

# POVERTY & ENVIRONMENT LINKS: EXAMPLES FROM AFRICA



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# UNSUSTAINABLE USE OF ENVIRONMENT COSTS:

- HEALTH
- LIVES
- PRODUCTION
- INCOME
- INSTABILITY
- INSECURITY



# ENVIRONMENTAL UNSUSTAINABILITY KILLS MILLIONS & COSTS BILLIONS

- About 2.2 million people in developing countries, mainly children, die every year from water borne diseases
- At any one time it is estimated that half of the total number of hospital beds in developing countries are occupied by people suffering from water borne diseases.
- Respiratory diseases caused by indoor smoke from solid fuels kill an estimated 1.6 million people annually.
- Urban air pollution kills about 800,000 people annually.

# LINKS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTALLY UNSUSTAINABLE LAND & WATER USE & POVERTY:

- Overgrazing =
  - Reduced grass growth, more soil degradation & erosion =
    - Decreased livestock numbers, decreased production =  
Decreased incomes
- Water pollution =
  - Reduced water usability, increase in water borne diseases =
    - Increased cost of obtaining clean water, increased water treatment costs, reduced farm production due to decreasing water usability, increased medical costs =  
Decreased incomes



# LINKS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTALLY UNSUSTAINABLE LAND & WATER USE & POVERTY:

- Depletion of water resources through excess use for agriculture =
  - Decreasing water availability, soil salinization =
    - Increased costs of obtaining water & decreased production = Decreased incomes
- Deforestation =
  - Erosion, increased sedimentation, decreased water resource retention due to increased run-off, soil degradation, timber resources exhausted, increased vulnerability to flooding =
    - Decreased production, increased flooding damage = Decreased incomes

# LINKS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTALLY UNSUSTAINABLE LAND & WATER USE & POVERTY:

- Depletion of fisheries through excess fishing =
  - Decreased fish catches waster of investment in fishing boats & equipment = Decreased incomes



# POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES: SUMMARY

- Unsustainable use of the environment reduces the social & economic benefits produced
- E.G. People get sick & die, farmers grow less & earn less
- Development is hindered by environmental damage
- The contribution of environment to social & economic development is often poorly understood
- Environmental sustainability not operationally integrated into national development processes (e.g. PRSPs): Words but not action.

# UNDP-UNEP POVERTY & ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE (PEI): *WHAT WE DO*

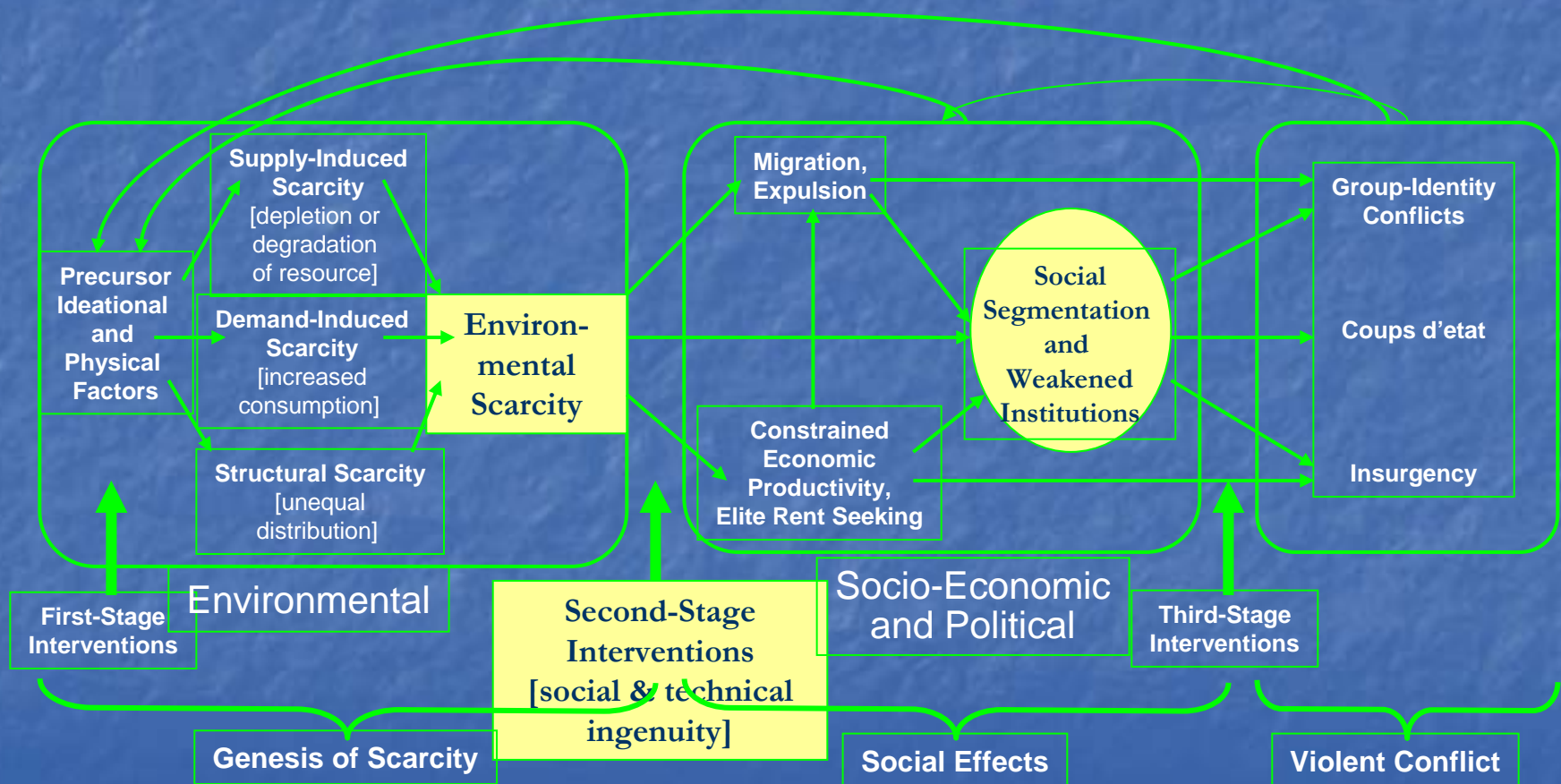
Supporting governments to:

- Integrate Environmental Sustainability into National Development Processes (e.g. PRSPs)
  
- Build National Capacity to:
  - Identify links between poverty & environment
  - Integrate environmental sustainability into national development processes



# Homer-Dixon Core Model of Causal Links

## Environmental, Scarcity, and Violence



# POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT-SECURITY LINKAGES

- Competition of land in Kenya
- Armed clashes over scarce water & pasture - Darfur
- Transboundary waters: Central Asia, Africa.
- Climate change
- Competition over increasingly scarce natural resources
- Negative impacts on one party by other(s)
- Lack of alternatives
- Inability to purchase alternatives



# UNDP-UNEP-PELL CENTRE CO-OPERATION

- UNEP & PELL CENTRE COLLABORATING PARTNERS
- NEED TO HIGHLIGHT THE LINKS BETWEEN POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT & SECURITY
- NEED TO DEVELOP & PROMOTE MULTILATERAL SOLUTIONS
- SUPPORT FROM KEY GOVERNMENTS VITAL - USA KEY
- EXAMPLE OF SENATOR PELL- NOT UNCRITICAL SUPPORTER OF THE UN MULTILATERAL SYSTEM
- CONTINUING REFORM & INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENT-ECONOMIC-SECURITY LINKAGES

# CONCLUSION

- Environmentally unsustainable resource use is a threat to economic development as it reduces the social & economic benefits generated
- Environmentally unsustainable use of natural resources (e.g land & water) reduces incomes, increases costs and worsens poverty.
- Security issues can arise as people compete for resources
- Conflict can cause environmental & economic unsustainability.
- Poverty, worsening environmental degradation, a lack of alternatives & a trigger can combine to lethal effect
- Environmentally sustainable resource use can reduce the potential for conflict by reducing competition over scarce resources.



