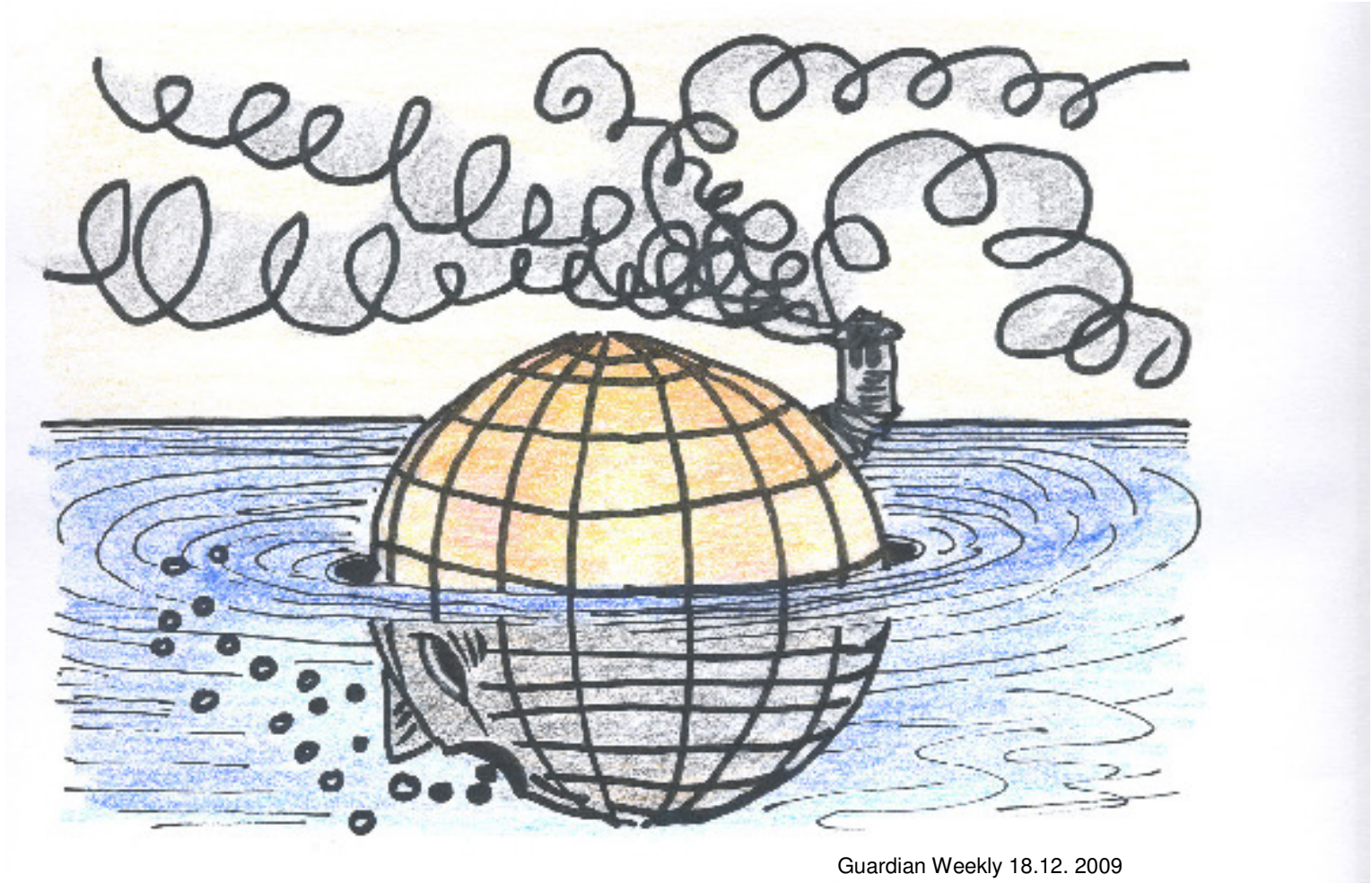


Quality of Life and Measurement of Prosperity – From an African Perspective

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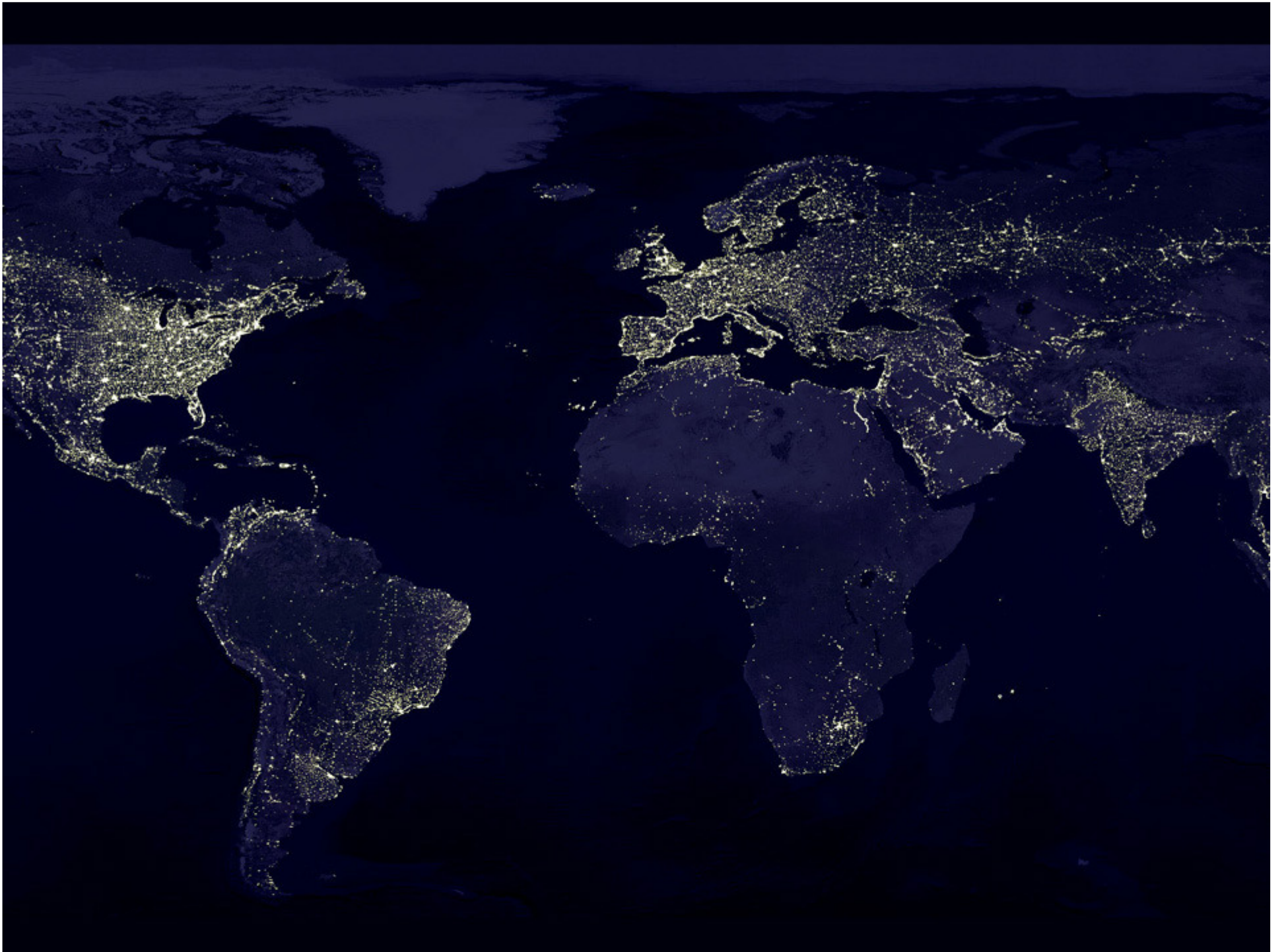
Growth in Transition conference
Vienna/Wien, 28 – 29 January, 2010





Guardian Weekly 18.12. 2009

Is it possible to maintain the current level of material prosperity to sustain quality of life for future generations?



Africa's food security is threatened by climate change not of its making.



Will the next generation in Africa be willing to forgo the modern living standard enjoyed by people in affluent societies?

Indicators of Quality of Life and Prosperity

- A good place to start is with living standards. (Alex Michalos, 2009)

I wish to be married by the rich man and I wish that we can give birth to two children (a boy and a girl) then I wish to have two cars, namely a BMW (new model) and a Venture.

I wish to build a big house with four (4) bedrooms, 3 (three) bathroom, two (2) toilets, two (2) garages, one (1) kitchen, dining room and sitting room.

– Letter 111 (Leggett et al., 'My Life in the New South Africa', 1997, p.107)



Sustainable Quality of Life?

What are the things that make for a decent living standard?

Essentials versus the '**Nice to haves**'

Which **essentials** do you not have – of necessity or choice?

NECESSITIES for an Acceptable Standard of Living in South Africa Today

Possessions and infrastructure items	% saying item is essential
* House strong enough to stand up to the weather	91
* Street lighting	90
* Mains electricity in the house	90
* Fridge	89
* Tarred road close to the house	85
* Flush toilet in the house	84
* Radio	77
* Electric cooker	74
Television	72
* Fence or wall around the property	71
* Bath or shower in the house	69
Burglar bars in the house	64
Landline phone	64
Cell phone	63
Sofa/lounge suite	52

Consensus across subgroups

Data Source: South African Social Attitudes Survey 2005, n2850. (Nobel et al., 2007)

NECESSITIES for an Acceptable Standard of Living in South Africa Today

'Green' ESSENTIALS	% saying item is essential
* Neighbourhood without rubbish in the streets	74
* Neighbourhood without smoke or smog in the air	65
Garden	56

Consensus across subgroups

Data Source: South African Social Attitudes Survey 2005, n2850. (Nobel et al., 2007)

Moral Dilemmas:

Do the world's rich have the right to deny the world's poor a materially better life?

..which would still be a fraction of the affluence we ourselves enjoy?



Has advertising dangerously inflated expectations of the Good Life in Africa?



Cellphones – ultimate symbols of modernity – have captured the African imagination.





The youth
have a
different idea
of a decent
living than
their
grandparents!



South Africa's dream of a 'better life for all' consumes energy

In 2008 energy consumption in non-OECD countries exceeded demand from wealthier countries.





**From the Age of
Entitlement to Green
Sustainable Lifestyles:**

**Do we need a new mindset
for the 21st Century**



What are the prospects of Africa's poor going green?

African Priorities are often Survivalist

Rehema Ibrahim knows the snow and ice on Mount Kilimanjaro has been melting.

She knows what is meant by the 'global warming'. But she says: "The issues I am experiencing have greater priority. The HIV and the problems it is causing are greater than the (receding) ice."



Bjorn Lomborg, Director Copenhagen Consensus Centre, writing in *Business Day*, Johannesburg, 20 November, 2009, p. 15.

Index of Environmental Care

- We worry too much about the future of the environment and not enough about jobs today.
- Even if we do not protect the environment, people will always find ways to survive.
- There are more important things to do in life than protect the environment.
- Nature conservation parks only benefit wealthy people.
- Land earmarked for conservation should rather be given to poor communities.

Who cares about Environmental Conservation in South Africa?

- ❑ Shack dwellers living in informal settlements care least.

Surprisingly, by province:

- ❑ Residents of Mpumalanga, who live in a province known for its pristine environment score lowest on the Environmental Care Index.
- ❑ Poor rural residents of Limpopo care most.
The belief system of the Venda people reflects respect for the environment.

Maximising our Natural Resources for sustainable Quality of Life



Green Energy for Africa?

Solar-powered townships in future?

Sustainability is also a question of good maintenance of existing infrastructure.





A 'new' mindset for Sustainable Quality of Life?

We need a new balance in our lives between our roles as modern consumers and as custodians of our natural and cultural heritage.

