

green growth : a sceptikal view

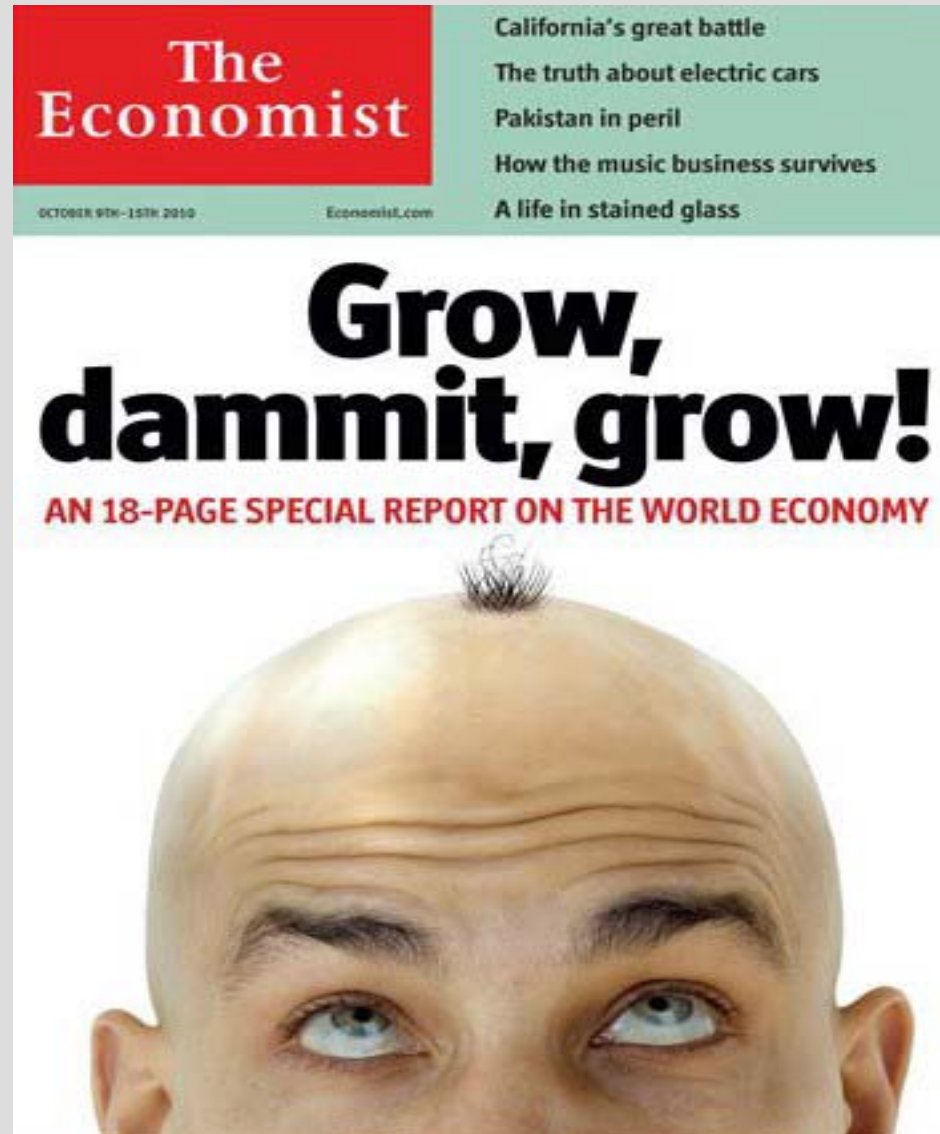
Thomas Coutrot (« Économiste atterré », Attac France)

Jean Gadrey (Université Lille 1)

« Green-growth-is-called-into-question »

www.etui.org/fr/Publications2/Policy-Briefs/European-Economic-Employment-and-Social-Policy/Green-growth-is-called-into-question

in search of the holy growth : a desperate quest



long term growth is undesirable...

- ⊖ IPCC Goals : if we want to have a chance of staying below a global average temperature rise of 2°C by the end of the century
- ⊖ we need a 80% reduction in GEG by 2050
- ⊖ e.g. - 4% per year
- ⊖ - 4% is what France has achieved in the 2000's (10 years!)
- ⊖ how do we do with growth ?

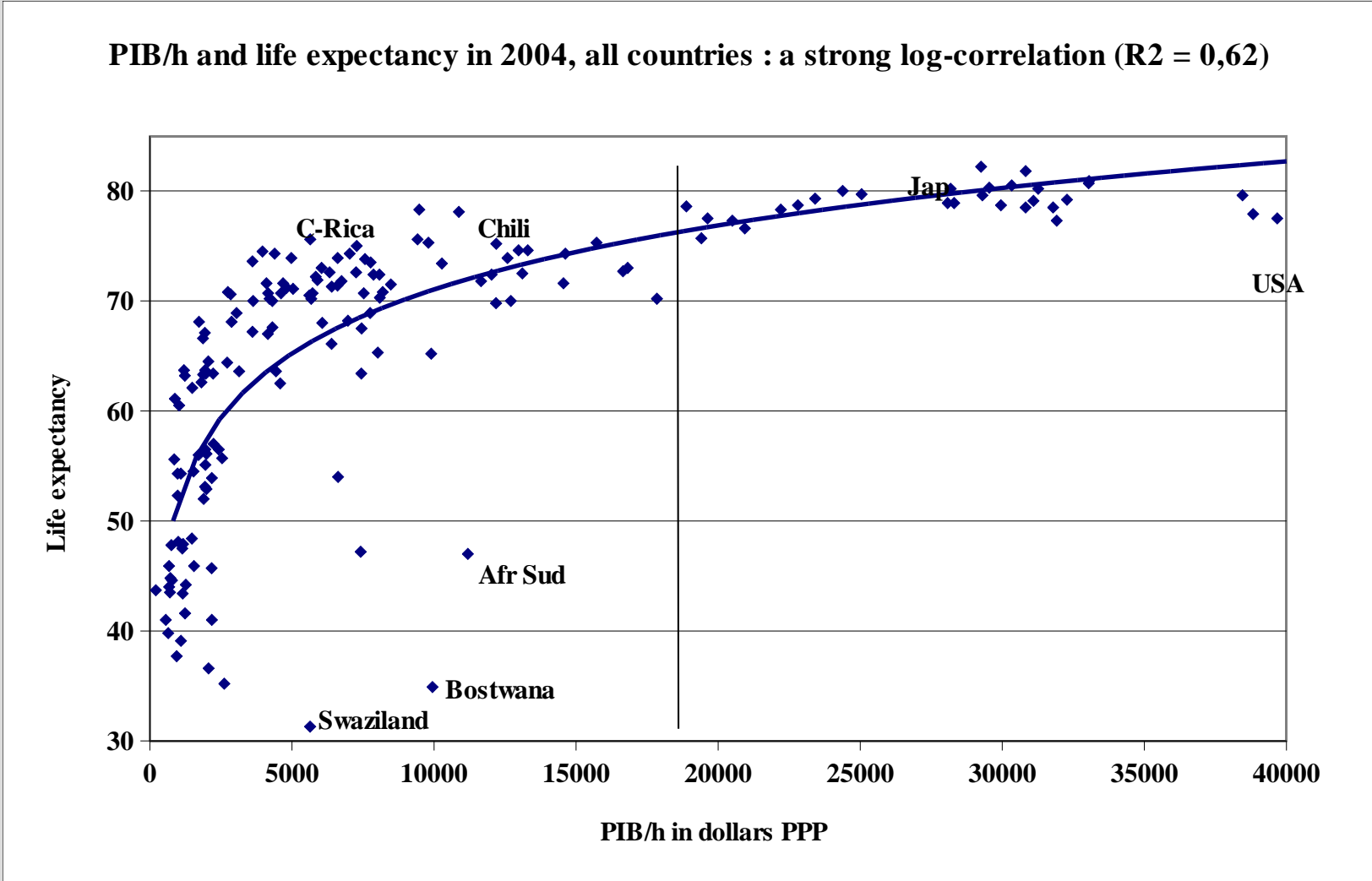
long term growth is undesirable...

- ⊖ another way to put it : « the myth of decoupling » (T. Jackson)
- ⊖ CO₂-intensity of growth = - 1,5% between 1970 and 2007 in France
(-0,7% worldwide)
- ⊖ it should fall - 7% per year to attain IPCC targets in 2050 !
⊖ (hyp : +0,7% pop./y, +1,4% GDP/h/y)
- ⊖ « Service economy » ? « immaterial economy ? »

...it is most unlikely...

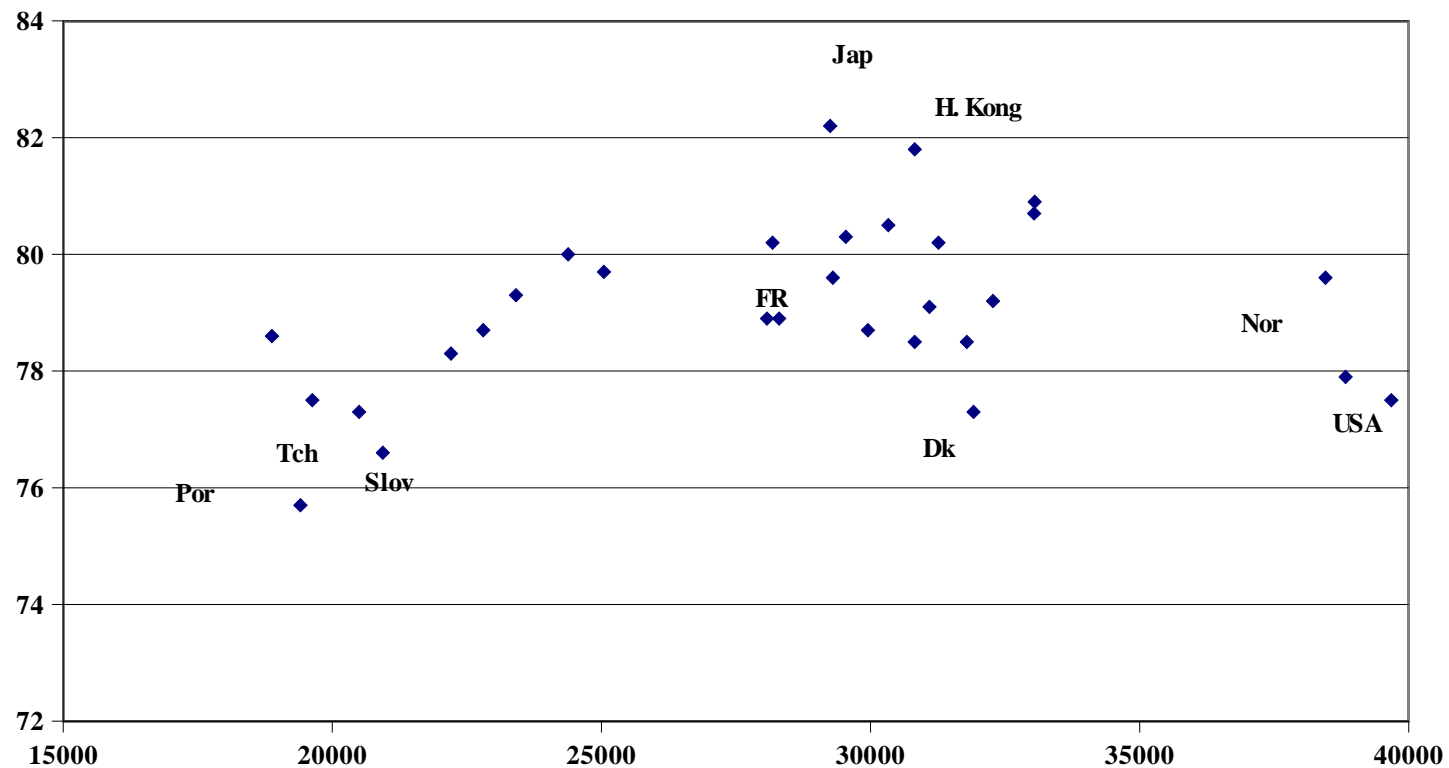
- ⊖ capitalism is in a deep crisis (inequalities; disconnexion between profitable needs and social needs)
- ⊖ commodities are becoming scarce
- ⊖ oil, lead, silver, copper, nickel... exhausted at an acceptable price between 2030 and 2050
- ⊖ prices are going to skyrocket

... and it's not worth it

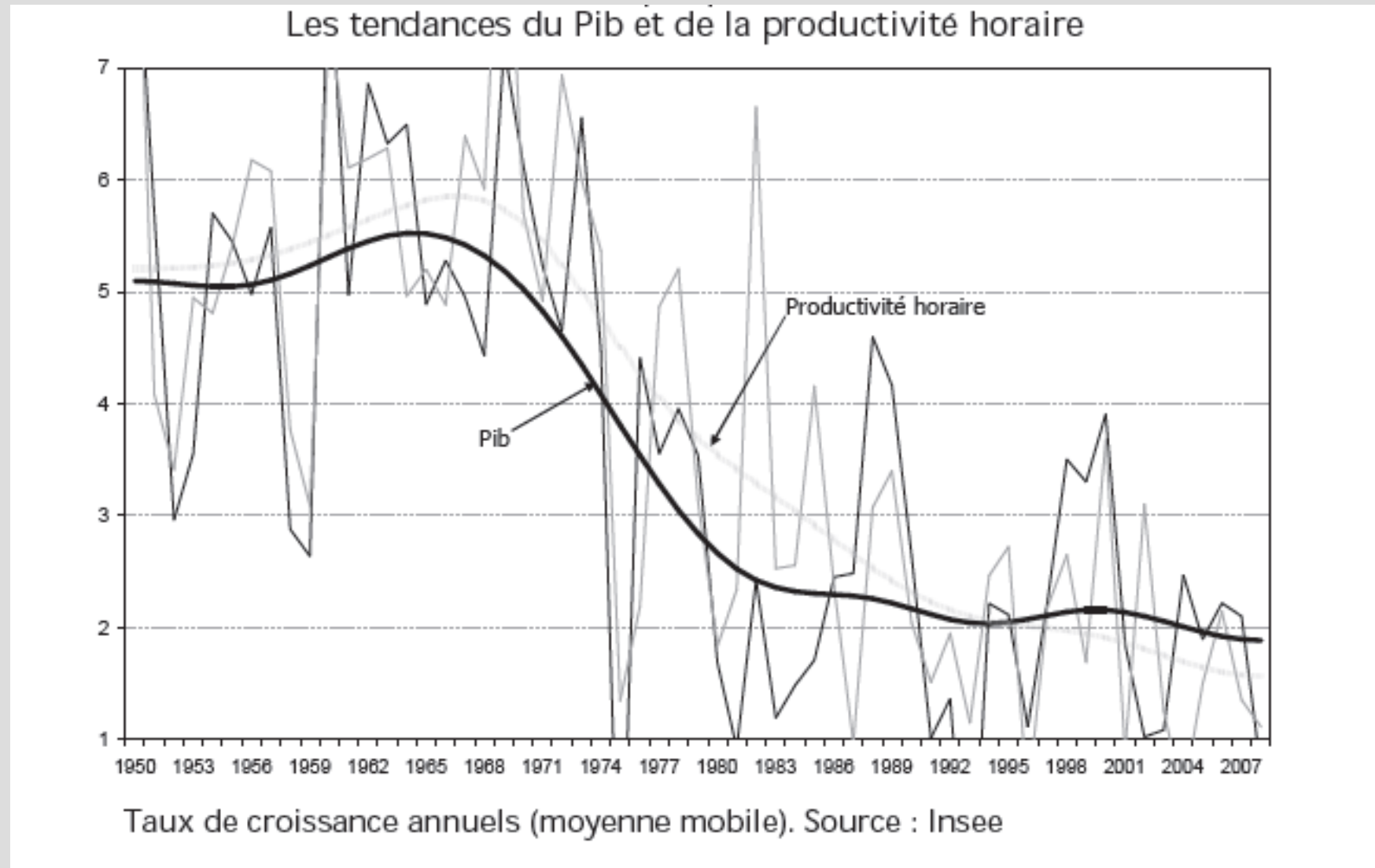


... and it's not worth it

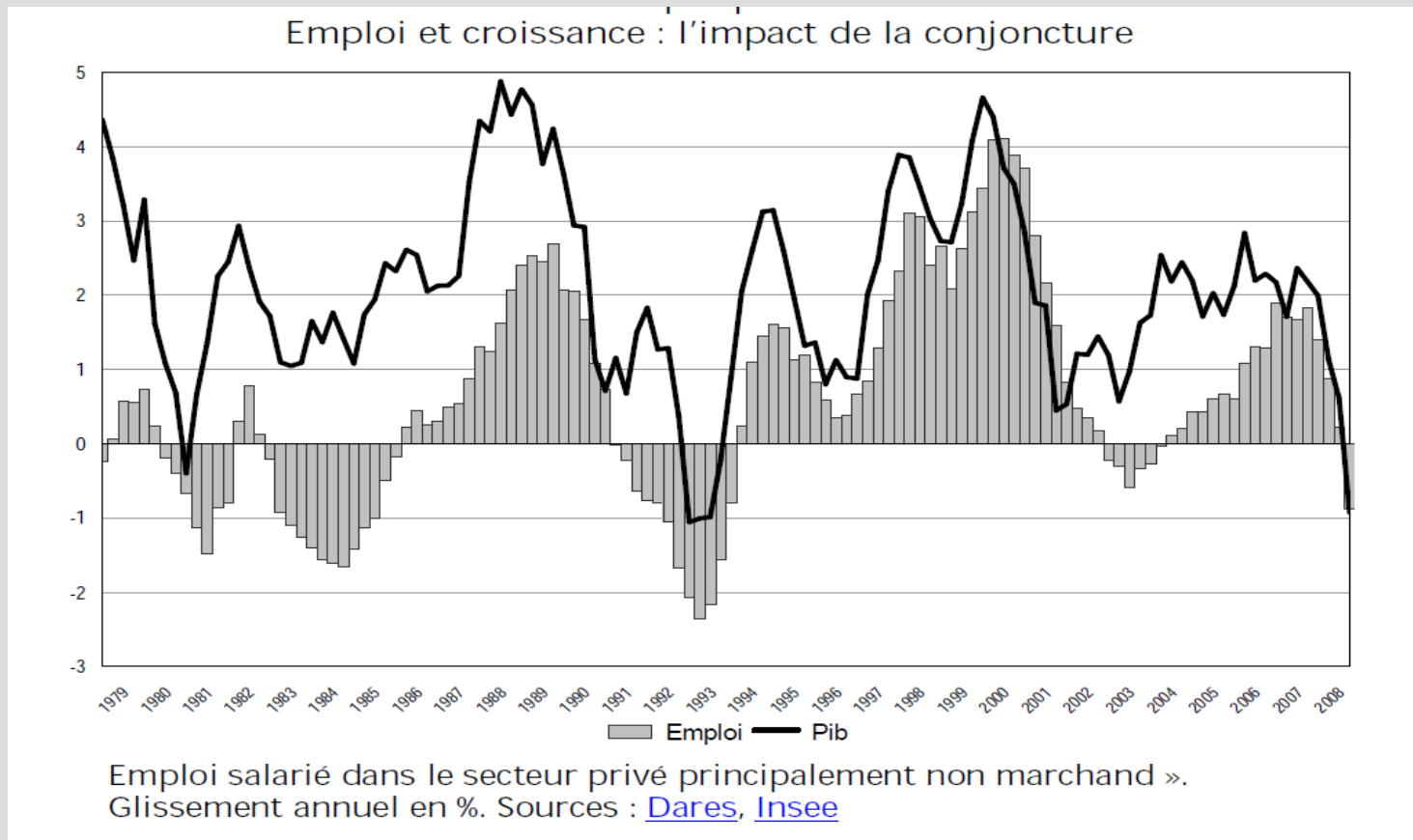
Above 18 000 \$/h , 29 countries, no correlation ($R^2 = 0,1$)



what about employment ?



on the short term, growth matters
on the long term, working time reduction is key



« productivity » must also be reconsidered

- $\Delta(\text{productivity}) = \text{real } \Delta(\text{GDP}) / \Delta(\text{hours worked})$
- $\text{real } \Delta(\text{GDP}) = \Delta(\text{volume}) \times \Delta(\text{quality})$
- $\Delta(\text{quality})$?? not measured by national accounts

transition : an economic catastrophe ?

- example : transition to organic agriculture
- 1 kg « chemical potatoes » = 5' work = 1 €
- 1 kg organic potatoes = 6' work = 1,20 €
- transition = inflation + decreased productivity + increased employment?

economy of quality : performance indicators must be reconsidered

- 1 « organic »kg is
 - tastier
 - healthier
 - more sustainable
- inflation = fallacy (quality increase not measured)
- productivity = misleading indicator
- transition = more and better jobs !

more and better jobs !

- ⊖ modern local organic agriculture
- ⊖ renewable energy, thermal insulation, energy-saving
- ⊖ collective transport
- ⊖ proximity retailing, recycling, repair
- ⊖ « quality of life » services (care, health, education, environment...)
- ⊖ + working time reduction...

How do we get there ?

« green economy » or fair transition ?

- ⊖ **their** « green economy » = marketization of natural resources and ecosystem services : the next bubble ?
- ⊖ **our** green economy : ecological participatory planning
- ⊖ starting from democratically settled needs
- ⊖ (Millennium development goals + IPCC targets...)

« green economy » or fair transition ?

- ◉ market mechanisms but not market forces
- ◉ socialization of investment (European investment bank, socialized banking systems...)
- ◉ subsidiarity principle... (UN, EU, nations, regions...)
- ◉ cooperative relocalization (kilometer tax)
- ◉ the visible hand of democracy

conclusion

utopians are those who think

- infinite growth and productivism can last in a finite world
- people will tolerate forever ecological, social and democratic depletion
- see you in Rio !