

# **Reimagining the future in the post-COVID and climate- risky world**

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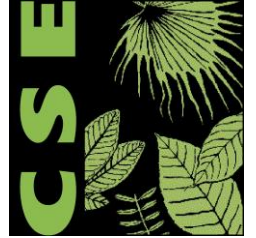
New Delhi

# Unprecedented Times



- We have never seen such disruption
- We have never imagined such a collapse of our economies – like a pack of cards the world around us has been wiped out
- **The worst hit are the poor; disadvantaged – black; brown or poor**
- The poor are:
  - **Most vulnerable** to the virus because of their living conditions; congested homes and dirty surrounding with no water or sewage management
  - **Most vulnerable** because of the collapse of the economy – they are suffering and this is not right. **Not acceptable**

# Unprecedented Times; but no time left



- **COVID-19 has disrupted economies; destroyed livelihoods; massive deaths and added to huge misery of the very poor in our world**
- **But in this pandemic, when governments have little ability to handle the 'normal' there is the 'other' global catastrophe looming; and showing up – climate change**
- **We need to understand that this is not going away and will make our world more vulnerable to shock and disruption**

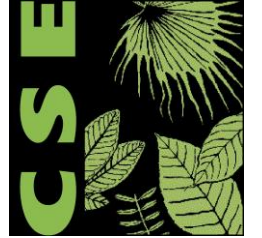
# Learning 1

## Inter-connected; inter-dependent world



- Coronavirus moved with speed across nations; cities and villages because we are inter-connected
- The movement of people and goods – between nations; within nations – is massive
- We are also as strong as our strongest link
- If virus remains in any region; any country; the contagion will spread
- If the vaccine is not available to all; mutations will increase; we will remain vulnerable. Deadly race between virus, variant and vaccine
- **Need to provide for all;** for all to survive this

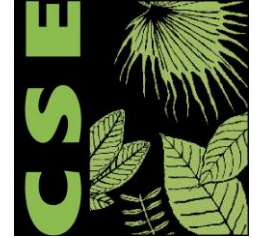
# Same



- **Same as climate change** – if the poor continue to pollute; temperatures will rise. Need to make space for the poor's right to development – share growth; share the atmospheric common
- **Same as air pollution** -- if the poor do not get access to clean energy, they will use polluting fuel to cook food or to build livelihoods and this will contaminate the airshed of the rich and the poor
- COVID-19; climate change and air pollution are **great equalizers**

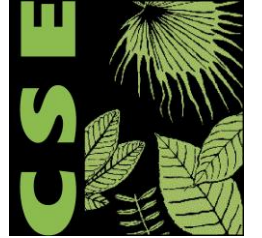
# Learning 2

## Dystopian relationship with nature



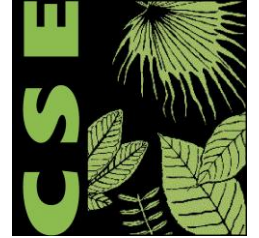
- Humans are transgressing the nature-human boundary – breaching the line so that virus found in the wild mutate and jump species
- We are destroying forests; we are destroying wildlife and their habitats so that new viruses emerge in our lives
- Humans are transforming nature through our industrial food systems –methods of growing animals/food which destroys biodiversity; makes breeds less resilient. This makes us more vulnerable to zoonotic diseases

# Food-sustainability link



- Cannot 'green' agriculture after we 'brown' it
- Sustainability is about **what we grow** – biodiversity rich and nature-friendly
- Sustainability is about **who grows** – local food for livelihood security
- Sustainability is about **how we grow** – less intensive and less toxic
- Sustainability is about **what we eat** – less processed and more bio-diverse and local

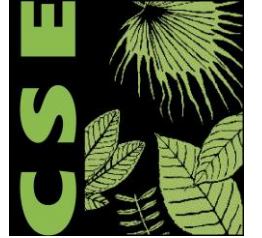
# Future



- **Of climate change**
- The next Planetary catastrophe will lead to as much disruption as what we are seeing today; and more
- Governments are working towards substantial investment in rebuilding economies. Massive opportunity to address both challenges
- **But will we?** This is the zillion-dollar question



# Climate change is real



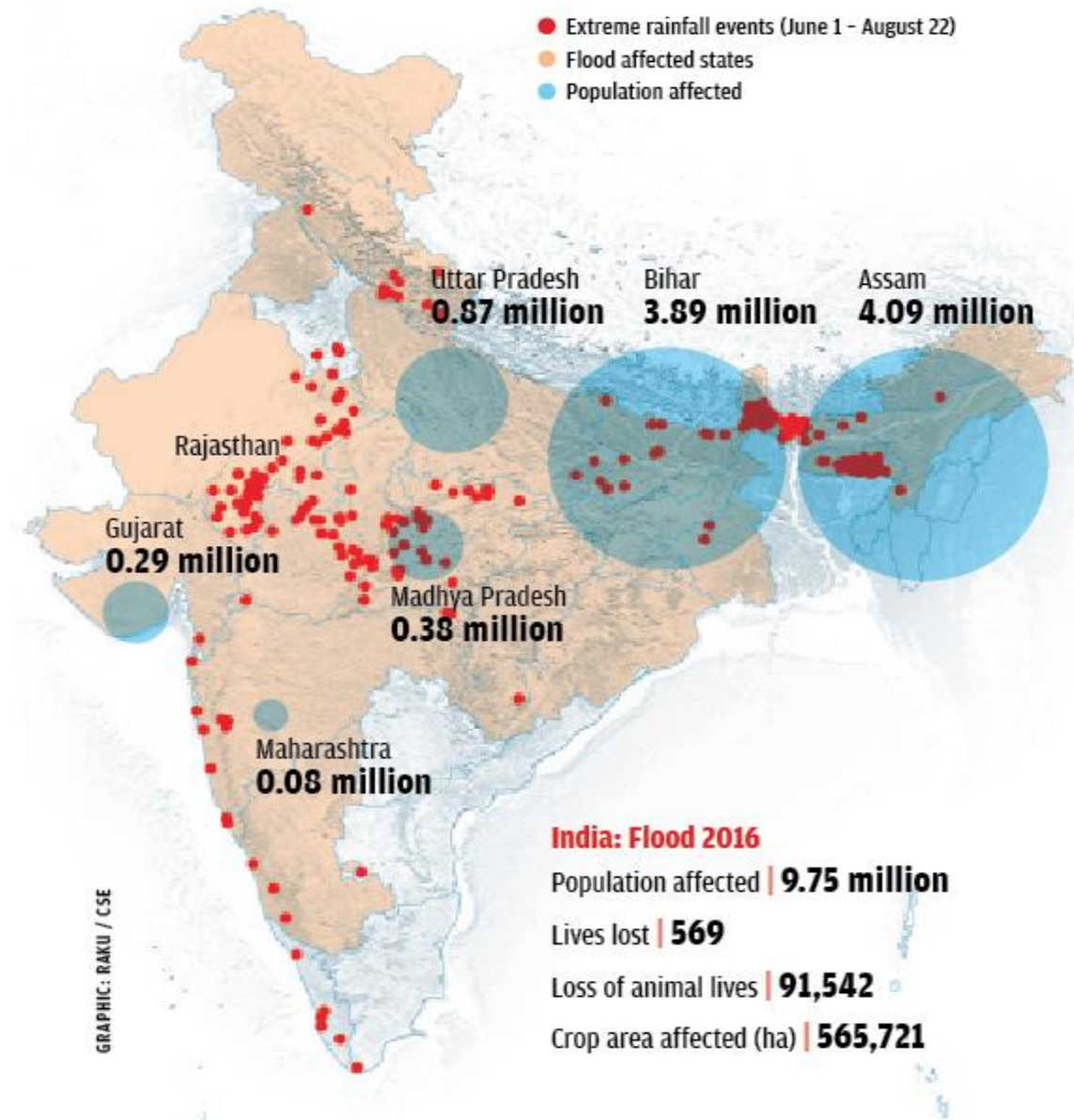
- Climate change impacts are showing up in our world; not about the future but now
- More than enough evidence to show that extreme and variable rain events are linked to climate change – increase of floods and then droughts
- More than enough evidence to show that intensity of tropical cyclones is increasing; becoming more unpredictable and causing more long-term ecological and livelihood damage

# Extreme-rain floods Double-whammy

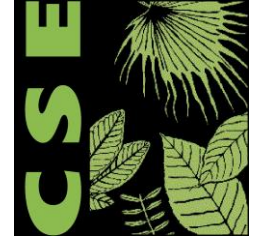
- Cannot hold water
- Destroys life when it floods
- Destroys life because of drought

## Under water

Most of the floods this year were preceded by extreme rainfall events—a precipitation of 124.5 mm or more in a day



# Internal displacement Drought-flood-crop loss-cyclones not single day events

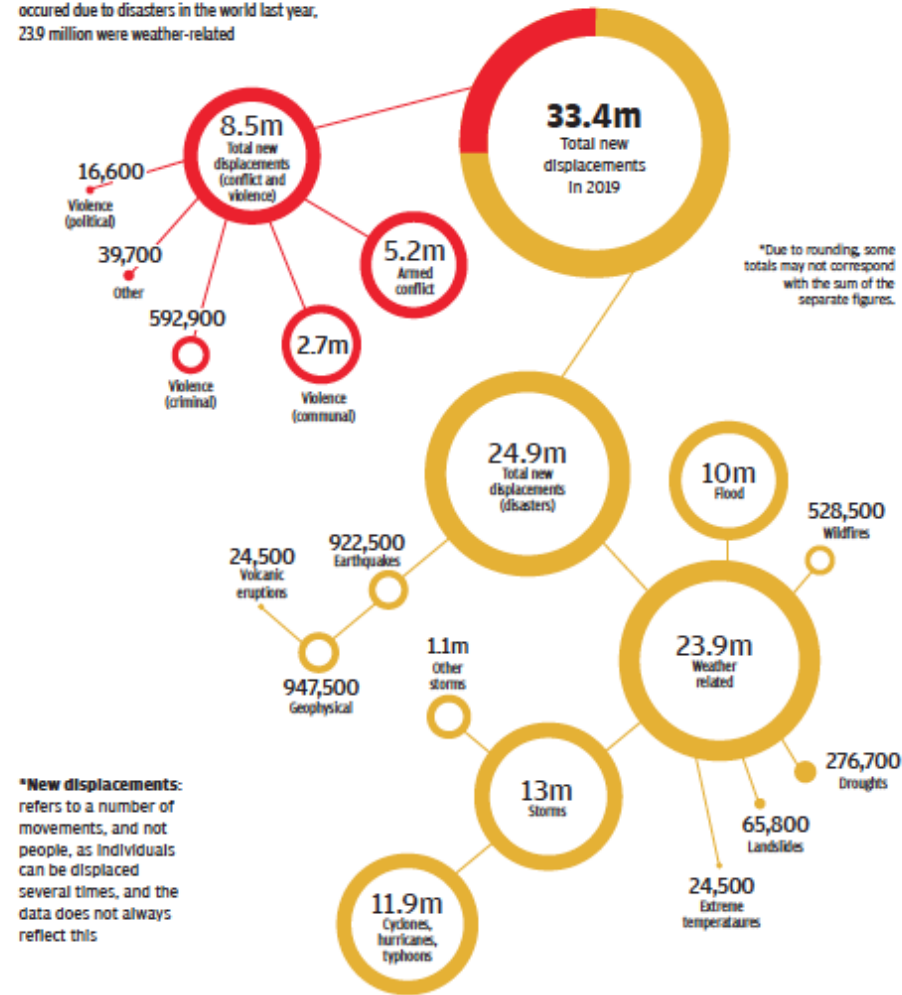


- Cripple people
- Destroy livelihoods
- Take away development dividend
- As events become more frequent, survival becomes more difficult
- No option but to move – migrate – **to cities to new countries**

# INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

by disasters and conflicts

Of the 24.9 million new displacements\* that occurred due to disasters in the world last year, 23.9 million were weather-related



**\*New displacements:** refers to a number of movements, and not people, as individuals can be displaced several times, and the data does not always reflect this

Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2020

Sourced from upcoming State of India's Environment 2020: In Figures to be released on June 5

# 50 WORST HIT COUNTRIES

India alone accounted for over 20 per cent of all new displacements in 2019

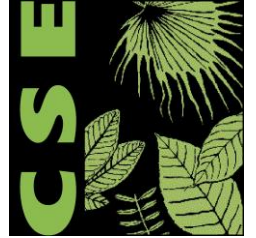


Source: United Nations Environment, Food and Agriculture Organization and others

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# Future of work

## Desperate to leave; desperate to return



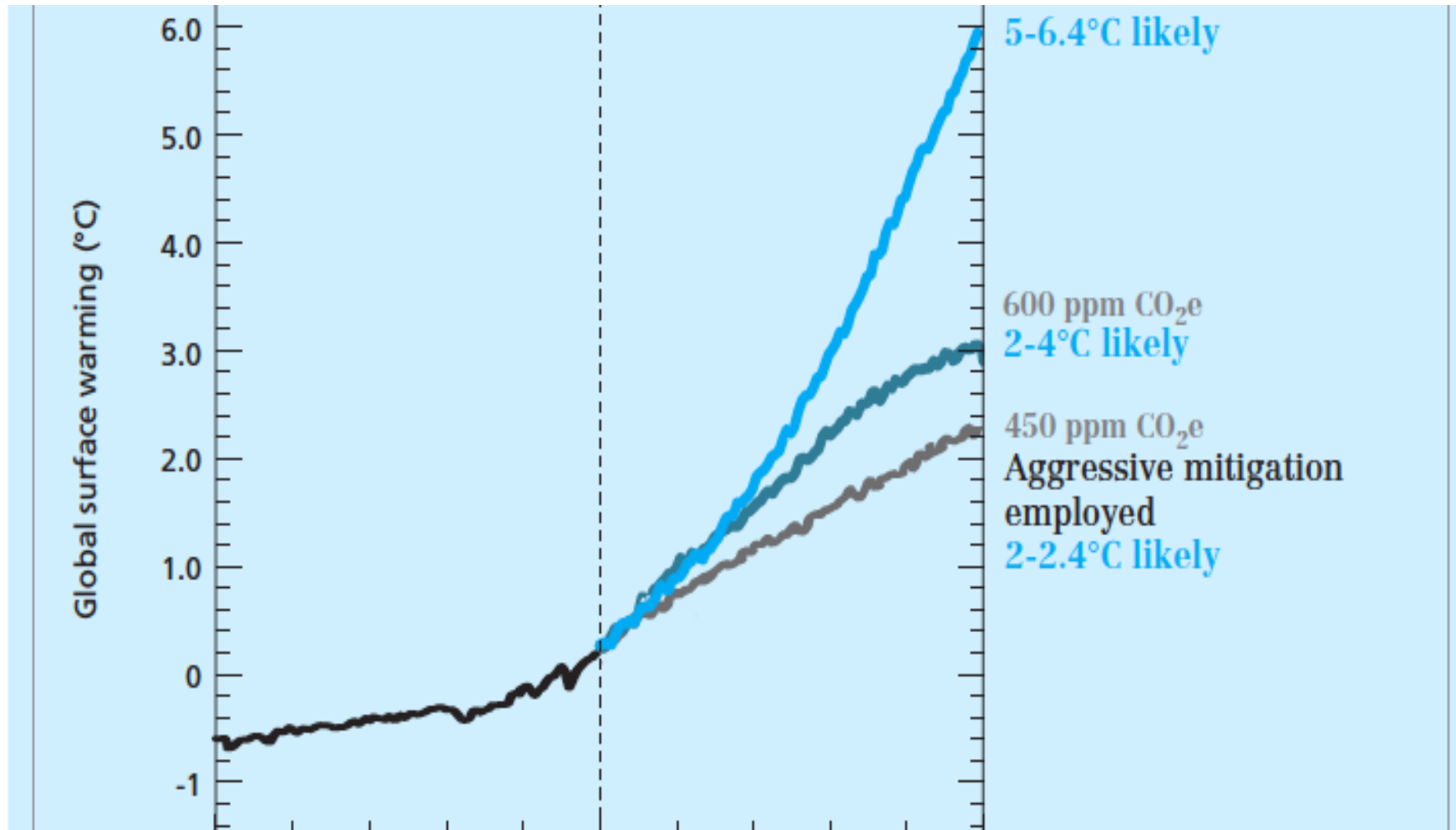
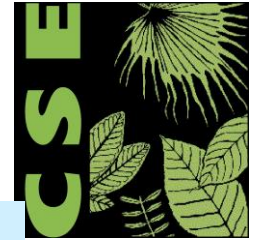
- COVID-19 made the invisible, visible
- We have seen massive migrant movement; in our world and in the rich world
- Earlier people were desperate to leave their home; because of poverty; lack of livelihood; climate risks because of variable weather and agrarian distress – **now they are desperate to return**

# Growth-climate linked



- No country, as yet, has learnt how to get rich without emissions
- US is moving from coal to gas (still fossil); EU coal use in electricity is still as high as its RE-based electricity;
- Biden-Harris are welcome change; but with cost of shale gas so low in the US, controlling emissions is a tall order
- Globally transport emissions are increasing; efficiency gains are being negated; energy transformation not happening
- Add challenge to **share that growth between nations;** between people

Emissions = Concentration = temperature  
rise = **CARBON BUDGET**





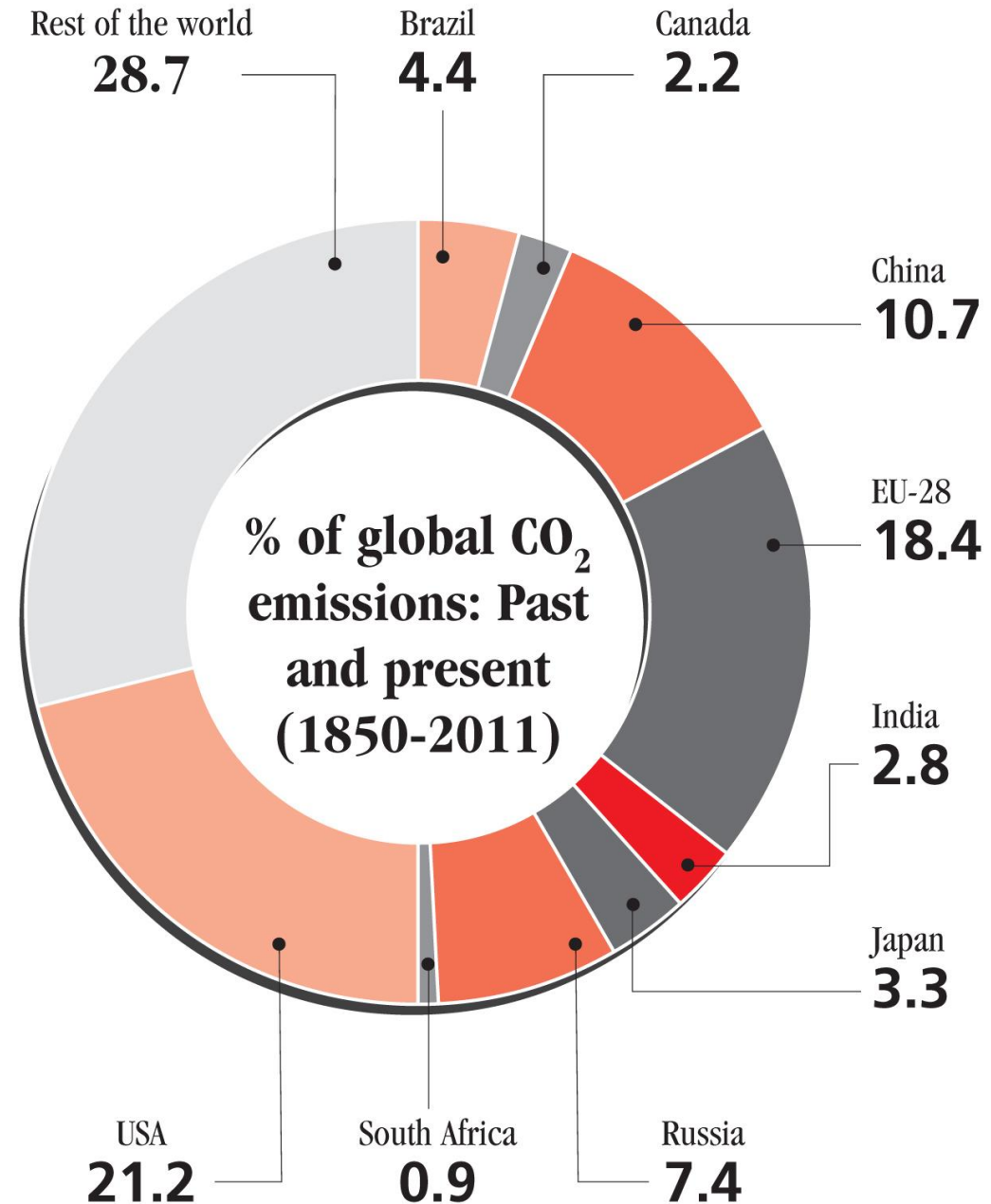
# Budget – what can the world emit to stay below 1.5 °C



- IPCC says that for a 66 per cent chance to keeping warming below 1.5°C the world can afford to emit 400 gigatonnes (GT) between 2020 and the end of the century
- In 2019 world emitted 37 GT globally
- **At current rates world will exhaust budget for the century in this decade itself**
- **What is then the option for the world; for the poor in the world?**



Historical  
carbon  
budget:  
reflects  
inequity of  
the past



## Future Carbon budget: reflects huge inequity in the future

2012-2030

1870-2030

New world has been created  
New occupiers  
New winners and many losers

China and US will get equal  
share of the global CO<sub>2</sub> budget  
by 2030

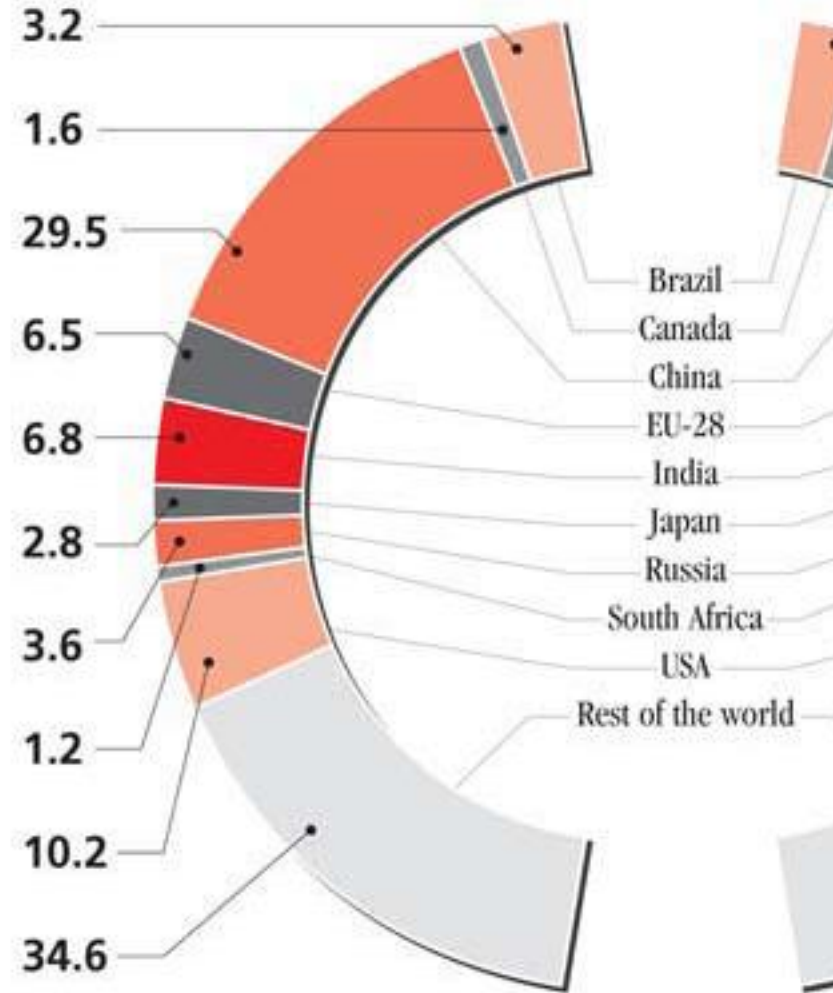
China 16.7%

US: 17.7%

Rest get nothing..

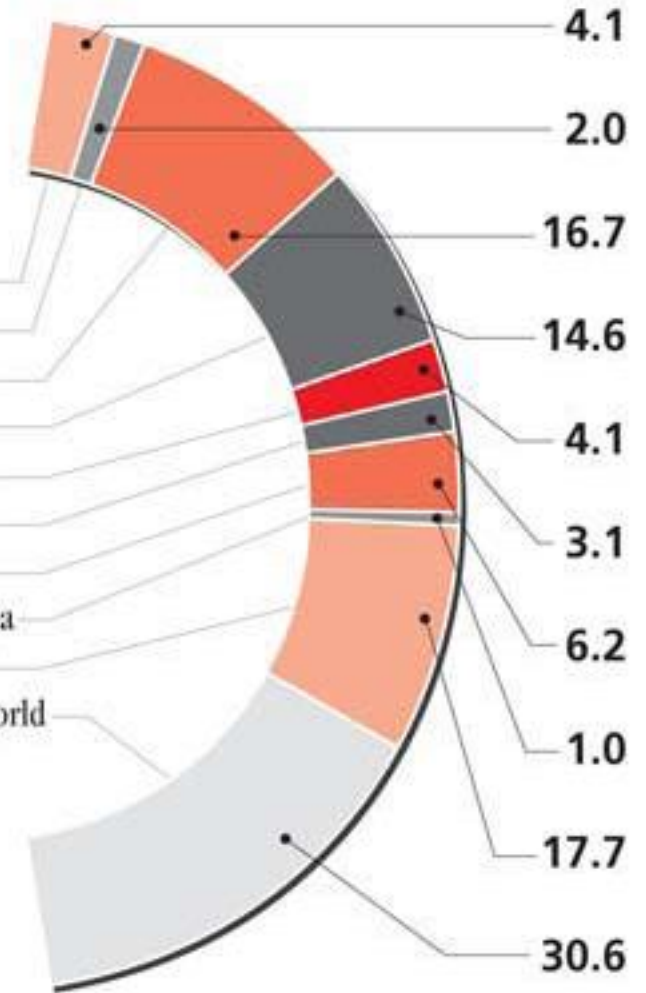
**Survival of fittest????**

% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: Future  
2012-2030

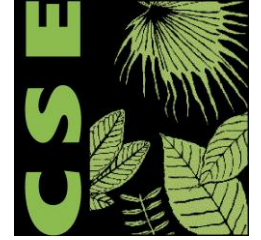


Source: IPCC, AR5

% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions:  
Past, present and future  
1850-2030



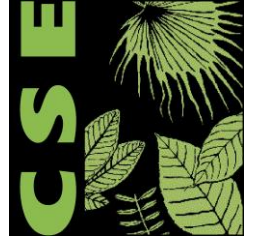
# We wish But cant wish away the poor



- The fact is the budget will be over
- This means that we will be on course to increasing temperatures
- But what then does it mean for the poor? Large numbers of people in India, Africa and South America
- Will they stop **development**? Will they stop breathing, eating, cooking, studying, working?
- How will they grow? Or do we ask them to stop all activity?
- How will they not grow? The price of mitigation is too expensive for us, how will the poor afford it
- They will get richer; and like us, they will emit; temperatures will increase.  
**We will all be at risk**

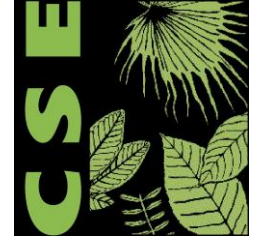
# What do we do?

## How do we begin to reshape our world



- **Future of work**
- COVID-19 has made the invisible, visible
- **What then is the future of work? Is this the opportunity to invest – big time – to build resilience in local-rural economies.**
- **Think out of box and at scale**

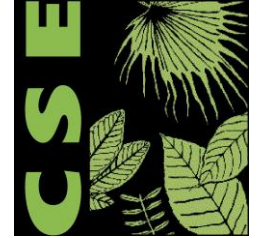
# Future



- **Future of production**

- Till now we have built economies by discounting labour and environment
- Trade as moved to where countries can compete because of low costs
  - including not paying for the cost of cleaning up
- Can this be reversed?
- Will we pay higher costs of goods; will our economies become less dependent on consumption-led growth; more on well-being led growth

# Towards greener fairer growth



- 1. Focus on rural resilience – India's MNREGA largest social net for green jobs; put money in hands of poor to rebuild natural capital
- 2. Focus on local production/nature based solutions for local growth and resilience
- 3. Focus on affordable and sustainable urban industrial growth; which can optimize on the opportunities of co-benefits; building for poor and sustainability
- 4. Focus on health as a preventive agenda for all; water, sanitation, air pollution, food that is good for nature, livelihoods and nutrition
- 5. Circular economies because we need to be resource efficient

Bottomline is that we need affordable and inclusive growth for sustainable development



# Reinvesting in rural economies

- This is our opportunity
- But for this we must rethink:
  - A. Conservation
  - B. Productivity
- We know “extraction” (destroy/pillage) or conservation (don’t touch)
- We need effective strategies for resource management for livelihoods
- Forest resources for development
- Water for livelihood support
- **We know how to build high-input agriculture; but this adds to risk and in climate change times with weird weather will increase debt; need to consider low-input but high-value resource management.**
- Give money in the hands of the producer and link food to nutrition, livelihoods

# Finally



- Today's world is all about science and needs informed understanding; every policy is about knowledge of science and its application in technology
- From food to water to air pollution
- Need more engagement of educational and scientific community in the multiple-crisis that stare us in the face
- **Needs all our ability to push the solutions; be bold; imaginative and at all times, to find answers that work for all.**