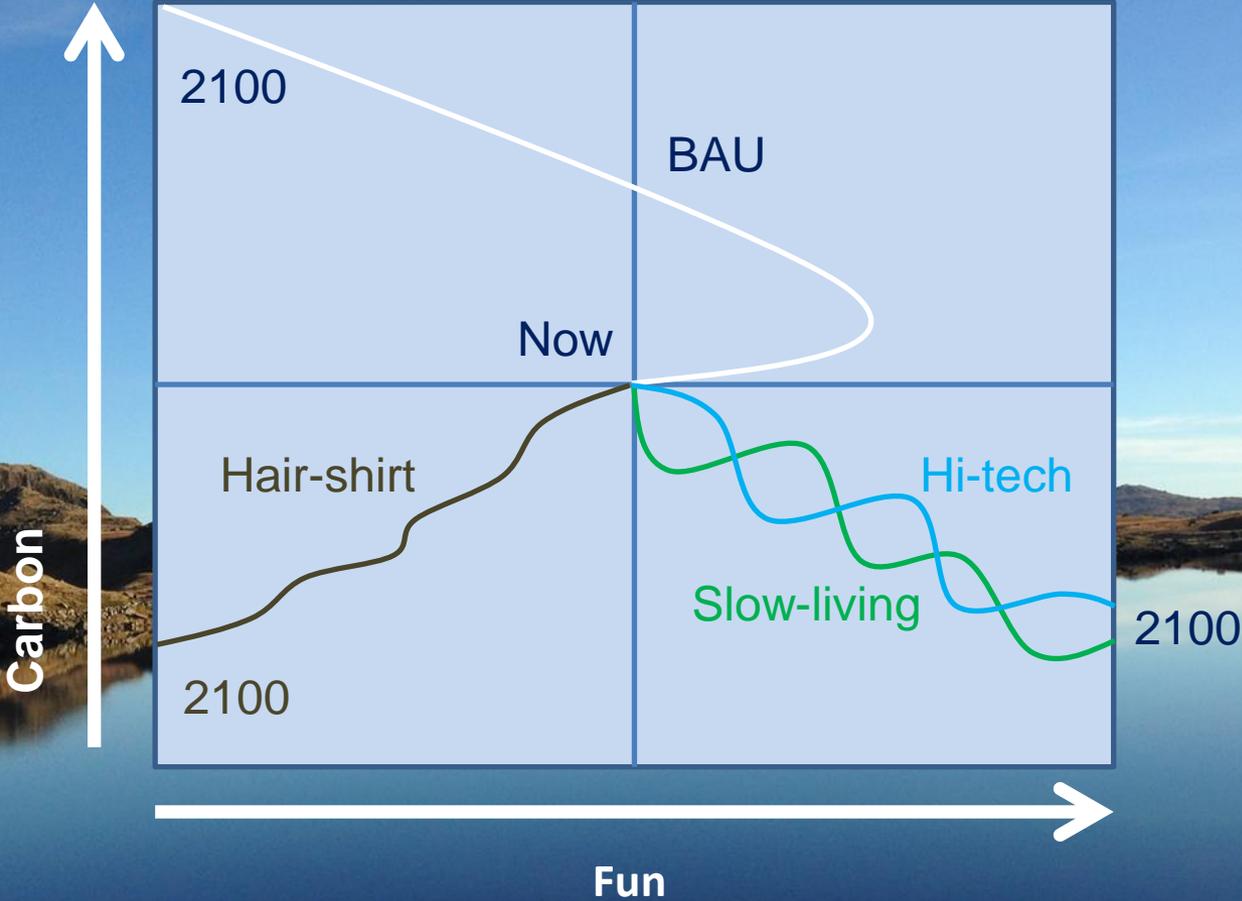
# More fun; less stuff



# More fun; less stuff



# More fun; less stuff



### *Guiding vision*

Sustainable prosperity consists in the capabilities that people have to flourish as human beings, within the ecological and resource constraints of a finite planet

### *Overall aim*

The overall aim of CUSP is to explore the dimensions of sustainable prosperity and to develop clear, pragmatic steps that could be taken in pursuit of it.

### *Research objectives (MAPSS)*

- M** – to examine the **meanings and moral framing** of sustainable prosperity;
- A** – to explore the role of **art and culture** in achieving sustainable prosperity;
- P** – to establish the **political economy** of sustainable prosperity and propose concrete institutional architectures for it;
- S** – to understand the **social and psychological dimensions** of people's aspirations for the good life;
- S** – to analyse the **system dynamics** of an ecologically bounded macro-economy and explore viable scenarios for change.

A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a calm body of water in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding terrain. The water is a deep blue, mirroring the clear sky above. The middle ground features rolling hills and mountains with sparse, dry vegetation. In the distance, a mountain peak is partially covered in snow. The sky is a gradient of blue, with a few wispy clouds near the horizon. The overall mood is serene and peaceful.

**Prosperity transcends material concerns. It resides in our sense of identity, our pursuit of meaning. It rests in our ability to participate in the life of society. Prosperity consists in our ability to flourish on a finite planet.**

Thanks for listening

<http://www.cusp.ac.uk>  
@cusp\_uk