

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS FREEDOM

How Alberta's Energy Sector Can Improve  
The Quality Of Life For Current And Future  
Generations

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Alberta Synergy Conference

October 31, 2012

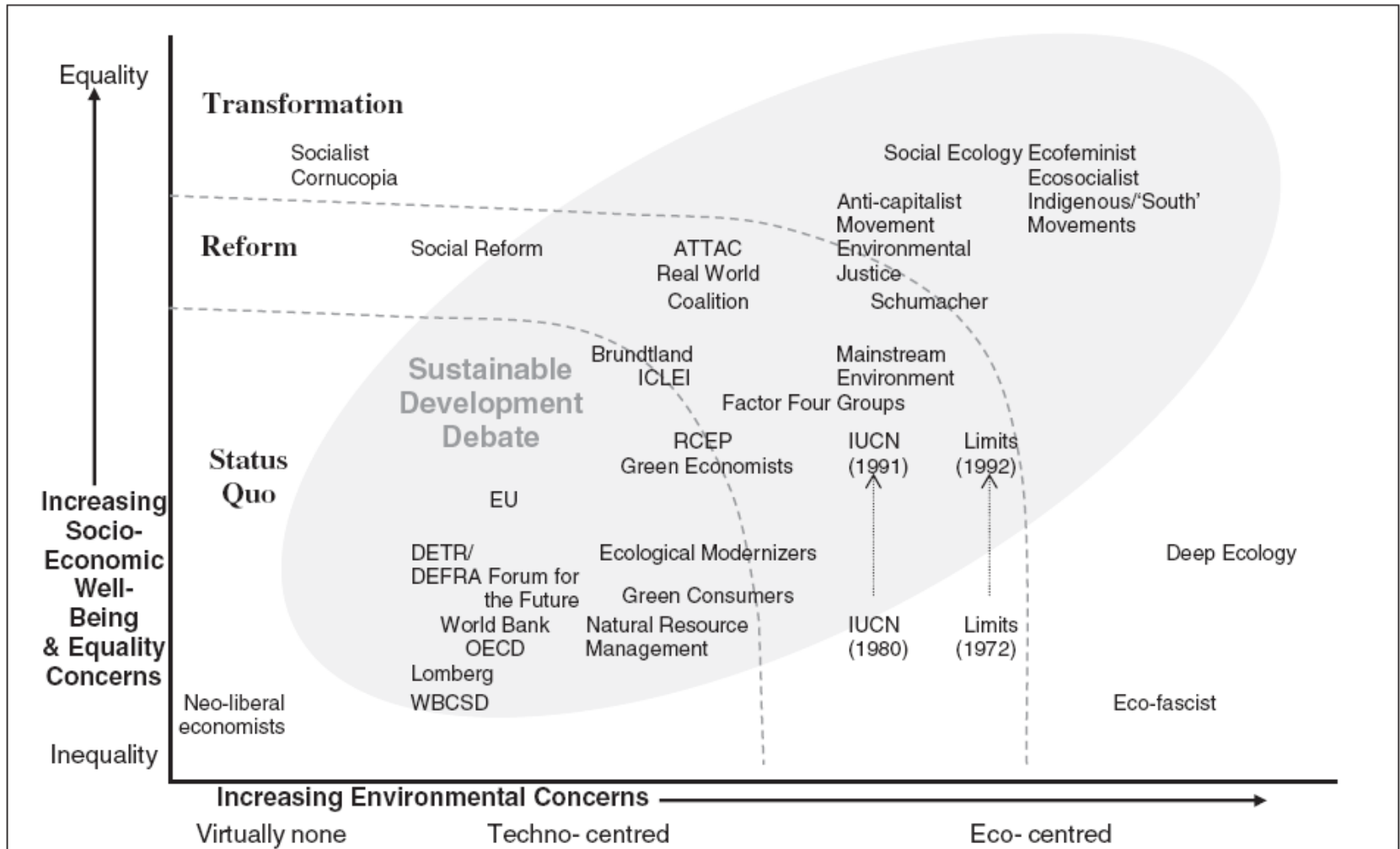
# Presentation Outline

- Understanding SD
  - ▣ background
  - ▣ different paradigms
- SD and Alberta's energy sector
  - ▣ background
  - ▣ common ground
  - ▣ processes and institutional arrangements
- SD and Synergy Alberta

# Understanding SD

- Popularized in 1987 with the Brundtland Report
- Broad public appeal
- Economic, environmental and social aspects
- SD is a dynamic process that moves us towards sustainability as opposed to specific goals that need to be achieved (Clark 2010)

# Understanding SD



Mapping of Views on SD (Hopwood, Mellor et al. 2005)

# Understanding SD

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- Important components of SD (National Research Council 1999)
  - ▣ what is to be sustained
  - ▣ what is to be developed
  - ▣ the intergenerational component

# Understanding SD

SD Paradigms	Components of SD Paradigms				
	Consider environmental, economic, and social aspects	Intergenerational equity	Intragenerational equity	Environmental limits	SD Strategy
Weak Sustainability	Yes	Yes	No	No	Economic Choice
Strong Sustainability	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Political Choice
Human Development	Yes	Yes	Yes	Depends	Social Choice

Source: Faran 2010

# SD and Alberta's energy sector

*“Are we prepared ... to put aside substantial sums of current revenues from the sale of non-replaceable crude oil production, put it aside for our grandchildren and not make it available for current revenue needs; to use it for that day ... when some of the wells may have gone dry?”*

- Premier Lougheed, 1976

# SD and Alberta's energy sector

## Thesis Overview

- Research aim: Integrate SD into the production-side of Alberta's energy sector
- Use-inspired basic research
- Creating a more sustainable energy sector

### **Sustainable development as freedom**

How Alberta's energy sector can improve the quality of life for current and future generations

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Master Thesis Series in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science,  
No 2012:009

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Lund University  
International Master's Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science  
(30hp/credits)



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# SD and Alberta's energy sector

## Realities in Alberta

- Albertans are the principal owners of non-renewable natural resources in Alberta
- continual improvement
- corporate social responsibility



# SD and Alberta's energy sector

## Fieldwork Results

- Common ground
  - ▣ corporate social responsibility
  - ▣ continual improvement
- Differences
  - ▣ Industry and government representatives (short-term focus, economic choice)
  - ▣ Landowner, Aboriginal people, NGOs (long-term focus, distribution of benefits, social choice)
  - ▣ No consensus on SD strategy

# SD and Alberta's energy sector

## Thesis Recommendations

- Incorporate elements of Social Choice into the energy sector
- Design appropriate processes and institutional arrangements
  - ▣ Voluntary approach
  - ▣ Regulatory approach
- Rely on continual improvement to move Alberta's energy sector towards SD

# SD and Synergy Alberta

- Synergy Groups could play an important role in promoting SD
  - ▣ Develop SD principles, for example:
    - neutral environmental footprint
    - promote renewables
  - ▣ Develop SD indicators, for example:
    - Plant 1 tree for every tree removed
    - Conserve 1 acre of land for every acre disturbed
    - Generate 1 kw of renewable energy for every kw of energy consumed

# SD and Synergy Alberta

- Synergy Groups could play an important role in promoting SD (continued...)
  - ▣ Communicate SD principles and SD indicators to industry
  - ▣ Watch industry performance
  - ▣ Promote continual improvement
  - ▣ Align development with the values and expectations of Albertans

# Final Thoughts

- SD applies to the energy sector
- SD is a valuable concept for complex problems
- Plenty of common ground
- Development is about improving the quality of life for individuals
- Public discussion is a powerful and important part of social change and economic progress

# Thank You

- Questions?
- Comments?



# CLD for Alberta's Energy Sector

