

HA 8008

Environmental Ethics 环境伦理学



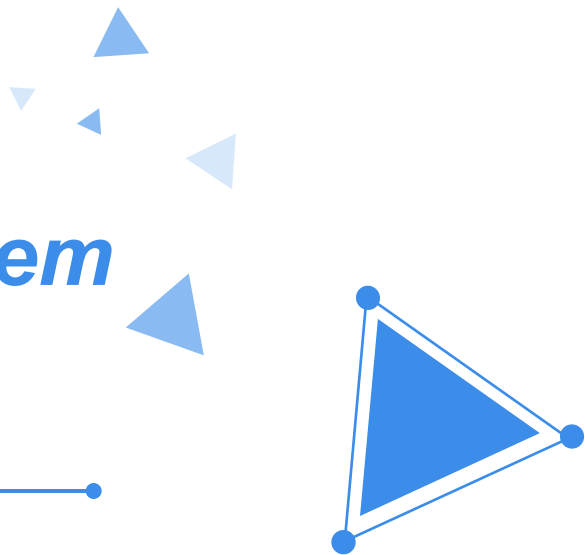
西安电子科技大学
XIDIAN UNIVERSITY



03

Poverty as An Environmental Problem

贫穷作为环境问题



主讲者：朱丹琼



1993年苏丹饥荒时期。这个孩子身上表现出来的无助与绝望，和秃鹰捕食时的耐心形成鲜明对比。这张照片深刻反映了饥荒的残酷，令其迅速成为全世界关注的焦点。摄影师凭借这张照片获得了普利策奖，但不久之后就自杀身亡。



十张改变了世界的照片



Keep this question in mind



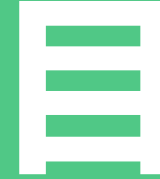
What is the right thing to do?



Should people in rich countries help people in poor countries when they are short of food, shelters, medical service?



- 1 **Lifeboat Ethics**
- 2 **Famine, Affluence, and Morality**
- 3 **Global Environmental and International Inequality**
- 4 **Feeding People Versus Saving Nature**
- 5 **What is the right thing to do?**



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生命舟伦理

Garrett Hardin, 1986



Garrett James Hardin
(April 21, 1915 – September 14, 2003)
an American ecologist

- ❖ **dangers of overpopulation**
- ❖ **the tragedy of the commons**
- ❖ **lifeboat ethics**



photo source:
<http://www.garretthardinsociety.org/>

Garrett Hardin(1915-2003)



❖ Living on a lifeboat

- Approximately two-thirds of the world is desperately poor, and only one-third is comparatively rich.
- Metaphorically, each rich nation amounts to a lifeboat full of comparatively rich people.
- The poor people are in other, much more crowded lifeboat.

Save or not?



- ❖ **save all** : swamped, complete justice, complete catastrophe.
- ❖ **Save 10**: which 10? first come, first saved?
- ❖ **Save 0**: Survival of the people in the lifeboat.

Deny the overseas food aid.

Figure 1: Hardin: living on a lifeboat

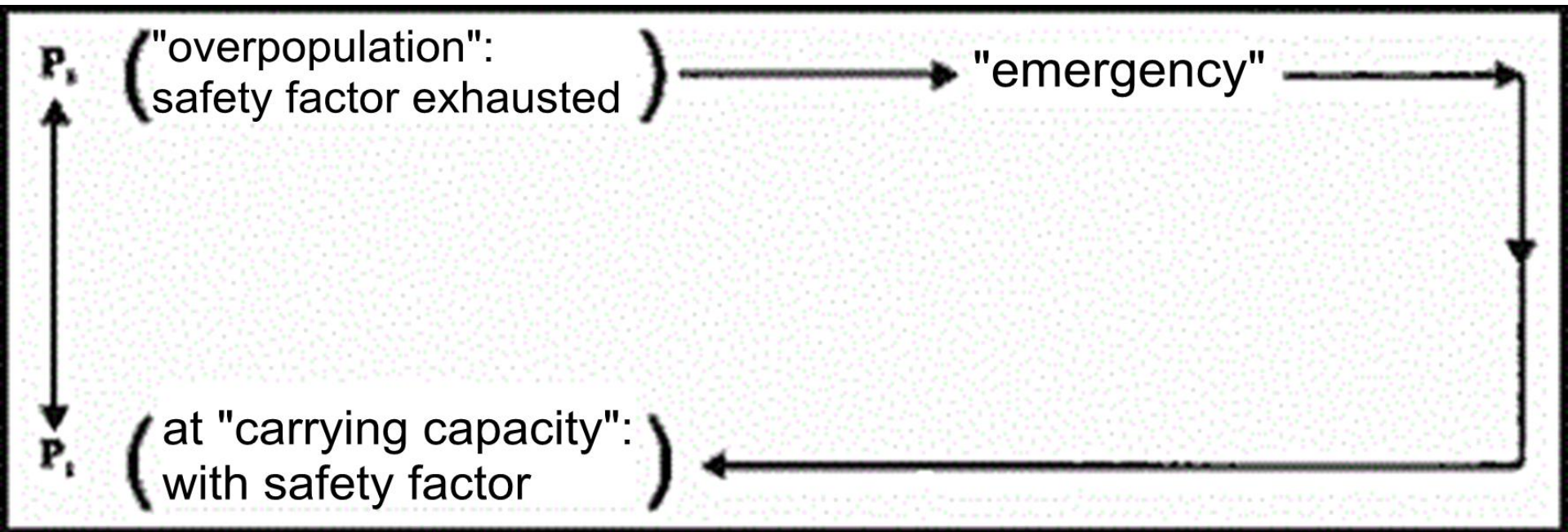
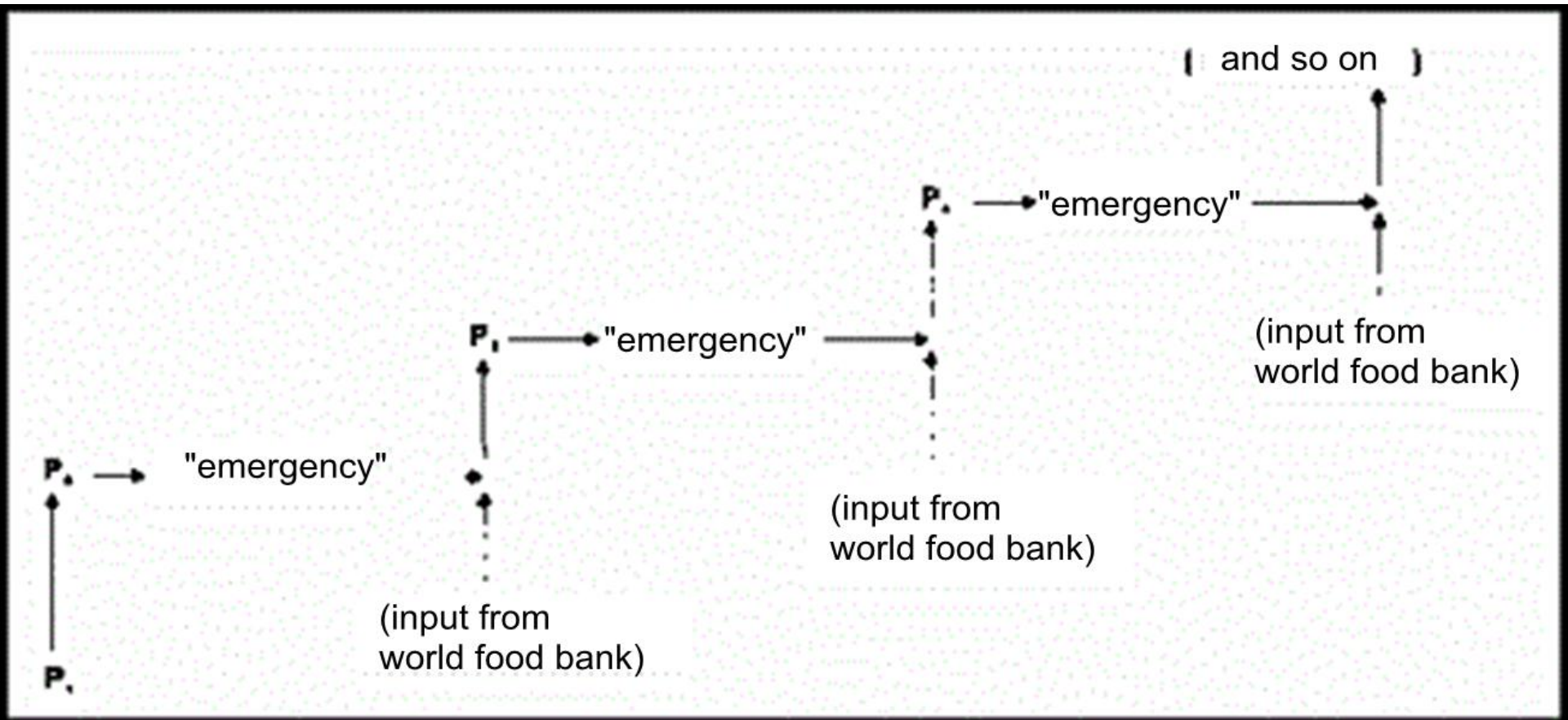


Figure 2: Hardin: living on a lifeboat




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Eco-destruction via the green revolution



- Give a man a fish or teach him how to fish

It is doubtful that Green Revolution can increase food production.

- Even if they can

Every life saved this year in a poor country diminishes the quality of life for subsequent generations.

Immigration creates a commons



- **Taking the position of the United States**

Unrestricted immigration policy moves people to the food, thus speed up the destruction of the environment in rich countries.

- **Why do they encourage poor people?**

It is the interests of the employers of cheap labor, particularly that needed for degrading jobs.

QUESTIONS



- ❖ According to the paper, how will a person living by the Christian ideal of being "our brother's keeper" or by the Marxian ideal of "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" response to the aid question?
- ❖ In his paper, he uses the word "pejorative" to describe the system which creates a commons. How many kinds of commons does he mention in his paper?
- ❖ Do you agree with him or not? Write down your view on poverty problem.
- ❖ Do you agree China's plan to provide overseas assistance to poor countries? Explain your reasoning in details.



- ❖ **Hardin argues that the affluent should not aid the poor and starving people of the world because**
 - a. doing so will raise their standard of living.**
 - b. doing so will only lead to disaster for everyone, rich and poor.**
 - c. the poor are undeserving.**
 - d. the rich have no moral obligations.**



Hardin says that in the lifeboat analogy, the morally right course of action is to

- a. allow everyone to climb into the boat.**
- b. allow only some poor people to climb into the boat.**
- c. turn away all the poor.**
- d. purposively sink the boat.**



According to Hardin, the tragedy of the commons is

- a. mutual ruin from a well-meaning system of sharing.**
- b. the overabundance of resources.**
- c. the waste of some resources.**
- d. mutual destruction through violence.**



Hardin claims that in a world where all resources are shared and reproduction in the impoverished countries is uncontrolled, the tragedy of the commons is

- a. undetectable.**
- b. possible.**
- c. inevitable.**
- d. instructive.**

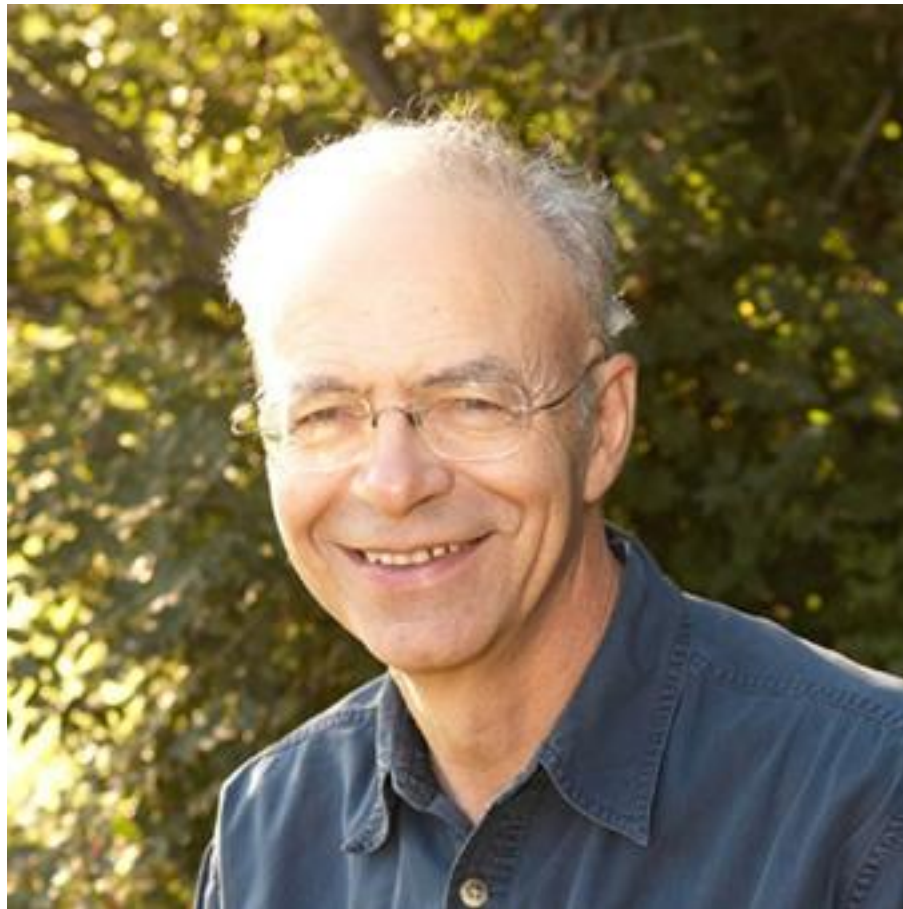


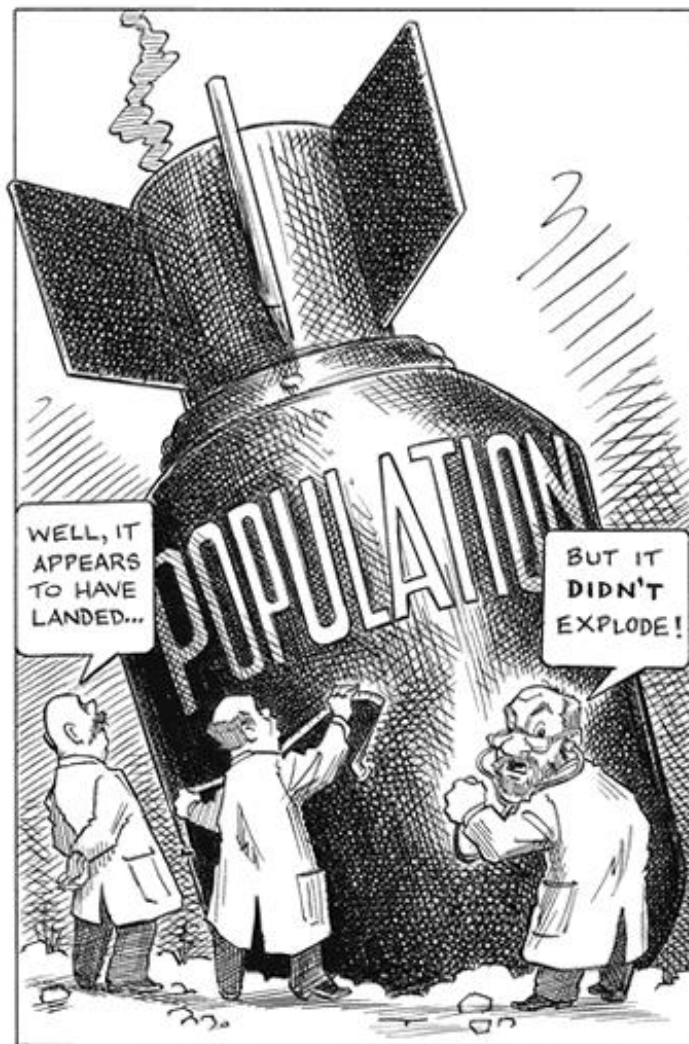
02

Famine, Affluence, and
Morality

饥荒，富足与道德

Peter Singer(1946-)





website of the life you can save



The Life You Can Save - Effective giving against world poverty - 360极速浏览器

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LOREM IPSUM DOLOR



A

Assumption 1: suffering and death from lack of food, shelter, and medical care are bad.

A

Assumption 2: if it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it.

C

Conclusion: therefore, we ought to prevent lack of food & shelter.

at least 4 Objections



01 Charity is beyond duty.

02 It requires us to do a great deal for others.

03 Overseas aid should be a government responsibility.

04 Overseas aid will slow down our own economy.

01 Charity is beyond duty.



People need to rethink their views about "charity."

Most people reserve their moral condemnation for those who violate some moral norm, such as the norm against taking another person's property. They do not condemn those who indulge in luxury instead of giving to famine relief.

It requires us to do a great deal for others.



In order to show that my conclusions, while certainly contrary to contemporary Western moral standards, would not have seemed so extraordinary at other times and in other places.

Thomas Aquinas



Now, according to the natural order instituted by divine providence, material goods are provided for the satisfaction of human needs. Therefore the division and appropriation of property, which proceeds from human law, must not hinder the satisfaction of man's necessity from such goods. Equally, whatever a man has in superabundance is owed, of natural right, to the poor for their sustenance. So Ambrosius says, and it is also to be found in the *Decretum Gratiani*: "The bread which you withhold belongs to the hungry; the clothing you shut away, to the naked; and the money you bury in the earth is the redemption and freedom of the penniless."

Overseas aid should be a government responsibility.



It is unsupported and unplausible that the more people there are who give to privately organized famine relief funds, the less likely it is that the government will take over full responsibility for such aid.

Giving privately is not enough, and we ought to be campaigning actively for entirely new standards for both public and private contributions to famine relief.

Overseas aid will slow down our own economy.



The value and necessity of economic growth are now being questioned not only by conservationists, but by economists as well. There is no doubt, too, that the consumer society has had a distorting effect on the goals and purposes of its members.

40% vs 1%



Strong version of Singer's Principle

We ought to prevent bad things from happening unless in doing so we would be sacrificing something of comparable moral significance. It seems to require reducing ourselves to the level of **marginal utility.**



M

oderate

version of Singer's Principle

We should prevent bad occurrences unless, to do so, we had to sacrifice something morally significant only ——in order to show that even on this surely undeniable principle a great change in our way of life is required.

Homework



Read Singer's article again, and describe the strong version and the moderate version of the principle of preventing bad things from happening.

What is effective altruism? Explain will this concept change your life or not?



According to Singer, we have a moral duty to help the poor and starving of the world regardless of

- a. their ability to pay us back.**
- b. their proximity to us.**
- c. their moral status.**
- d. their intentions.**



Singer's strong principle requires us to give aid to the level of

- a. minimal utility.**
- b. differentiated sacrifice.**
- c. least disruption.**
- d. marginal utility.**



Singer's less stringent principle says that we have a duty to prevent something bad from happening if we can do it without

- a. affecting overall utility.**
- b. violating principles of equality.**
- c. sacrificing anything morally significant.**
- d. sacrificing anything.**



A criticism of Singer's view is that the strong principle

- a. compels us to be mindful of others.**
- b. allows the needs of others to be taken into consideration.**
- c. allows the needs of others to outweigh or overrule our own legitimate rights and needs.**
- d. contradicts the weak principle.**



03

Global Environment and International Inequality 全球环境与国际不平等

Henry Shue



❖ **Former Cornell philosophy professor Henry Shue, now a senior research fellow at Oxford University.**

source:

<http://ezramagazine.cornell.edu/SUMMER12/Endnote.html>



Background



Now the rich countries have realized that their own industrial activity has been destroying the ozone in the earth's atmosphere and has been making far and away the greatest contribution to global warming. They would like the poor states to avoid adopting the same form of industrialization by which they themselves became rich. It is increasingly clear that if poor states pursue their own economic development with the same disregard for the natural environment and the economic welfare of other states that rich states displayed in the past during their development, everyone will continue to suffer the effects of environmental destruction.

the problem



equality

- The problem is “the allocation of the costs of protecting the environment”.
- Is it right to make developing countries pay for global environmental problems mainly caused by industrial activities of rich states for their own benefits?

unacceptable complete egalitarianism



Complete egalitarianism — the belief that all good things ought to be shared equally among all people

While I do assume that it may be equitable for some good things to be distributed unequally, I also assume that other things must be kept equal—most importantly, **dignity and respect.**



Starting from the existing inequality in wealth between North and South, there are three kind of justification of:

unequal burdens intended to reduce or eliminate the existing inequality by removing an unfair advantage of those at the top;

B

a guaranteed minimum intended to prevent the existing inequality from becoming worse through any infliction of an unfair additional disadvantage upon those at the bottom

A

unequal burdens intended to prevent the existing inequality from becoming worse through any infliction of an unfair additional disadvantage upon those at the bottom;

C

unequeal burdens



- **Externalization of the production costs;**
- **Unilateral decision which creates or expands inequalities;**
- **We are justified in imposing extra burdens -at least equal to the unfair advantage previously taken- upon the producer of those inequalities.**

Examples :

The destruction of the ozone layer or the initiation of global warming .



the first principle of equity



“

When a party has in the past taken an unfair advantage of others by imposing costs upon them without their consent, those who have been unilaterally put at a disadvantage are entitled to demand that in the future the offending party shoulder burdens that are unequal at least to the extent of the unfair advantage previously taken, in order to restore equality.

”

greater contribution to the problem

unequal burdens



greater contribution to the problem



Spokespeople for the rich countries make at least three kinds of counter-argument:

- a) LDCs also benefited from the enrichment of DCs;
- b) Whatever environmental damage has been done, it was unintentional;
- c) It's not fair to hold current generations responsible for damage they didn't do themselves.



the second principle of equity



“

Among a number of parties, all of whom are bound to contribute to some common endeavour, the parties who have the most resources normally should contribute the most to the endeavour.

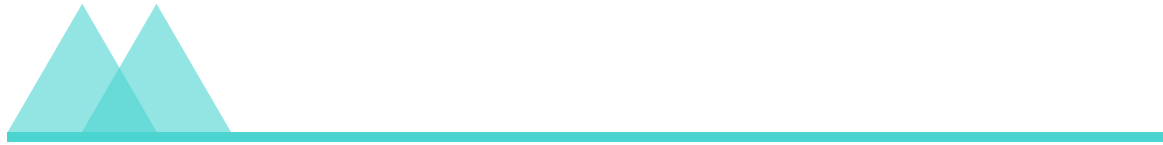
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greater ability to pay

unequal burdens



greater ability to pay



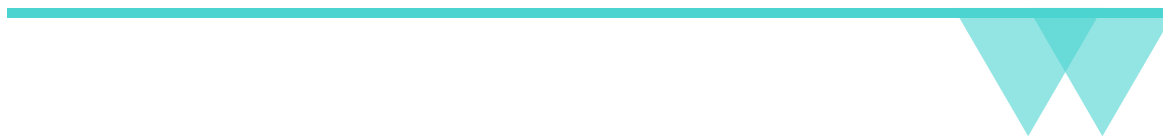
In a situation that every man is treated equally:

A: 90 units

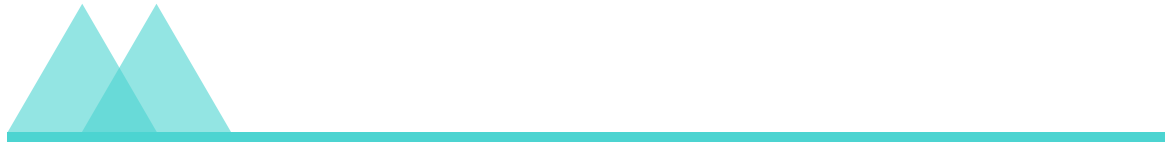
B: 30 units

C: 9 unit

if one third is contributed? C will not be able to survive.



unequal burdens



- **Progressive rate of contribution:** paying in accordance with each one's ability to pay;
- Strictly, or not strictly, proportional system;
- Flat rate contribution is not the fairest treatment possible as many people could think.



unequal burdens



greater ability to pay



objection — disincentive effects:

If those who have more are going to lose what they have at a greater rate than those who have less, the incentive to come to have more in the first place will, it is said, be much less than it would have been with a flat rate of contribution.

Why should I take more risks to obtain more if the result will only be that I contribute more?



the third principle of equity



“

When some people have less than enough for a decent human life, other people have far more than enough, and the total resources available are so great that every one could have at least enough without preventing some people from still retaining considerably more than others have, it is unfair not to guarantee everyone at least an adequate minimum.

”

guaranteed minimum

unequal burdens

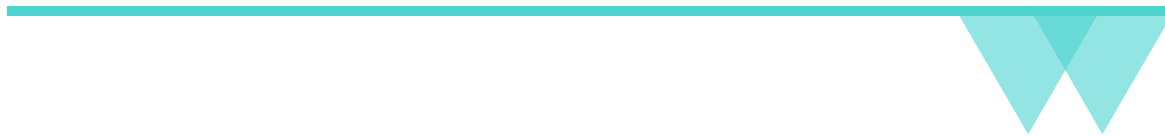


guaranteed minimum



the situation — radical inequality:

- (a) the aggregate total of resources is sufficient for all parties to have more than enough;
- (b) some parties do in fact have more than enough, some of them much more than enough; and
- (c) other parties have less than enough.



unequal burdens



guaranteed minimum



two objections:

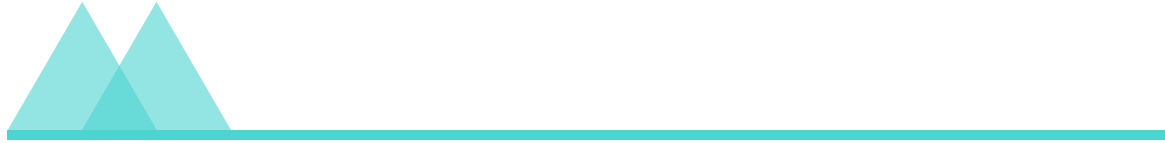
- a) An extended welfare in LDCs would cause overpopulation problems;
- b) It's fair for a society to provide a guaranteed minimum for its own members, but it is unfair to maintain it for other societies' members.



unequal burdens

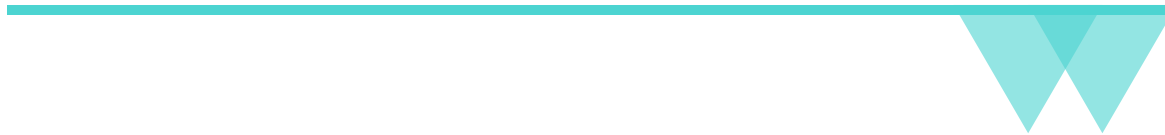


guaranteed minimum



With no international obligation, national interests prevail. DCs' most urgent concern is about environmental problems, while LDCs' one is to provide their citizens a life with dignity.

The only fair solution would be if rich countries guarantee means to provide basic needs for poor states.



conclusion



“Any international agreement that attempts to leave radical inequality across national states untouched while asking effort from the worst-off to assist the best-off is grossly unfair”.

- Despite different content and grounds of these principles, whatever it needs to be done by rich or poor states, the costs about environmental problems ought to be initially carried by industrialized states.

greater contribution to the problem



Throughout history,
people with new ideas
have always been called troublemakers.

Richelle Mead

(c) FB/Sue Fitzmaurice, Author

Be a troublemaker!

greater ability to pay



guaranteed minimum



IN THE US, MINIMUM WAGE IS \$7.25 PER HOUR AND A BIG MAC COSTS \$4.56. IN AUSTRALIA, MINIMUM WAGE IS \$15.96 PER HOUR AND A BIG MAC COSTS \$4.62.

Source: The Economist

TELL ME AGAIN HOW RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE WILL RAISE PRICES?

IN SUPPORT OF AN
\$11
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Find us on Facebook by searching for "Raise the Minimum Wage."

<http://ethics.sandiego.edu/video/interviews/>



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Ethics Interviews on the Web

Professor Henry Shue
Cornell University

"World Hunger and Human Rights"



homework



What are disincentive effects? Explain how Henry Shue respond to disincentive effects?



04

Feeding People Versus Saving Nature

养人还是救自然？

Holmes Rolston, III



PHILOSOPHY GONE WILD

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

HOLMES ROLSTON, III



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刘耳叶平译

by Holmes Rolston III

Translated by Liu Er & Yei Ping

background



Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development.

Rio Declaration

All States and all people shall cooperate in the essential task of eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement.

basic conflict



- ❖ The developed nations are wealthy enough to be concerned about saving nature.
- ❖ The developing nations want the anthropocentrism, loud and clear.

Feed People First? Do We? Ought We?



fact and
value

Fact : We mostly choose to do things we value more than feeding the hungry ; If one were to advocate always feeding the hungry first, doing nothing else until no one in the world is hungry, this would paralyze civilization.

Value : Our moral systems in fact do not teach us to feed the poor first. The Ten Commandments do not say that; the Golden Rule does not; Kant did not say that; nor does the utilitarian greatest good for the greatest number imply that.

Choosing for People to Die



choices

- ✓ Admitting **refugees** is humane, but it lets such persons flee their own national problems and does not contribute to any long term solutions in the nations from which they emigrate.

Hunger and Social Justice



the welfare
concept

The welfare concept introduces another possibility, that the wealthy should be taxed to feed the poor. We should do that first, rather than cut into much else that we treasure, possibly losing our wildlife, or wilderness areas, or giving up art, or underpaying the teachers.

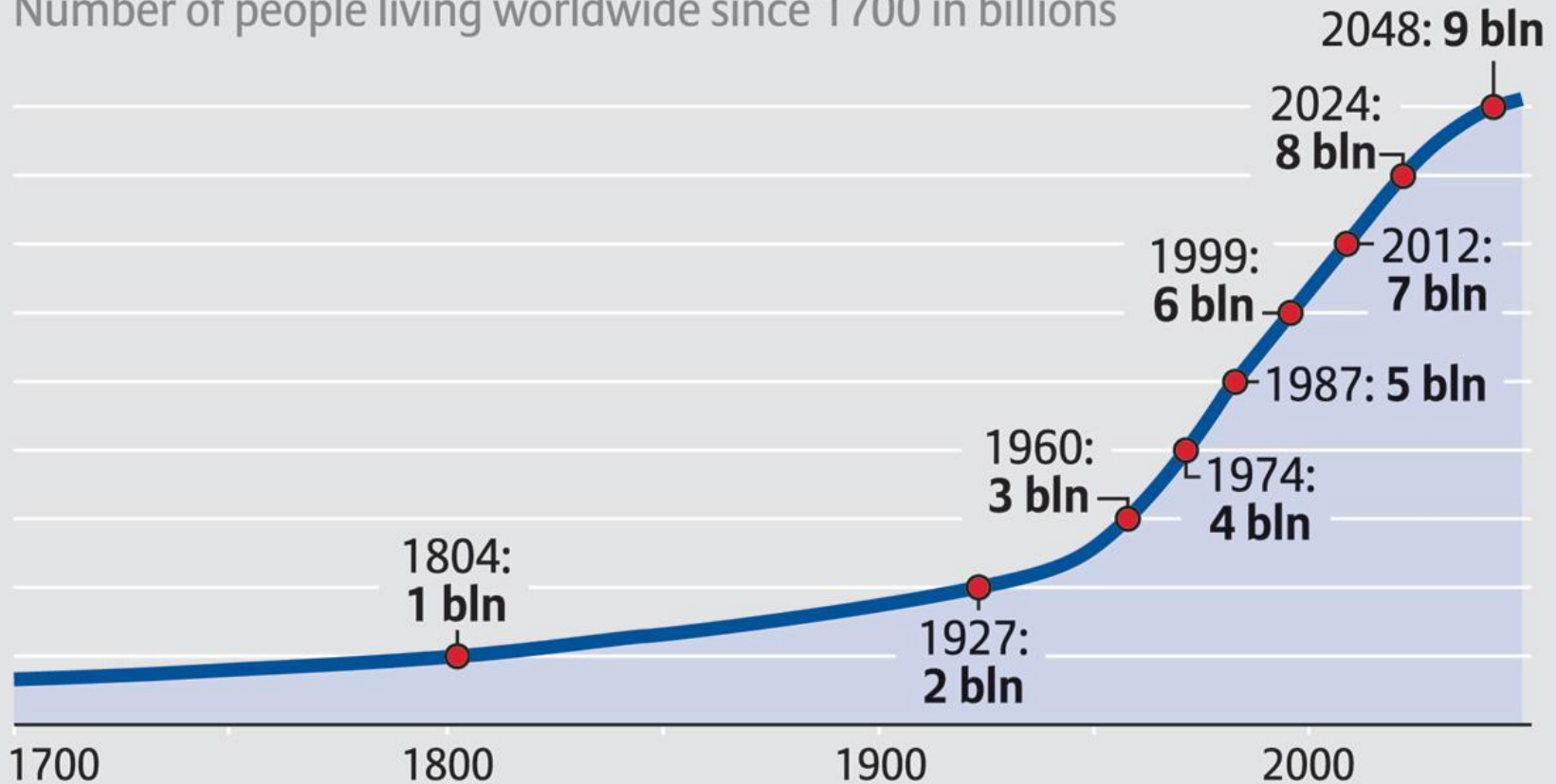
Escalating Human Populations



POPULATION OF THE EARTH

Allianz 

Number of people living worldwide since 1700 in billions



Source: United Nations World Population Prospects, Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung

For further information please visit: www.knowledge.allianz.com

Escalating Human Populations



requirement

Not only have the numbers of persons grown; their expectations have grown;

Cultures have become consumptive, with ever escalating insatiable desires overlaid on ever escalating population growth.

Culture does not know how to say “Enough!” ;

Feeding people always seems humane, but, we could be feeding a kind of cancer.

Humans will lose, and nature will be destroyed as well.

Endangered Natural values



nature

Natural values are endangered at every scale: global, regional, and local, at levels of ecosystems, species, organisms, populations, fauna and flora, terrestrial and marine, charismatic megafauna down to mollusks and beetles.

Endangered Natural values

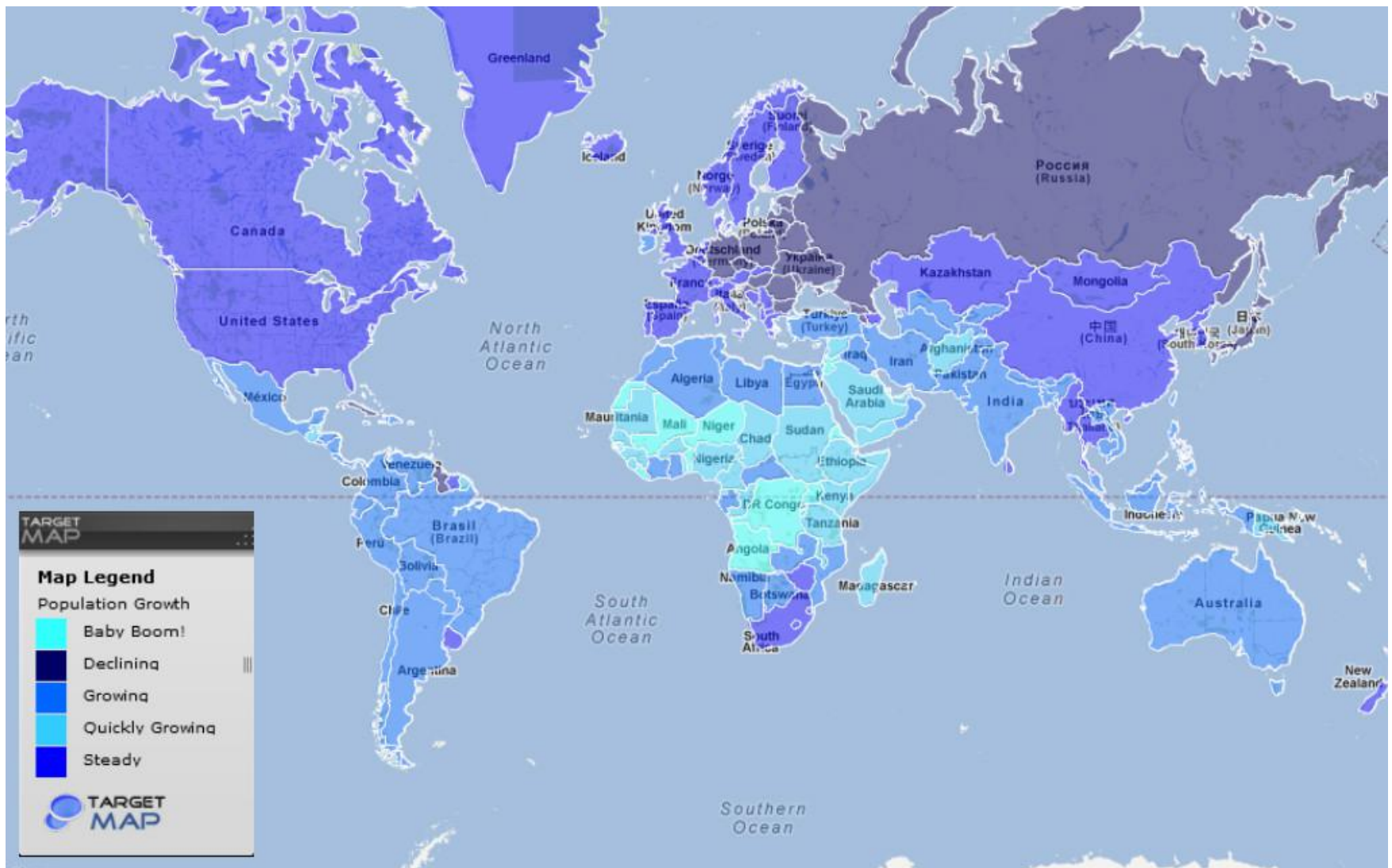


Madagascar

Africa is a case in point, and Madagascar epitomizes Africa's future.

Madagascar is the most eroded nation on Earth, and little or none of the fauna and flora is safely conserved. Population is expanding at 3.2 percent a year; remaining forest is shrinking at 3 percent, almost all to provide for the expanding population.

world population growth rate



world population growth rate



unreasonable
human

Tigers are sliding toward extinction. Populations have declined 95 percent in this century; the two main factors are loss of habitat and a ferocious black market in bones and other body parts used in traditional medicine and folklore in China, Taiwan, and Korea, uses that are given no medical credence.



Nature Comes First



Ought we to save nature if this results in people going hungry? In people dying? Regrettably,

sometimes, the answer is **YES.**

When Nature Comes First



Zimbabweans do not always put people first; they are willing to kill some, and to let others go hungry rather than sacrifice the rhino.

Zimbabwe has a hard-line shoot-to-kill policy for poachers, and over 150 poachers have been killed.

kill people

poachers killed elephant



Rolston's conclusions



- ✓ If persons widely demonstrate that they value many other worthwhile things over feeding the hungry (Christmas gifts, college educations, symphony concerts),
- ✓ and if developed countries, to protect what they value, post national boundaries across which the poor may not pass (immigration laws),
- ✓ and if there is unequal and unjust distribution of wealth and if just redistribution to alleviate poverty is refused,

IF

Rolston's conclusions



- ✓ and if charitable redistribution of justified unequal distribution of wealth is refused,
- ✓ and if one fifth of the world continues to consume four fifths of the production of foods and four fifths consumes one fifth,
- ✓ and if escalating birth rates continue so that there are no real gains in alleviating poverty,
- ✓ and if low productivity on domesticated lands continues, and if the natural lands to be sacrificed are likely to be low in productivity,
- ✓ and if significant natural values are at stake, including extinctions of species,

IF



THEN

one ought not always
to feed people first, but
rather one ought
sometimes to save
nature.



What do they prefer?



1

nature or people? WHICH FORST?

?

2

refugee? SAVE OR NOT?

?

3

?

?



05

My opinion

我的观点



Is there any way

to ensure both humanity
and environment ?

Approaches



the west

- ❖ unexamined life: the meaning of life
- ❖ calculating: good and evil
- ❖ dichotomy: conflicts always
- ❖ moral situation & universal principle

Approaches



the east

- ❖ **unexamined life: conscience**
- ❖ **calculating & the moment**
- ❖ **dichotomy & integrity**
- ❖ **moral situation & universal principle**

The wisdom of give



01

save

?

02

give what they
need

?

03

give what they
really need

?

Syria refugees



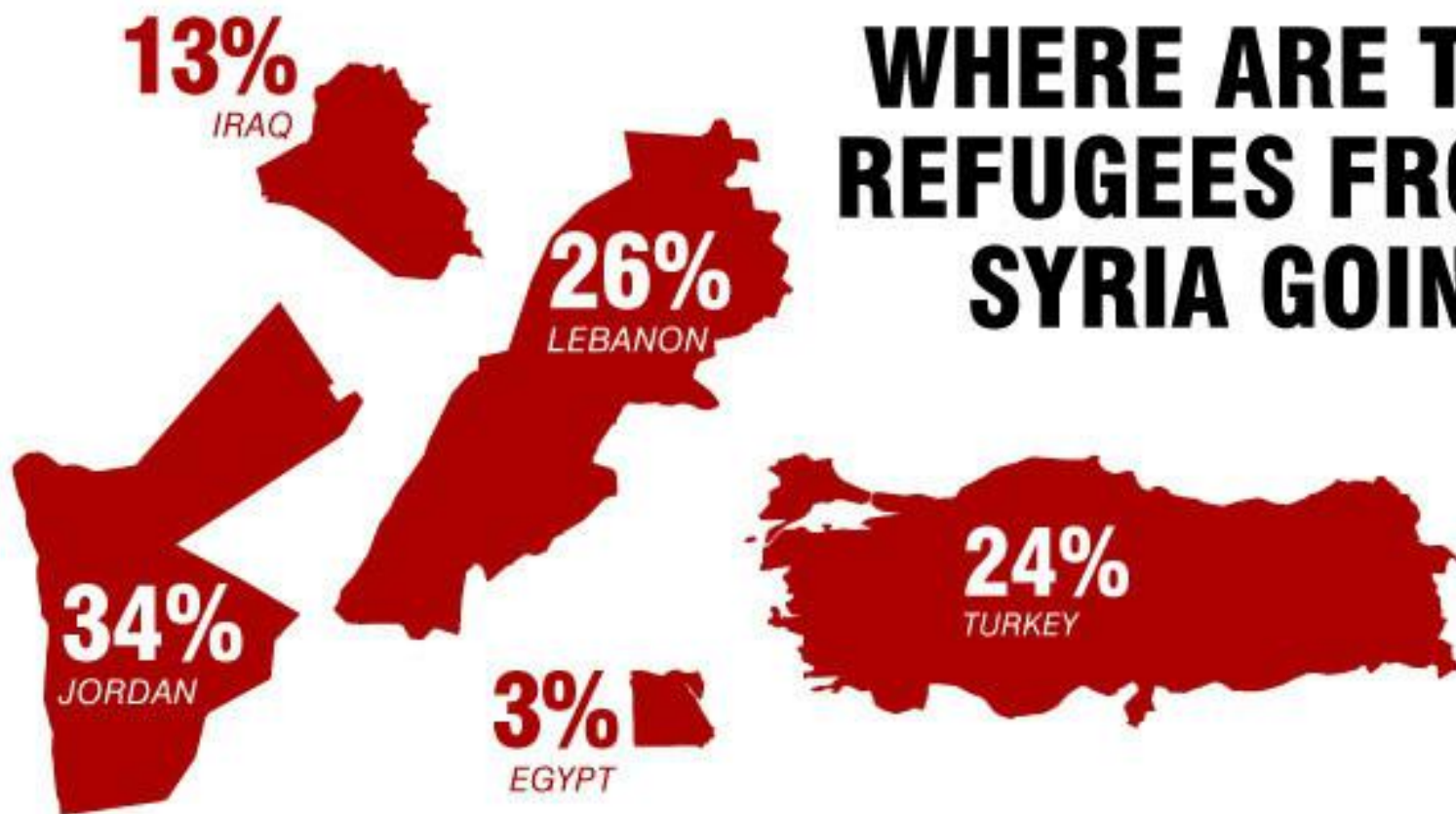
Syria refugees



three year-old Syria boy died on the beach



Europe



WHERE ARE THE REFUGEES FROM SYRIA GOING?

INEZ TORRE/CHN

SOURCE: UNHCR, the United Nations' refugee agency.

Which type of person will you be?



give
take

1. Are you the type of person who gives, gives and gives till there is no more to give, exhausted, resentful, and unfulfilled?
2. Are you the kind who shy away from giving and only concerned about taking?
3. Are you the kind who's style is tit for tat? Or
4. Are you the kind who has the skilfulness of knowing how to give, what to give and how much to give at the same time to know what to get, how much and how to get it?
5. What will you suggest China do about nature and refugees problem?

How to give?



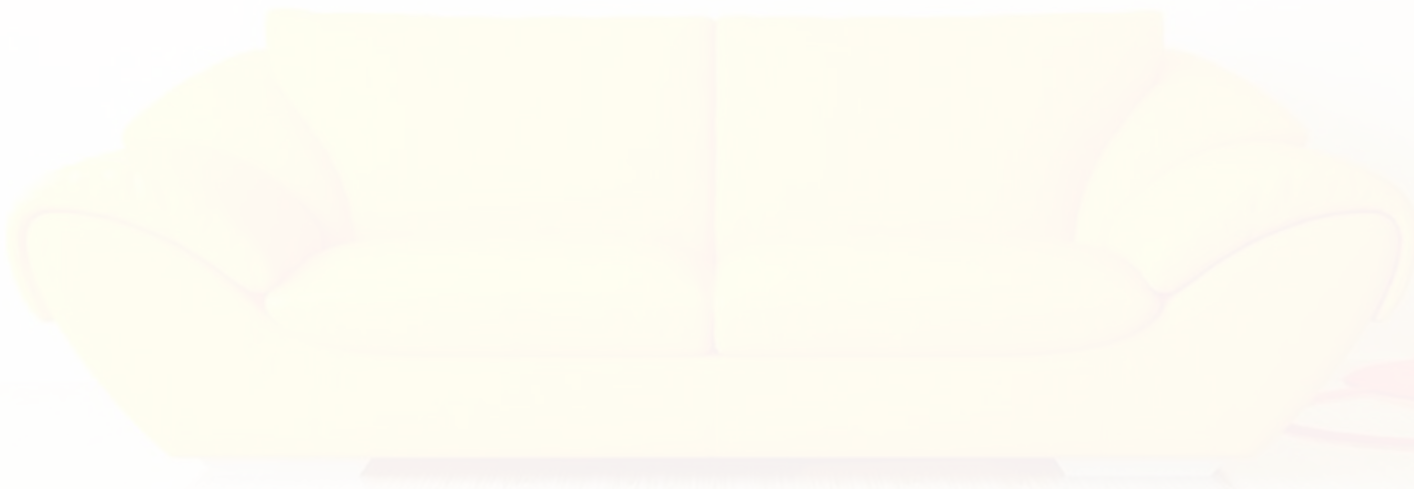
give

Will you give to nature? Why? How will you give to nature?

Will you give to refugees? Why? What will you do?

Do you think you are poor? Do you think what you have is more than what you need? Will you give to the poor people who are starving?

<https://forest-hugger.com/>



Thanks for your attention!

感谢您的关注!



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