The Earth is not a Magic Pudding

Mark P Taylor, Environmental Science, Macquarie University
Upton Sinclair, 1906

“It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends upon his not understanding it.”
Fundamental requirements for ‘Safe operating space for humanity’

(1) Urgent need to de-populate at a global scale.

(2) Reduction in consumption per capita.
Defining sustainability

Problem
Inability / unwillingness to provide a clear definition of sustainability.

Solution
Legally binding resources limits must be established.
Planning, policy and governance

Problem
Tyranny of small decisions at the local government level.

Solution
ESS must engage directly with the process of evaluating policy developments.
Population

Problem
Nexus between population growth and environmental resources is not well understood.

Solution
ESS must explain in simple terms to the wider community the interconnectedness of our activities.
Leaders in power

Problem
Current political 3-4 year cycle perpetuates short term thinking.

Solution
Introduce a limit of two or three parliamentary terms to help promote more visionary thinking.
Decision-making

Problem
Thinking for today but for not tomorrow.

Solution
Project 100 years forward and ask each and every time if society would say we made the best decision.
Engagement and language

**Problem**
Public will not support something they cannot understand and in which they are not involved.

**Solution**
Use language and examples that all can understand.
Summary

- Expectations of consumption must be reduced.
- Population must also be lowered gradually.