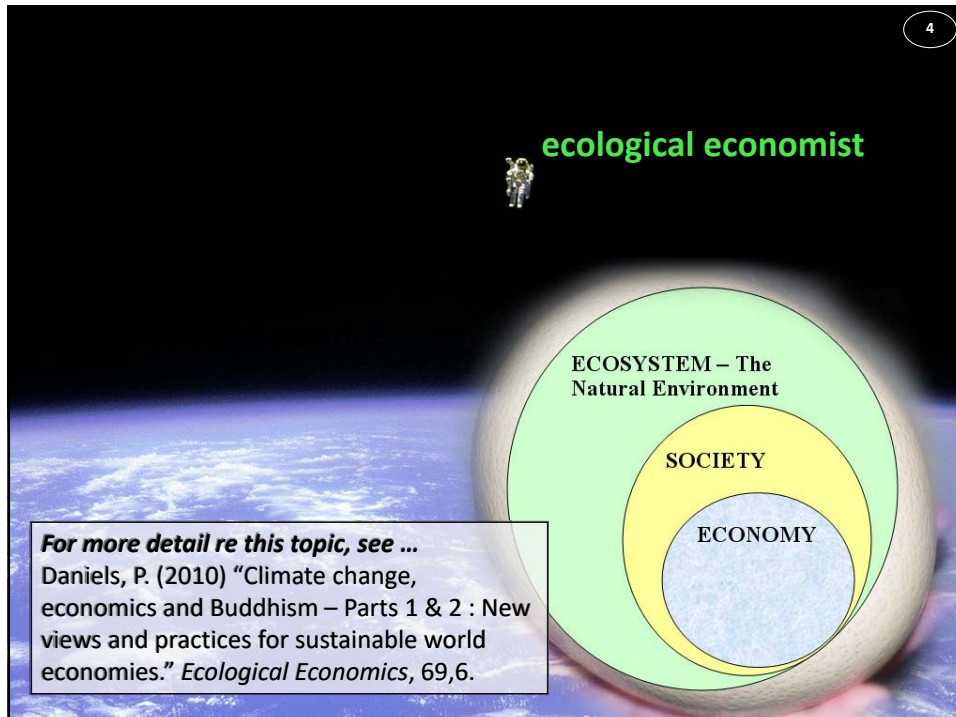


Was Buddha the First Ecological Economist? 3

Talk Structure

1. (a) justification of the topic and (b) general background on religion/values/sustainability links.
2. *More detailed* - How the Buddhist world view (BWV) is related to sustainability and the ecological economic (EE) agenda.
3. How this focus might be useful to help advance the aims of EE and sustainability in general.



ecological economist 4

ECOSYSTEM – The Natural Environment

SOCIETY

ECONOMY

For more detail re this topic, see ...
Daniels, P. (2010) "Climate change, economics and Buddhism – Parts 1 & 2 : New views and practices for sustainable world economies." *Ecological Economics*, 69,6.

WAS BUDDHA THE FIRST ECOLOGICAL ECONOMIST?

Talk Structure

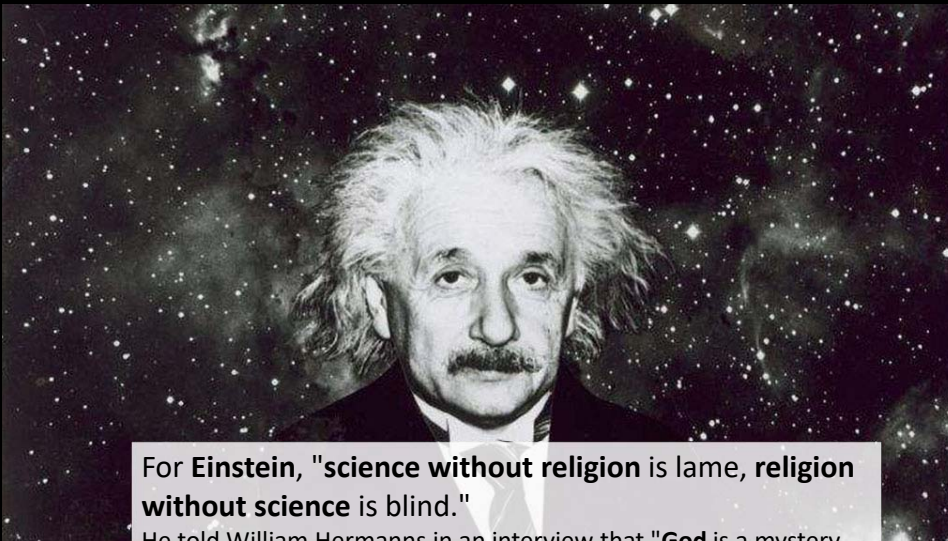
1. (a) justification of the topic and
(b) general background on
religion/values/science/sustainability links

* values critical for science

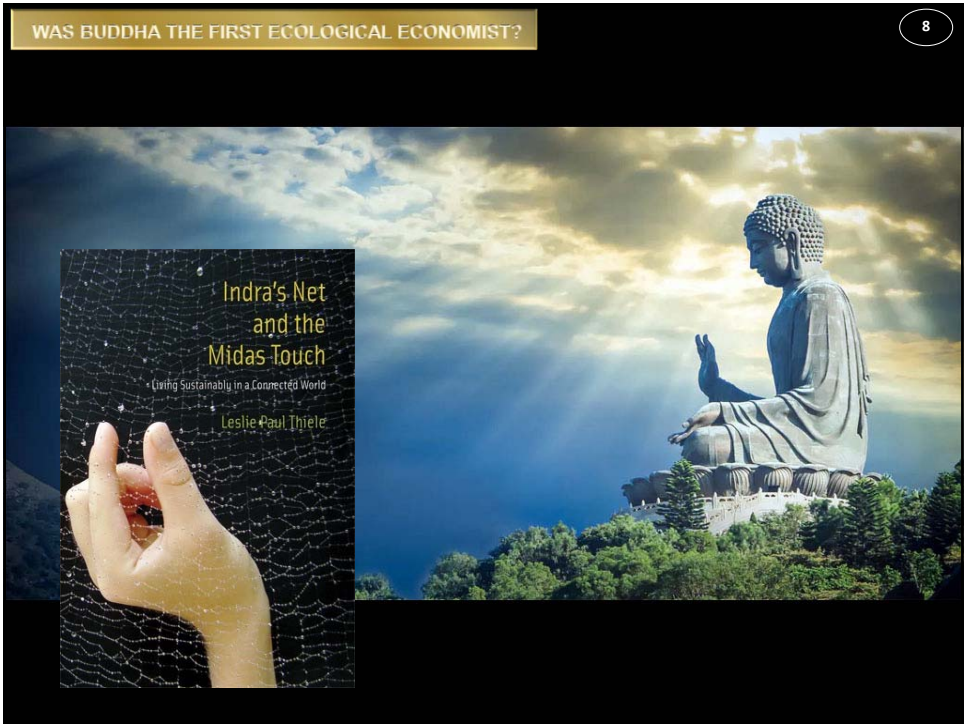


WAS BUDDHA THE FIRST ECOLOGICAL ECONOMIST?

6



For Einstein, "science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."
He told William Hermanns in an interview that "**God** is a mystery. But a comprehensible mystery. I have nothing but awe when I observe the laws of nature."



9

Talk Structure

2. How the **Buddhist world view (BWV)** is related to sustainability and the ecological economic (EE) agenda



10

4 BASES FOR THE BUDDHIST WORLD VIEW SUPPORTING ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS (Sustainability)

1. The central importance recognised for **interconnectedness** – between the 3 “spheres of existence” in the BWV (individual, social, natural)

2. An understanding of reality characterised by a strong degree of **dependent origination** and presence of the law of karma => **flow-on effects; externalities**

3. An explanation of the wellbeing limits of existing economies related to a lack of information ; **ignorance**; an **incorrect “theory of happiness”**

4. The deduction that... a better guide to inter-connected wellbeing can be found in the “**Middle Way**” and the principle of **minimum intervention** (1000 names for this in EE)

11

1. **Interconnectedness** – the 3 spheres of existence (individual, social, natural)

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

the 3 spheres of existence

SELF

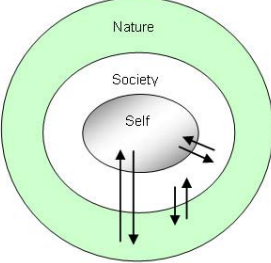
NATURE

SOCIETY

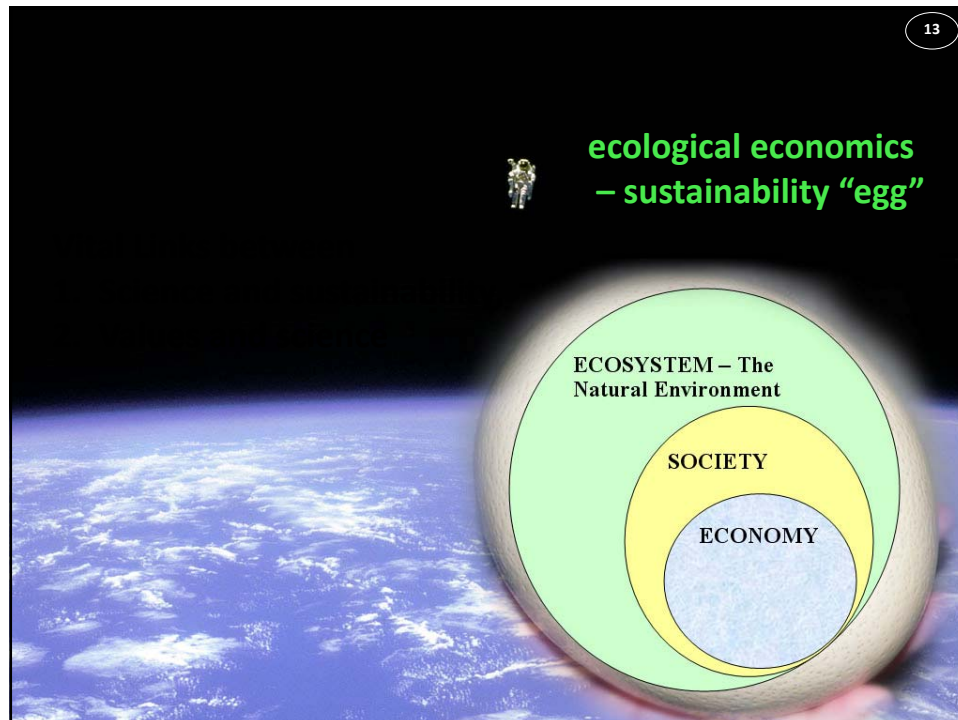
12

1. **Interconnectedness (i-c)** – the 3 spheres of existence (individual, social, natural)

Close to the “sustainability egg” in ecological economics ?



Interconnectedness between the three spheres of existence



14

2. How the **Buddhist world view** is related to sustainability and EE

2. A reality that seems to have a strong degree of **dependent origination** and presence of the law of karma
=> externalities

LAW OF KARMA

➔ a cause or event (from a person or collective) will initiate another event (effect) which is either pleasant or unpleasant to the extent that the cause was *skilful* or *unskilful*

"skilful" = not accompanied by craving, resistance or delusions

☯ A major force of nature is moral causation (cause-effect process)

- it has ongoing “spillover” effects across mental and physical phenomena
- if an action is morally “wrong”, it will return with the same kind of impact upon the source

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2. How the **Buddhist world view** is related to sustainability and EE

The law of karma; *kamma-vipaka*; dependent origination

LAW OF KARMA

➡ As every (economic) action affects the whole universe and the self only exists in relation to others, **actions that exploit and disrupt the social or material world are self-injuring.**

The unified and interconnected nature of the universe suggests that **“violent” action or intervention that consumes and damages the natural-material world, will have adverse impacts on the source** in direct proportion to the extent of intervention

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The law of karma (*kamma-vipaka*);
dependent origination

➡ hence, these laws explain the Buddhist view of profound **respect and loving-kindness and compassion** that extends to the natural world

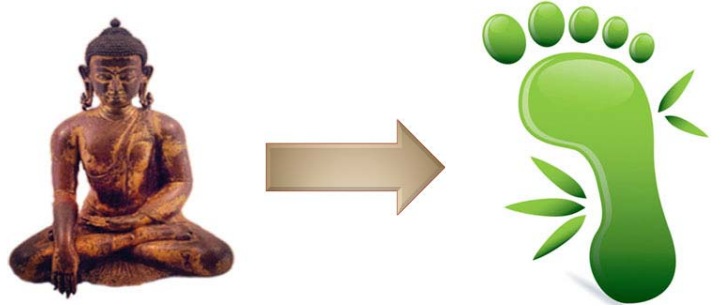
Therefore ...

1. Unskilful action
(craving intent)
2. Violent intervention

➡ Unsustainable outcomes

17

It is only a small step to link the
(1) Buddhist insights of minimum intervention and non-harm to
(2) notions of ecological and other “footprints” of human activities



Not just environmental footprints, but include direct social effects, and enviro effects are social and economic when they affect humans

- I Karmic footprint
- I Eco-karma
- I Green karma

2. How the **Buddhist world view** is related to sustainability and EE

18

3. An assumption that the wellbeing limits of existing economies stems from lack of information ; **ignorance**; an incorrect “theory of happiness”

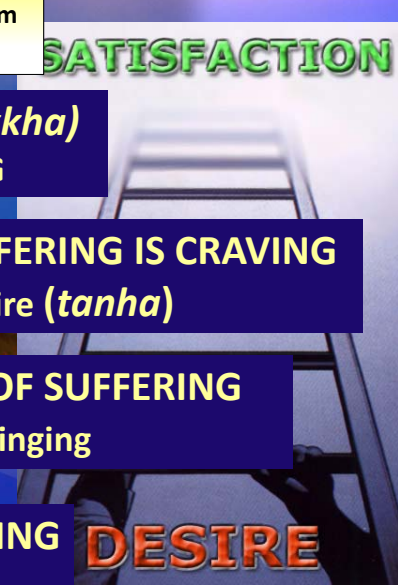


IGNORANCE - about what leads to true long-term well-being

19

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

The wellbeing or “happiness” ignorance problem is better identified in the 4 Noble Truths



1. THERE IS SUFFERING (*dukkha*)
- life is fraught with SUFFERING

2. THE ORIGIN OF SUFFERING IS CRAVING
- the attachment to desire (*tanha*)

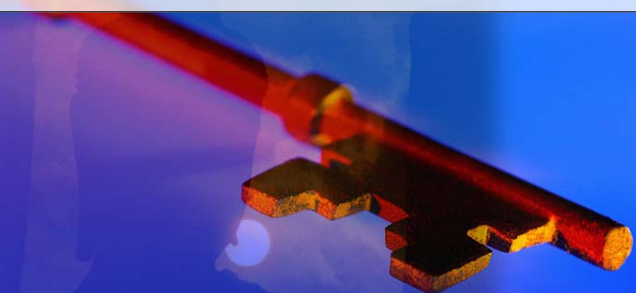
3. THERE IS A WAY OUT OF SUFFERING
- cease attachment and clinging

4. THE PATH TO END SUFFERING IS THE 8-FOLD PATH

20

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

4. The deduction that... a better guide to inter-connected wellbeing can be found in the “**Middle Way**” and the principle of **minimum intervention**



4. The deduction that... a better guide to inter-connected wellbeing can be found in the “**Middle Way**” and the principle of **minimum intervention**

21

MINIMUM INTERVENTION - The Middle Way

☯ given profound interconnectedness and the *law of kamma*
=> when people act or initiate events (produce and consume)
they should be guided by **compassion; loving-kindness; non-violent motives**

... and be aware and mindful of the consequences of
those actions for all in the three spheres of existence

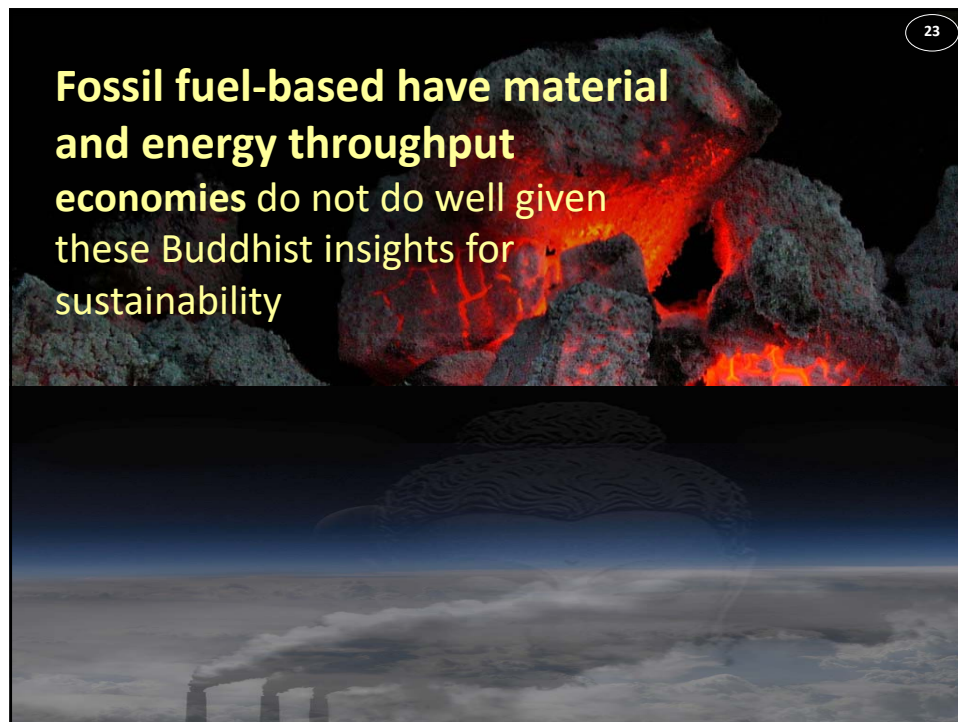
... be “other-regarding” 🙏 ☯ inter-(well)being

4. The deduction that... a better guide to inter-connected wellbeing can be found in the “**Middle Way**” and the principle of **minimum intervention**

22

MINIMUM INTERVENTION - The Middle Way

➡ usually implies minimising actions that
disturb the other realms; minimise
(disruptive) intervention in the external
world



24

Together ...

3. The Four Noble Truths, and

4. The Middle Way, minimum intervention and other guides from the 8-fold Path

==>

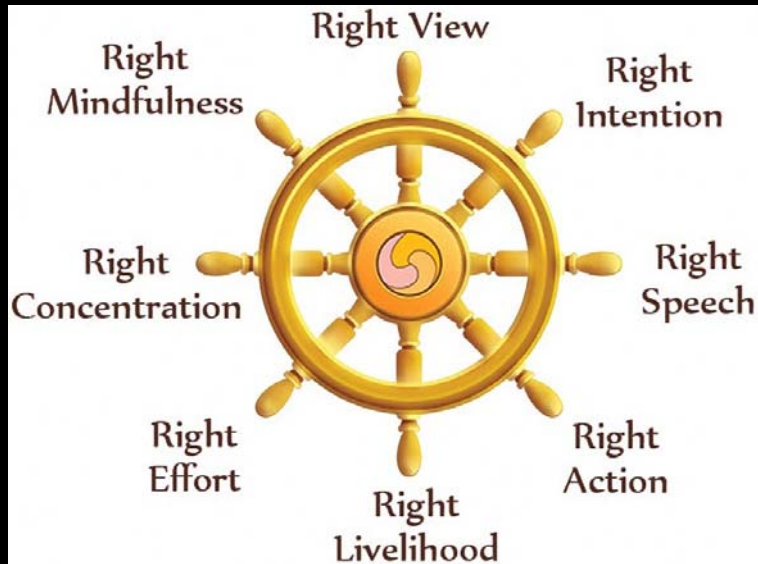
... help explain that the way to reduce suffering (i.e. improve well-being) is the 8-fold path and the humanistic principles of Right Conduct, “non-harm” and minimum intervention

➡ favours minimising actions that disturb the other realms; minimise (disruptive) intervention with external world

The slide has a background image of a forest path. A large white text box contains the first part of the text, and a grey text box contains the second part. A brown arrow points from the grey box to the final line of text.

4. THE PATH TO END SUFFERING IS THE 8-FOLD PATH

25



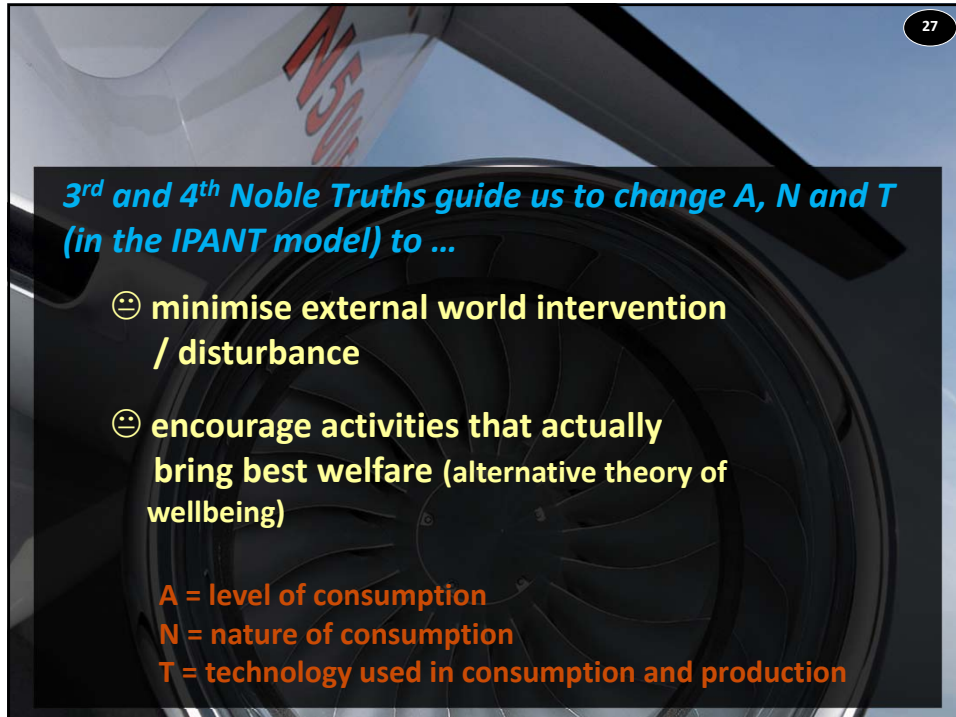
Talk Structure

26

Final part =>

3. How the Buddhist world view (BWV) might
be useful for helping advance the cause of EE
and sustainability in general.

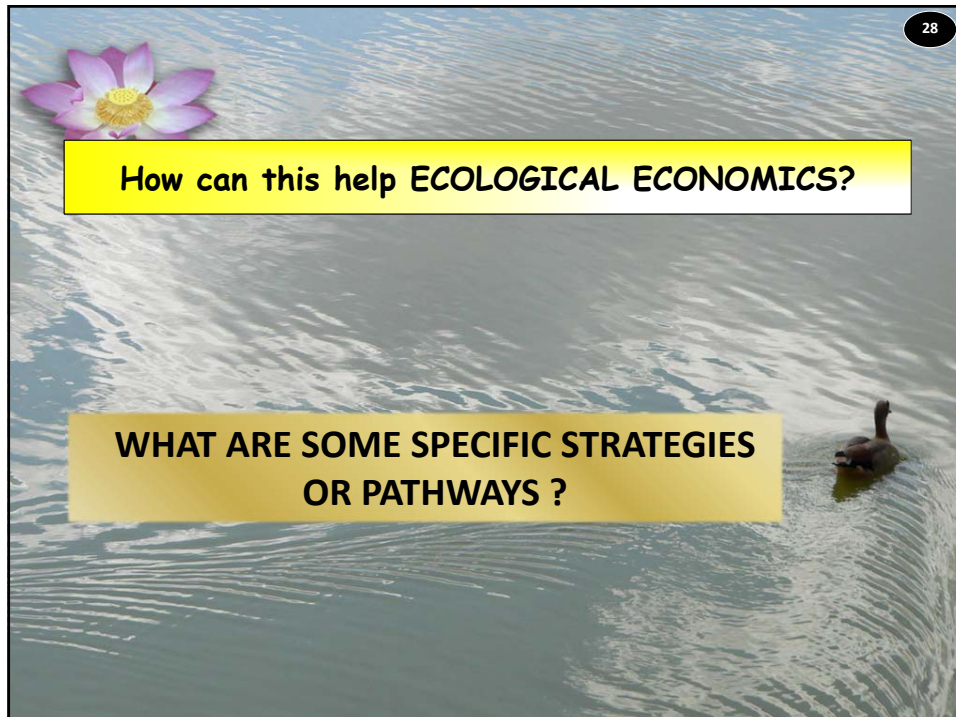




*3rd and 4th Noble Truths guide us to change A, N and T
(in the IPANT model) to ...*

- ☺ minimise external world intervention
/ disturbance
- ☺ encourage activities that actually
bring best welfare (alternative theory of
wellbeing)

A = level of consumption
N = nature of consumption
T = technology used in consumption and production



How can this help ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS?

WHAT ARE SOME SPECIFIC STRATEGIES
OR PATHWAYS ?

29

It is good to consider the IPANT model to structure such strategies

What can we change?

$I = P \cdot A \cdot N \cdot T$

$I =$

IMPACT – pressure on nature; social harm

\cdot = multiplied by

P = population

A = affluence or output per person

N = nature of consumption or output (composition)

T = technology and environmental impact of output type

30

MANY OF THE INSPIRATIONS FOR A BETTER ENVIR & SOCIAL FUTURES FROM BUDDHISM ARE SHARED BY ITS LINKS TO SUSTAINABILITY

IPAT can be extended into IPANT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
 I

=

POPULATION
 P

x

A_i

x

N_i

x

T_i

A_i	N_i	T_i
\$ consumption per person	Type of consumption	Envir impact of a dollar of this type of consumption
A_1	N_1 eg.cars	T_1
A_2	N_2 eg.food	T_2
\vdots	\vdots	\vdots
A_t	N_t eg.housing	T_t
ΣA_i = total affluence (\$s)		
N = mix of consumption		

The environmental/sustainability impact model

– we use this as a systematic way to explain the show how Buddhist traditions (and ecological economics) can help guide new economies that produce better community wellbeing

$I = PANT$

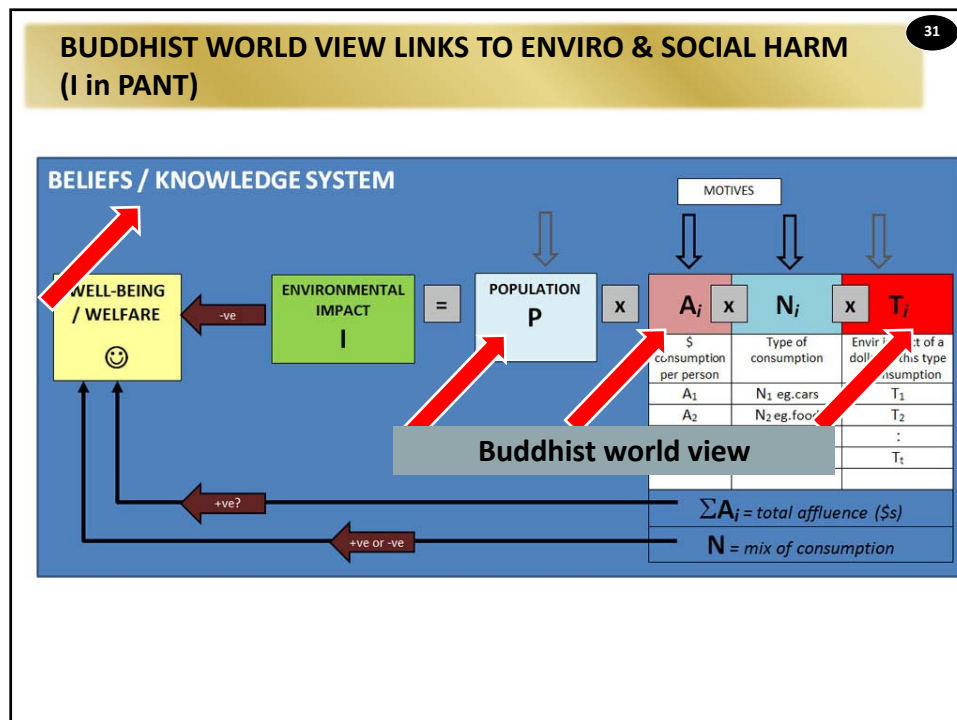
I = total environmental/sustainability impact

P = population

A = affluence, or output or consumption per person

N = type of output (jet-skis or yoga)

T = sustainability impact/footprint per unit of output (per person)

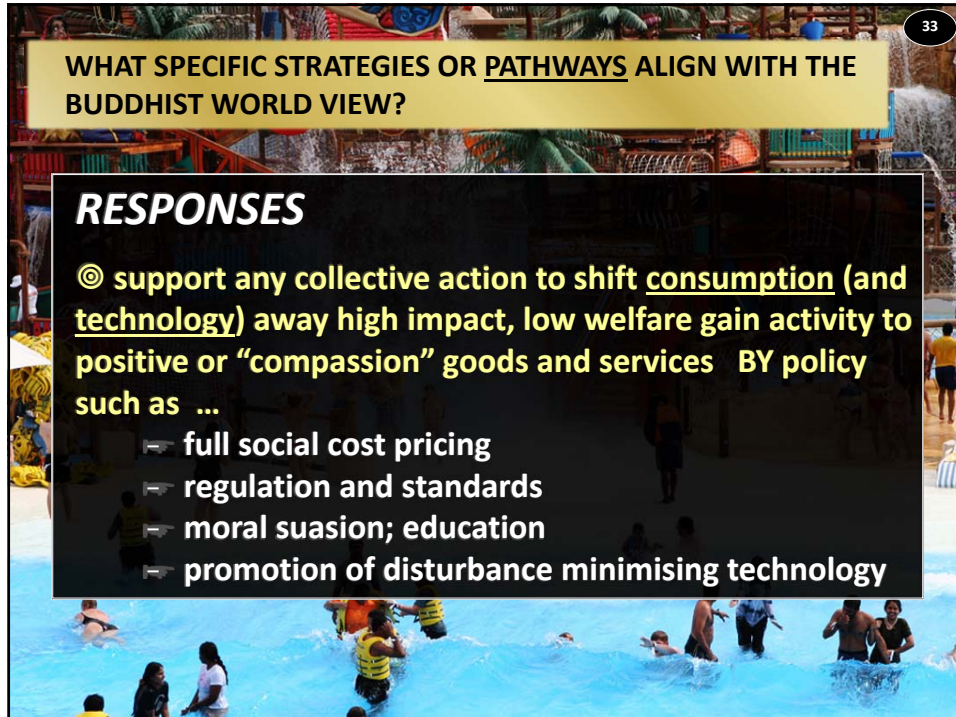


32

WHAT SPECIFIC STRATEGIES OR PATHWAYS ALIGN WITH THE BUDDHIST WORLD VIEW?

RESPONSES

- © **Promote research and knowledge :**
 - (1) about the full impacts – including unintended consequences - of different sorts of economic activity and their associated technologies (“karmic effects”)
 - (2) well-being research - the conditions and outcomes that actually increase individual and societal “happiness”



33

WHAT SPECIFIC STRATEGIES OR PATHWAYS ALIGN WITH THE BUDDHIST WORLD VIEW?

RESPONSES

- © support any collective action to shift consumption (and technology) away high impact, low welfare gain activity to positive or “compassion” goods and services BY policy such as ...
 - full social cost pricing
 - regulation and standards
 - moral suasion; education
 - promotion of disturbance minimising technology



34

**GOODS & SERVICES AND WELLBEING
- A Dodgy Relationship!**

- * **adaptive goods**
- * **positional goods**
- **positive or environmental goods
 (“compassion” goods and services)**

WHAT SPECIFIC STRATEGIES OR PATHWAYS ALIGN WITH THE
BUDDHIST WORLD VIEW?

35

RESPONSES

- ◎ **changes in individuals' roles as producers**
- ◎ liberation of personal time as the ultimate resource
required for loving-kindness relationships
- ◎ **develop and implement new indicators of progress to
direct strategic change for real improvements in
wellbeing**
- ◎ international policy and assistance for welfare growth
and min. disturbance in the lower income nations
- ◎ **population ?**

