

# All green, all good?

Taking an environmental justice perspective  
to the bioeconomy program

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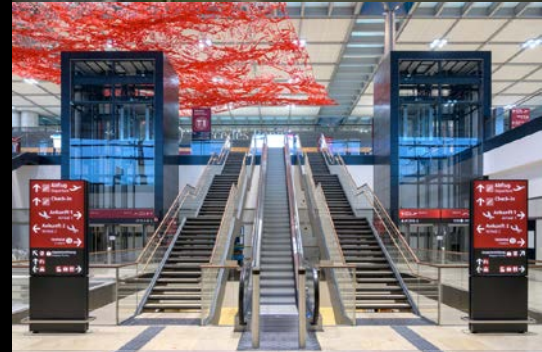
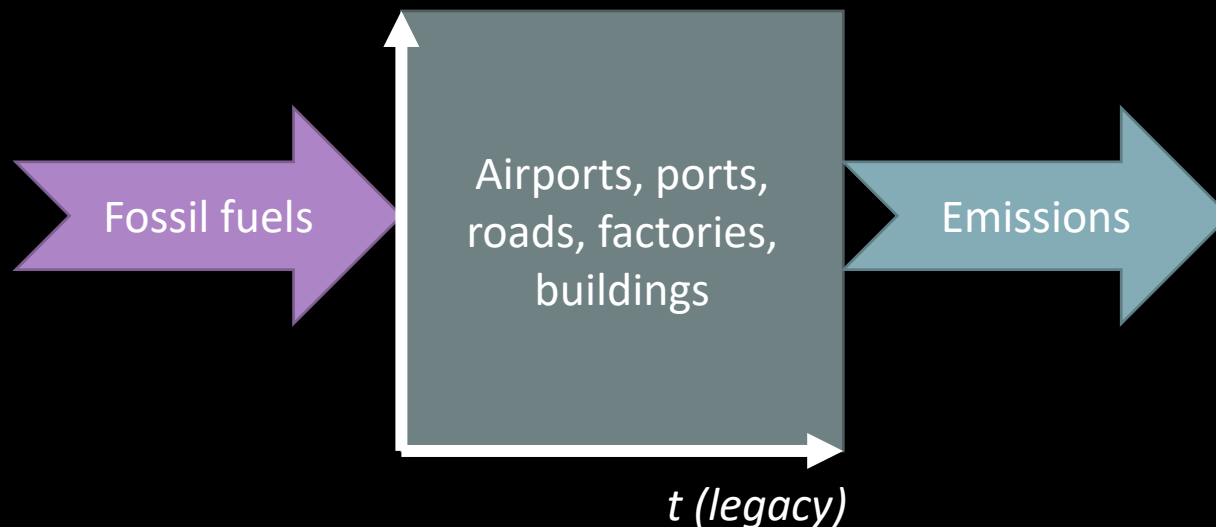
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# Failing in gray

**Construction** as the go-to stimulator for economic growth and jobs

→ Growth at what price?

→ What kinds of jobs?



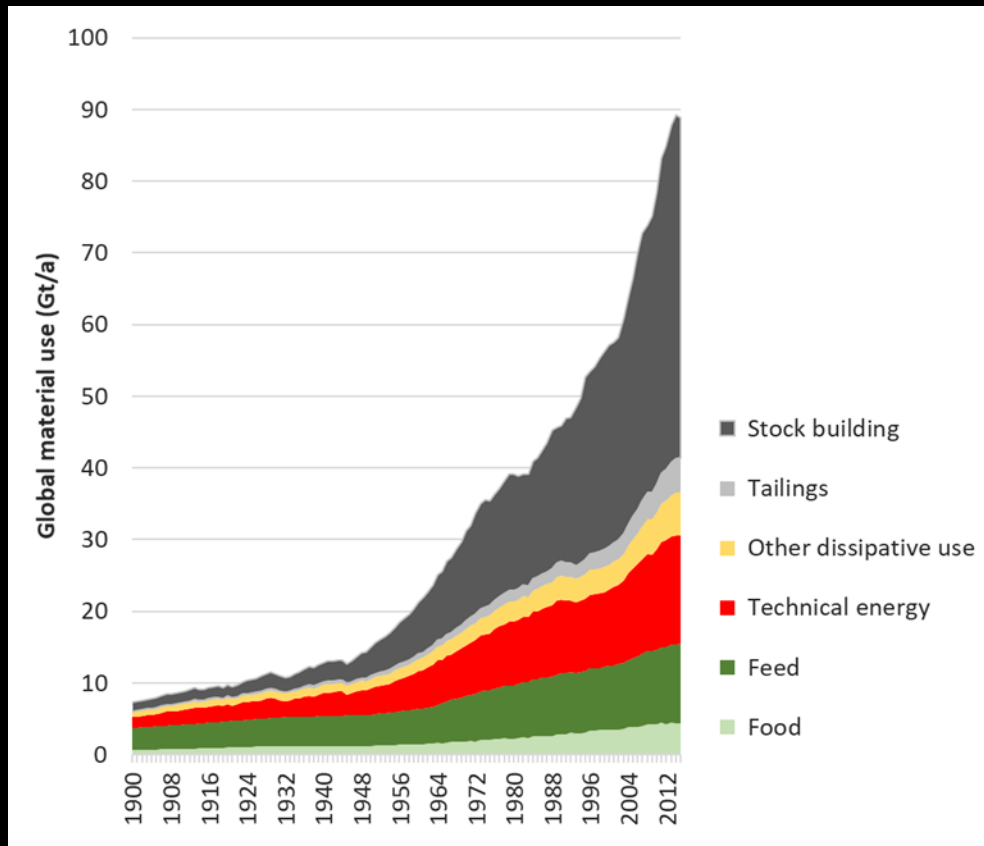
# Bioeconomy: Greening the gray?

*What does the construction sector have to do with the bioeconomy?*

Much of the bioeconomy-language is eerily reminiscent of how this sector is touted as a 'motor for growth and jobs', regardless of functionality and impacts of infrastructure expansion and urbanization.

Is the bioeconomy heralded as offering the same 'advantages' but in an environmentally benign manner because it is based on renewable resources?

# The socio-metabolic base of the bioeconomy



Krausmann et al., 2018. From resource extraction to outflows of wastes and emissions: The socioeconomic metabolism of the global economy, 1900–2015. *Global Environmental Change*.

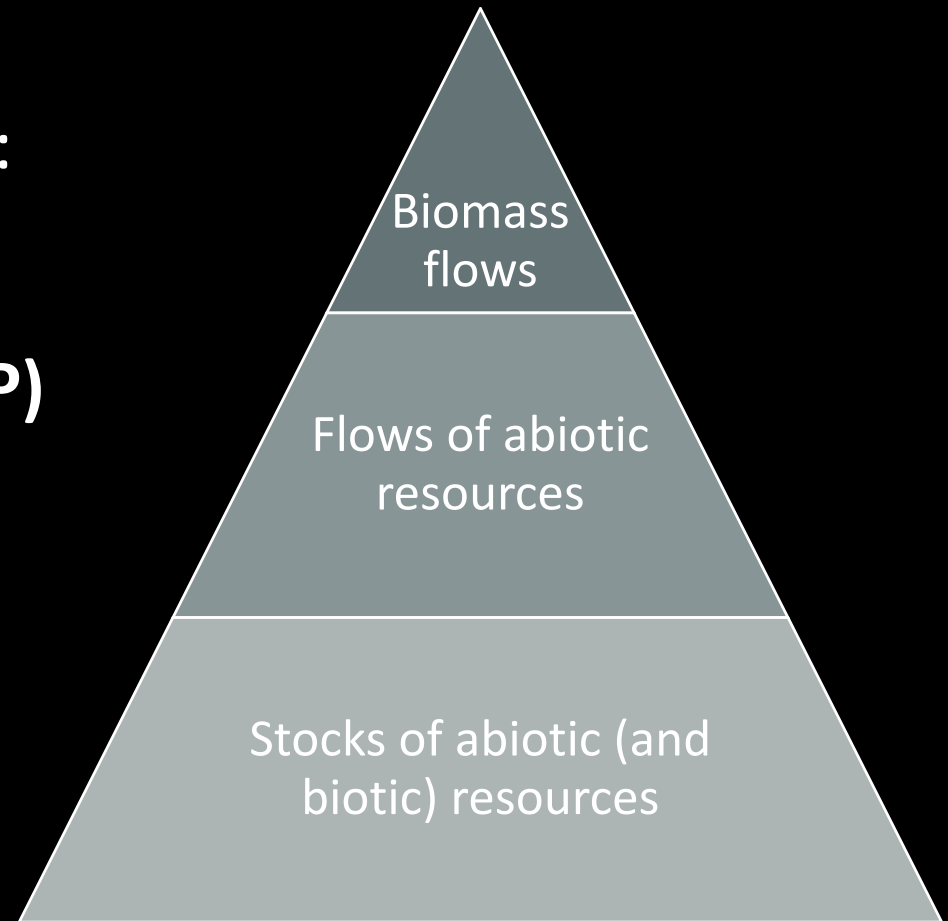
Globally, we have been building up fossil-energy guzzling stocks for the better part of the past century.

We are only beginning to realize the extent of their legacy.

This, too, forms the basis for any bioeconomy endeavor.

# Biomass as the tip of the iceberg

Life is not easy at the top:  
Humans are currently appropriating **25% of natural productivity (NPP)** with serious implications for non-human life.

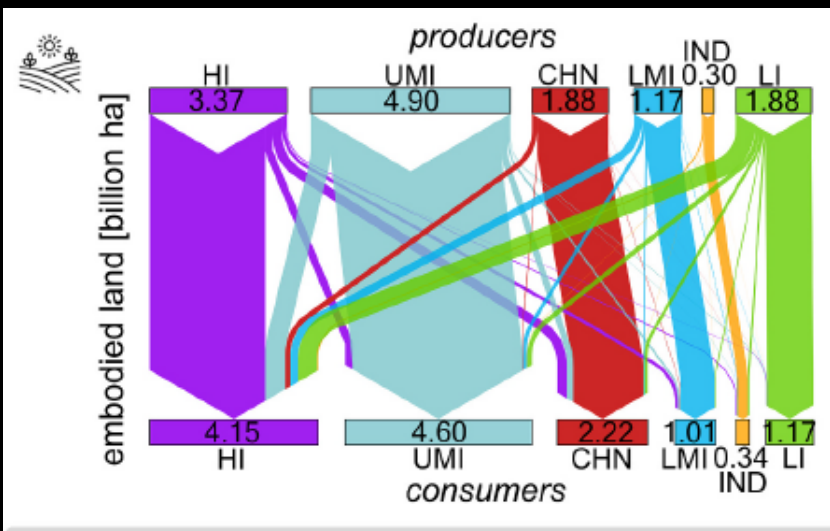
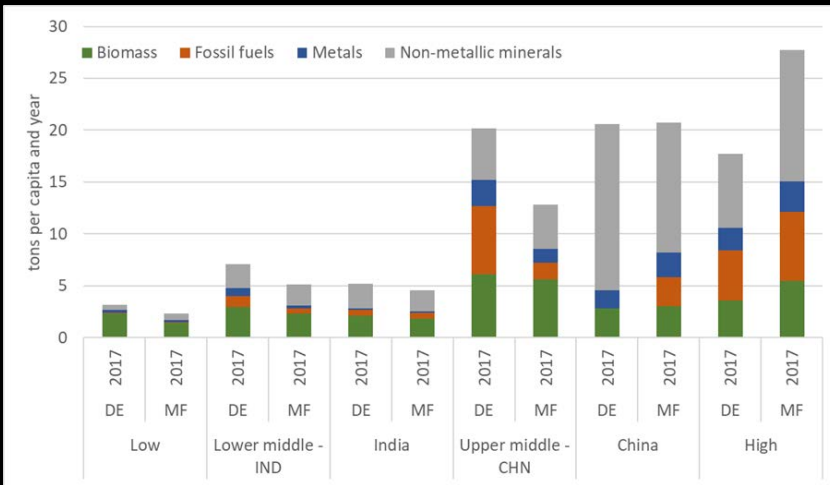


# Distributing biomass and embodied land through trade

High-income countries appropriate not only abiotic materials but also biomass (2 t/cap/a in 2017).

Trade patterns represent a claim to land elsewhere.

Will the bioeconomy 'tap into' the 'underutilized potential' of the lower-income countries?



# Extractive expansion and environmental justice movements

Even if it is 'only' for plantation monocultures or cattle farming or forestry, extractive expansion for biotic resources implies **far-reaching reconfiguration of the social metabolism across levels of scale.**

**Environmental justice movements** demonstrate that there are social, environmental, cultural grounds on which to **resist this expansion**, to counter the **perceived exploitability of people and places.**

# It's only life

Bioeconomy strategies propose a wealth of ways in which to **deepen the economic exploitation of knowledge and human and non-human life.**

The **functionality of this exploitation** in securing economic growth and jobs under 'sustainable' conditions is accentuated.

Functionality is always a question of perspective:  
What should 'work' and for whom?