

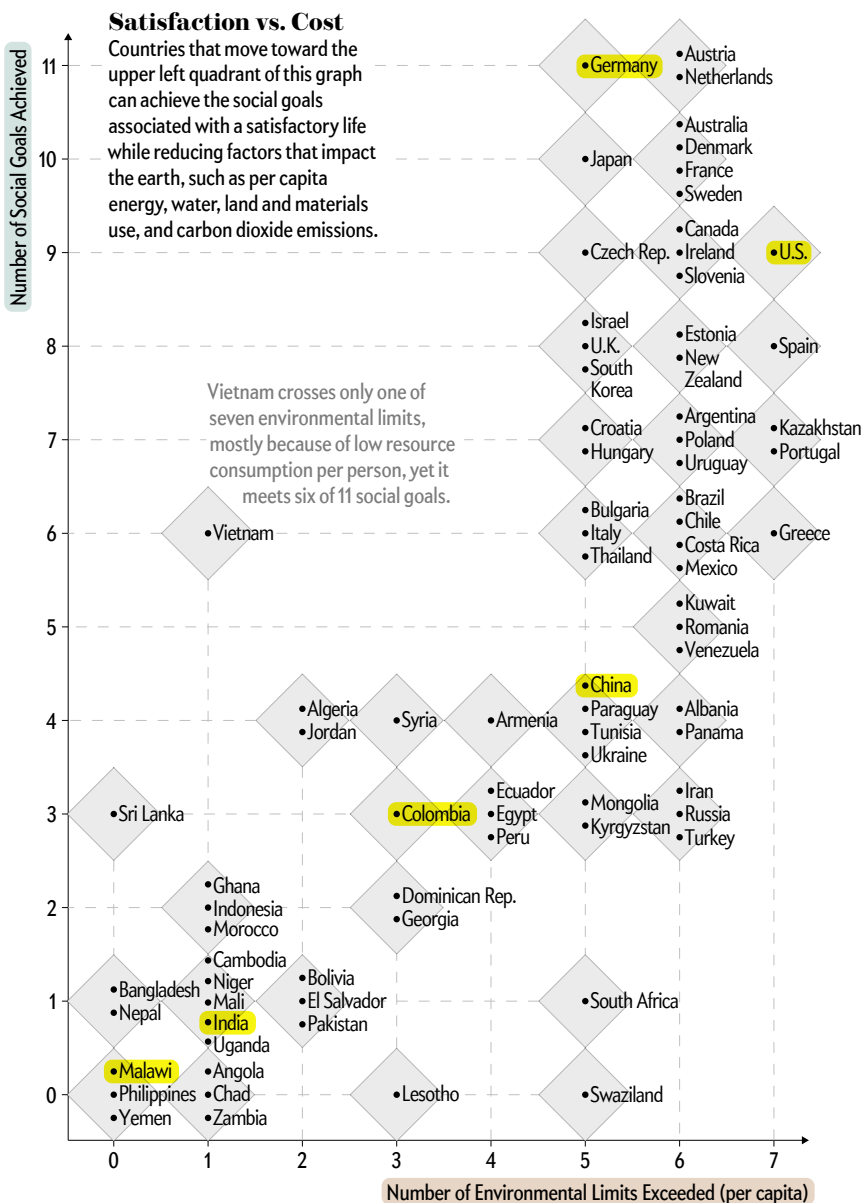
A Good Life for All

Can humans live well without pillaging the planet?

Many wealthy nations achieve a range of social objectives that together can provide a good life for their people, as outlined by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. But to do so, they exceed their share of the earth's natural resources and surpass environmental impact limits needed to safeguard the planet, according to a recent study (*top right of main graph*). Less wealthy nations use resources more modestly and have lower impacts but meet fewer of the social goals (*bottom left of main graph*). The solution: "Wealthy nations can consume less, with no loss in quality of life," says study leader Daniel W. O'Neill of the University of Leeds in England. That would free up resources for less wealthy nations to improve lives (*circular charts*) while still keeping within safe environmental boundaries.

Satisfaction vs. Cost

Countries that move toward the upper left quadrant of this graph can achieve the social goals associated with a satisfactory life while reducing factors that impact the earth, such as per capita energy, water, land and materials use, and carbon dioxide emissions.



Country Goals and Limits

Social Goals

- A • Life satisfaction
- B • Years of healthy life
- C • Nutrition
- D • Sanitation
- E • Sufficient income
- F • Access to energy
- G • Education
- H • Social support
- I • Democratic rights
- J • Income equality
- K • Employment rate

Social goal fulfilled

Overshoot can be wasteful or harmful

Not fulfilled

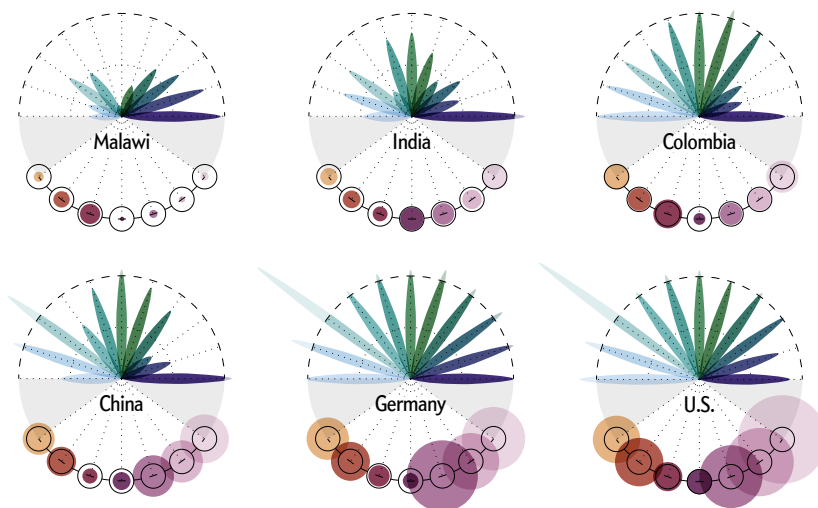
Environmental limit

Share exceeded

Within share of limit

Environmental Limits

- L • Materials use
- M • Land and ocean use
- N • Crop and forest loss
- O • Freshwater use
- P • Nitrogen discharge
- Q • Phosphorus discharge
- R • CO₂ emissions



SOURCE: "A GOOD LIFE FOR ALL WITHIN PLANETARY BOUNDARIES," BY DANIEL W. O'NEILL ET AL., IN NATURE SUSTAINABILITY, VOL. 1, FEBRUARY 5, 2018 <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41566-018-0025-2>