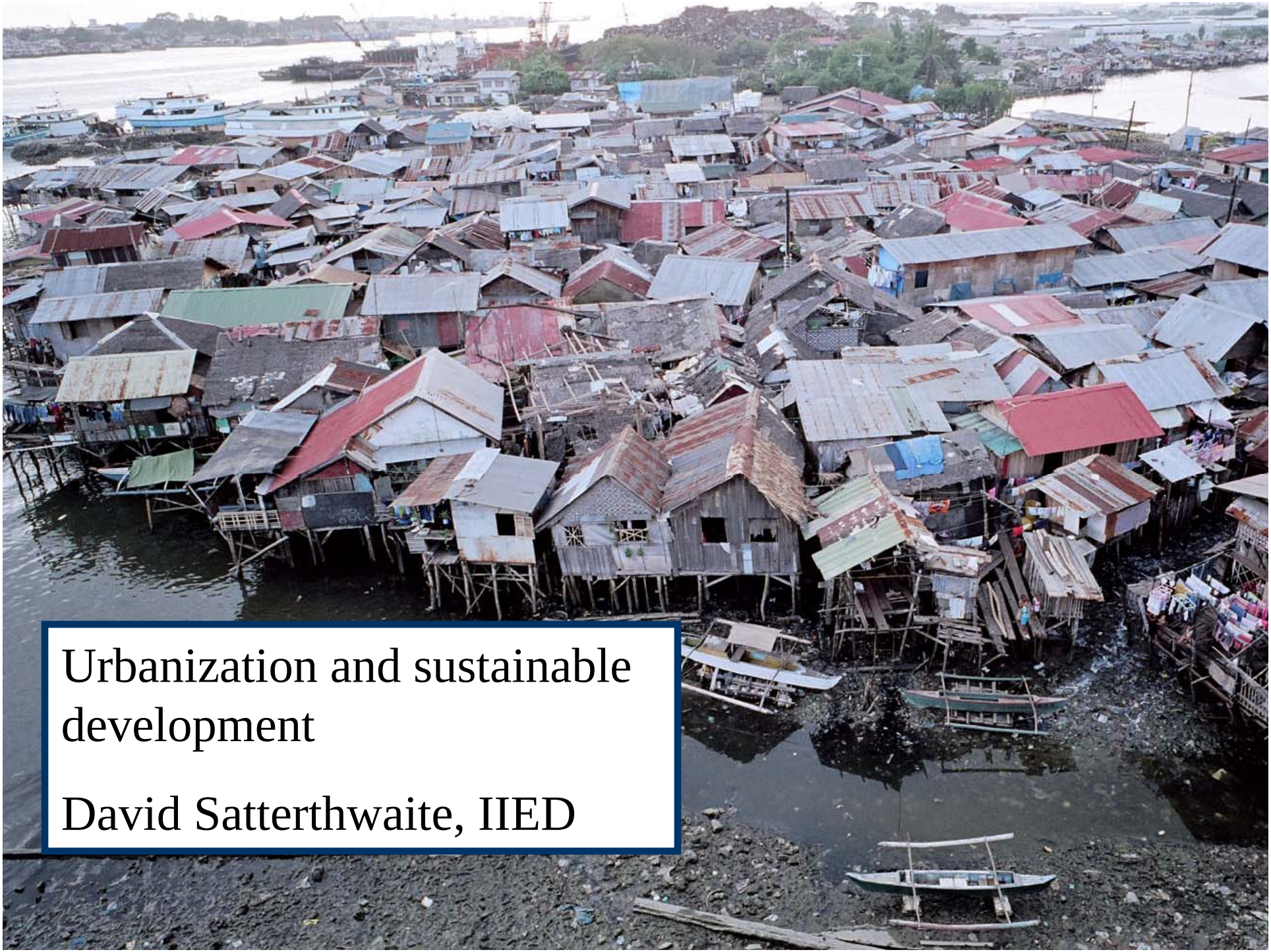


Urbanization and sustainable development

David Satterthwaite, IIED

How can urbanization be a problem if

- All rich nations are highly urbanized; all the poorest nations predominantly rural
- ***All the most successful economies in Africa, Asia and Latin America are urbanizing rapidly***
- Almost all the least successful economies are not urbanizing or urbanizing slowly

Environment & development advantages of cities:

- **Cities with lower unit costs**
  - ***Economies of scale/proximity for providing piped water, sewers, drains, health care, education, emergency services……***
- **Cheaper to keep down energy use, cut wastes, control pollution, cut greenhouse gas emissions....**
- **WHY DO MOST GOVERNMENTS SEE URBANIZATION AS A PROBLEM?**
  - ***The mayor who said "The best urban policy – keep people in rural areas"***

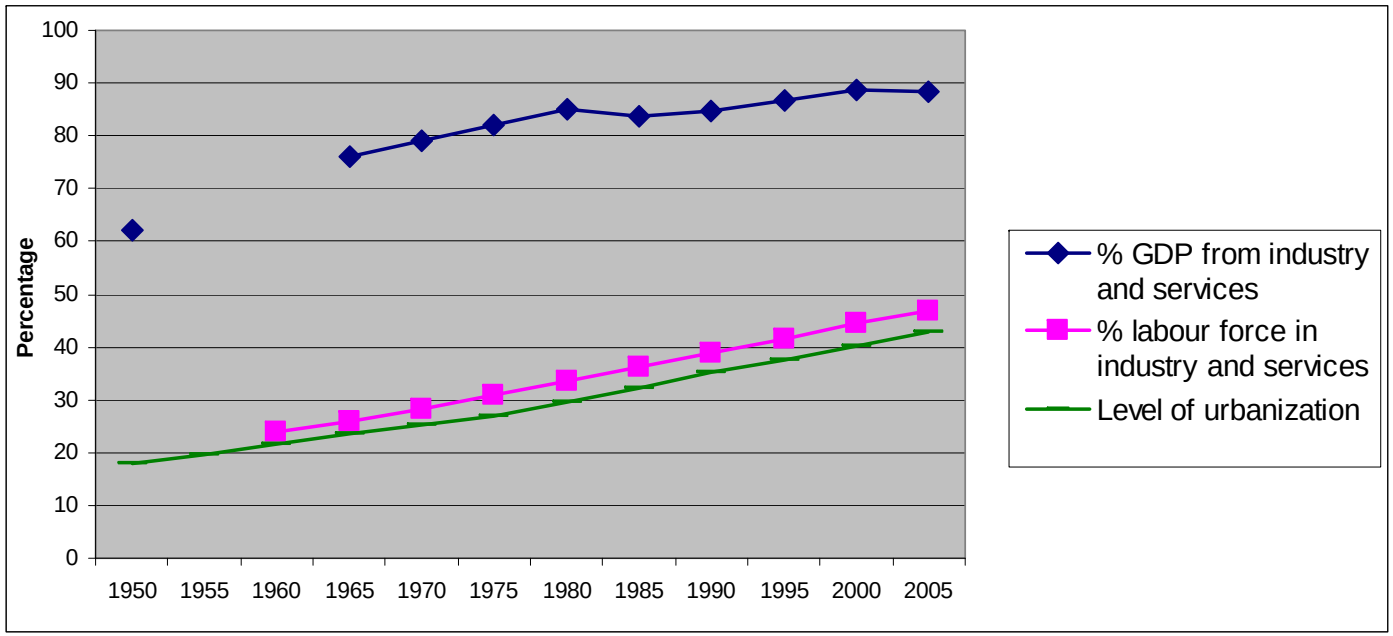
Urbanization and sustainable development

- Meeting people's needs
  - Economic, environmental, social, cultural, health and political needs.....
- Without compromising ability of future generations to meet their needs
  - limit generation of environmental costs
  - sustainable use of finite resources (soils, freshwater...)
  - limit greenhouse gas emissions

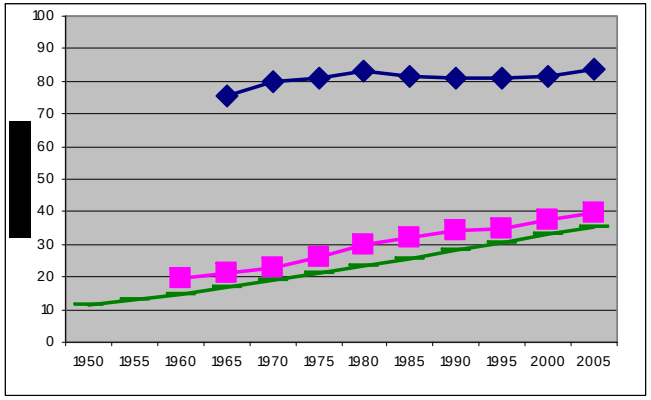
Three global milestones for economic change

- In 2008, more than half the world's population living in urban areas
- Two less well-known milestones
  - 1980, more than half the world's economically active population working in industry & services – not agriculture (today 65%)
  - 1940, more than half the world's GDP was generated in industry and services, not agriculture (today 97%)
- Urbanization follows economic success
  - People moving in response to where new investment and jobs concentrate

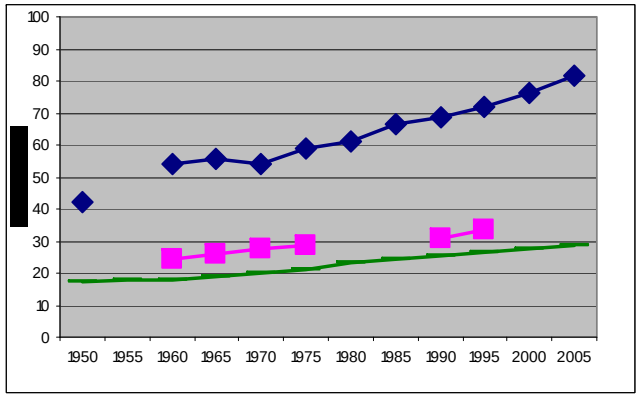
Low- and middle-income nations



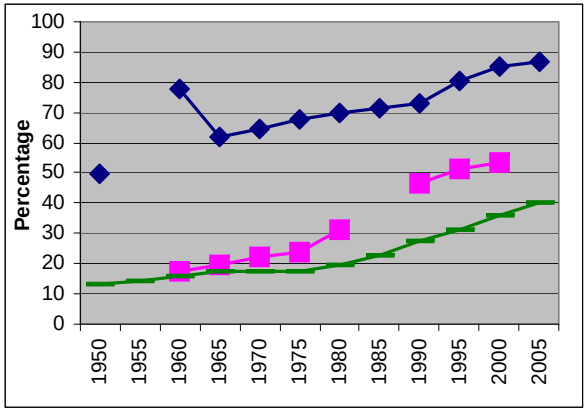
Sub-Saharan Africa



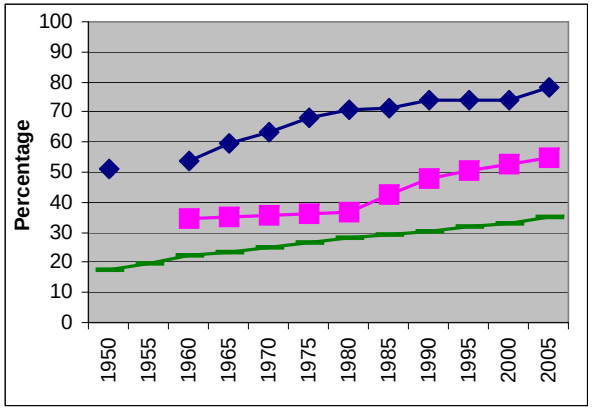
India



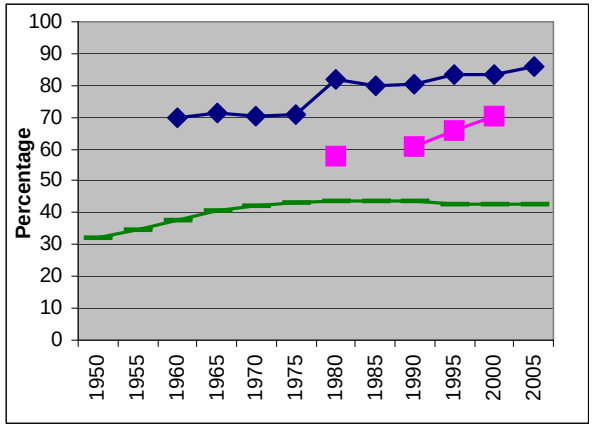
China



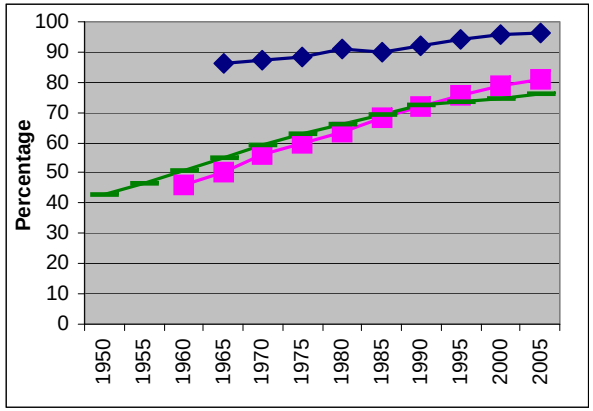
Pakistan



Egypt



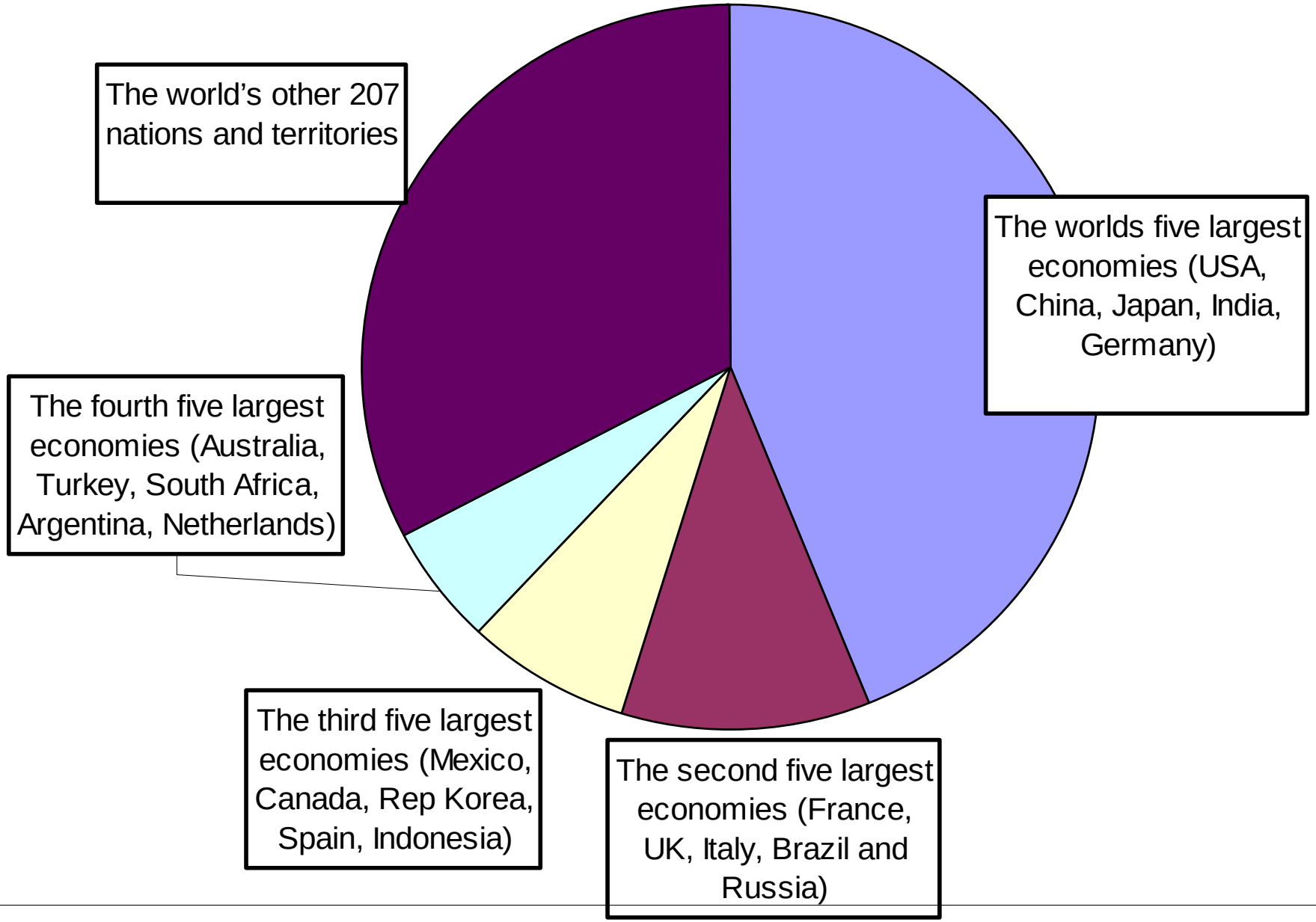
Mexico



Cities generating high proportion of GDP

City	% national population living in that city	% GDP generated by that city
New York	6.2	9
Mexico City	18.1	41
Sao Paulo	9.8	28
Shanghai	1.1	6
Mumbai	1.7	16
Cape Town	6.5	11.2
Johannesburg	7.7	18.1

Distribution of the world's 'million-cities', 2000



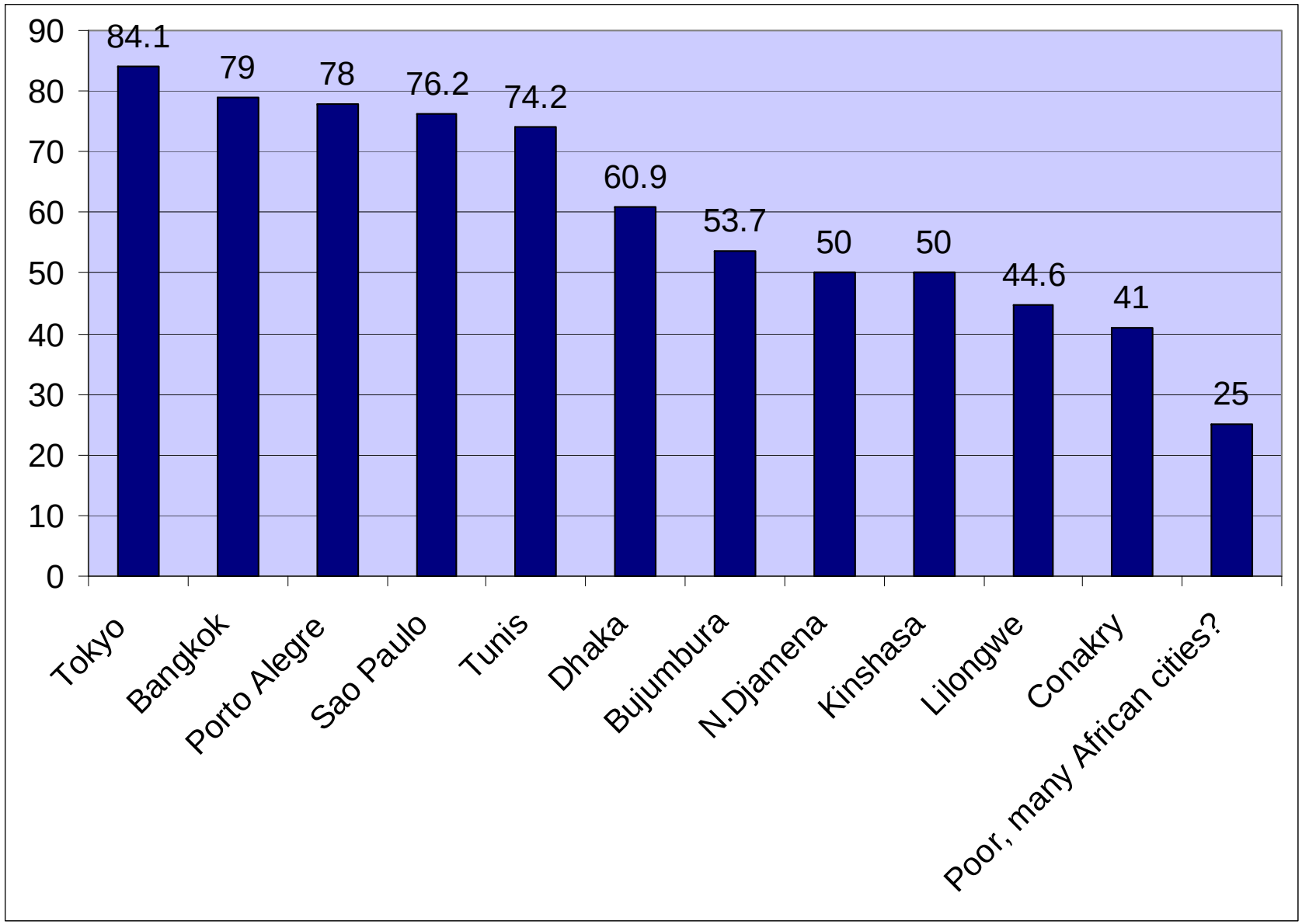
Urbanization also supports economic growth

- Economic logic to where urbanization is taking place and large cities develop
  - Private investment goes to cities that provide economies of scale and agglomeration
  - A few exceptions (political change, war/civil strife, disasters)
- *Well-functioning cities essential for economic competitiveness*
  - *Economies of scale/agglomeration for businesses, economics of scale and proximity for almost all forms of infrastructure and services*
- In successful economies, urbanization decentralizes
  - Especially if there are competent, capable local governments outside the largest cities

Urbanization and health

- Concentrate people, industries, vehicles and their wastes – without good government, very poor health
  - Cholera, typhoid, diarrhoeal diseases, ARI.....
  - Much of the population in slums/squatter settlements
  - One child in five dying
  - Urban life poor, nasty, brutish and short (Thomas Hobbes)
- *Use potential advantages of this concentration for providing infrastructure & services and good governance – a huge health benefit*
- The more urbanized a nation, the higher the life expectancy
  - All the most urbanized nations with high life expectancies
  - But good city government needed to deliver this

Urbanization & health: Life expectancy:women



Governance and health penalties

- Good city governance can deliver 10-30 years more life expectancy than bad city governance?
  - *Good city governance cutting under five mortality rates from over 100 to under 20?*
- Good health statistics for a city depends on reducing the health penalty of having a low income
  - *In badly governed cities, huge health differentials between high-income and low-income areas*

Urbanization and social development

- Cities driving innovations in participation and democracy (social innovations in Latin America mostly driven by city governments?)
- Cities helping partnerships between local governments & citizen groups
  - 20 nations with national federations of slum/shack dwellers who offer governments partnerships: in India, South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, Malawi, the Philippines..
  - Work of the Orangi Pilot Project-Research and Training Institute in Pakistan on sanitation, drainage.....
  - Partnerships between local governments and low-income groups in Thailand, supported by CODI
  - The many Latin American cities with mayors who work with the low-income population, not against them

Urbanization and global warming

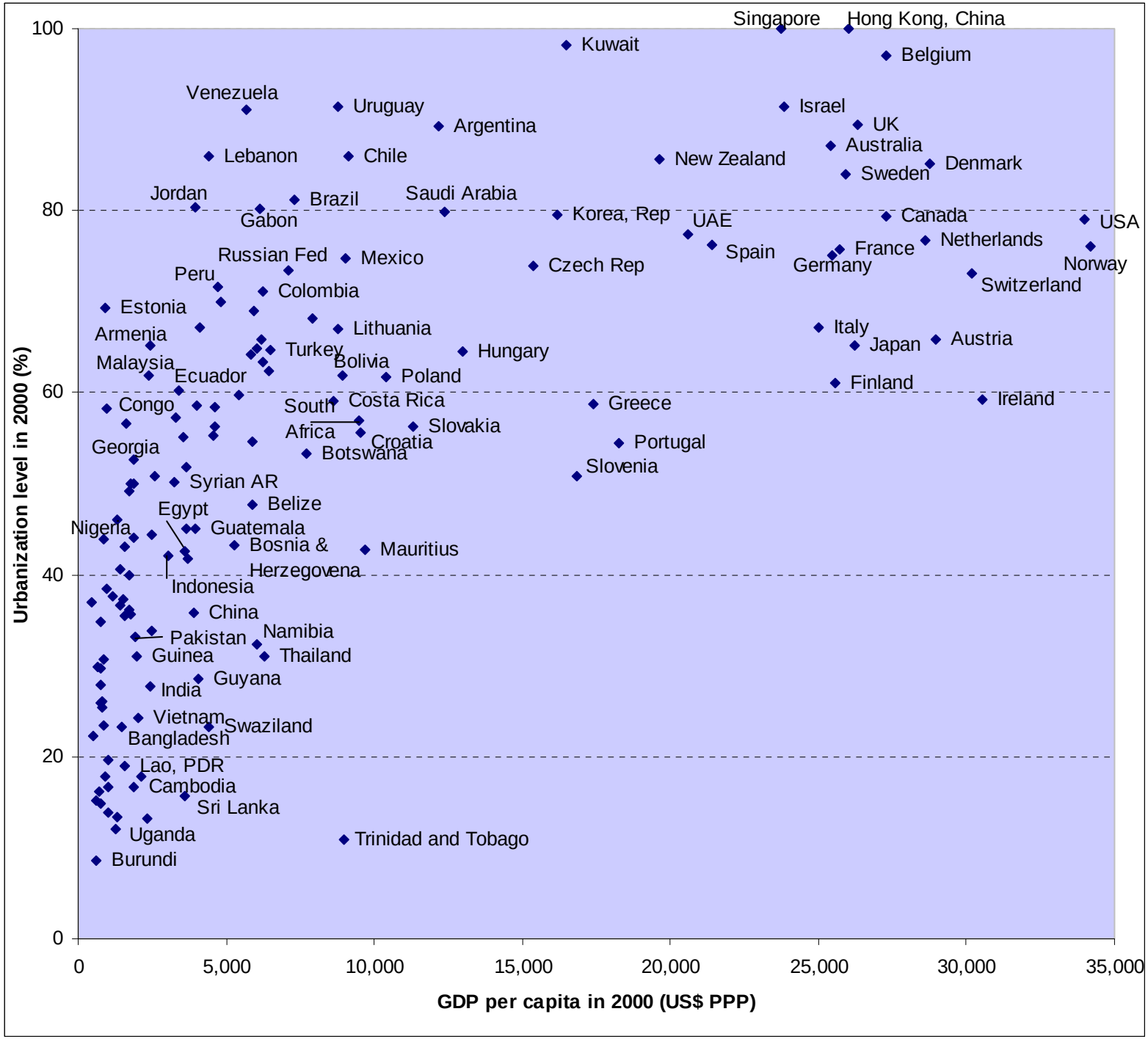
- Cities unfairly blamed for global warming
  - Cities said to produce 75-80% of all greenhouse gas emissions - but no scientific evidence for this
    - Misses large contributions of agriculture and deforestation and of industries & high-income people outside cities
- Well planned/governed cities can cut link between high quality of life & high greenhouse gas emissions
    - People choosing to walk, bicycle, use public transport
    - Much city housing can be very space & energy efficient
    - Much of what makes a city enjoyable does not mean high greenhouse gas emissions – centres of culture, theatre, music, dance, fun....

What we need for the future

- Imagination to see potential of cities for sustainable development and act on this
- *City governments with the bravery to engage with their low-income populations*
  - Civil servants and politicians who see the dynamism and capacity of low-income groups and migrants and their potential as partners
- City governments that build into development plans the need to adapt to climate change & keep down greenhouse gas emissions
- *African, Asian and Latin American cities to show Europe and the USA how to develop very healthy cities without high ecological costs*

Urbanization & health: water and sanitation

Best performing cities for in-house water supplies	Many cities in North Africa, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa
Worst performing cities for in-house water supplies	Most sub-Saharan African cities, Colombo, Bangalore...
Best performing cities for sanitation	Several Brazilian & Mexican cities, many Asian cities, some North African cities
Worst performing cities for sanitation	Most sub-Saharan African cities, Dhaka, Bangalore


Urbanization level in 2000 (%)
GDP per capita in 2000 (US$ PPP)
0
20
40
60
80
100
0
5,000
10,000
15,000
20,000
25,000
30,000
35,000
Singapore
Hong Kong, China
Kuwait
Belgium
Venezuela
Uruguay
Israel
Argentina
UK
Australia
Lebanon
Chile
New Zealand
Denmark
Sweden
Jordan
Brazil
Saudi Arabia
Gabon
Korea, Rep
UAE
Canada
USA
Spain
France
Netherlands
Germany
Norway
Russian Fed
Mexico
Czech Rep
Peru
Switzerland
Colombia
Estonia
Lithuania
Italy
Armenia
Japan
Austria
Turkey
Hungary
Malaysia
Bolivia
Ecuador
Poland
Finland
Congo
South Africa
Costa Rica
Greece
Ireland
Slovakia
Croatia
Portugal
Georgia
Botswana
Slovenia
Syrian AR
Belize
Egypt
Nigeria
Guatemala
Bosnia & Herzegovena
Mauritius
Indonesia
China
Pakistan
Namibia
Guinea
Thailand
Guyana
India
Vietnam
Swaziland
Bangladesh
Lao, PDR
Cambodia
Sri Lanka
Uganda
Trinidad and Tobago
Burundi

Good governance using potential of cities

- Economies of scale and proximity for health producing or enhancing infrastructure
  - Water
  - Sanitation
  - Drainage
  - Health care and emergency services
  - Schools and pre-school provision