The Millennium Consumption Goals (MCG): a concrete proposal

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I applaud Munasinghe's proposal to develop Millenium Consumption Goals for the 20% global rich, because MCGs has the potential to communicate well to society at large, and could obtain credibility when endorsed by the UN. Their adoption should be a major aim for Rio+20. I especially applaud Munasinghe's formulation "…..*instead of viewing the rich as a problem, they should be persuaded to contribute to the solution…".*

I propose that MCGs are formulated in a way that individuals could pledge to achieve them; while policy makers and stakeholders could pledge to develop appropriate measures to foster these goals.

After reading and thinking I propose the following 10 MCGs; to be reached by 2025: (they need to be further developed and quantified): These goals are per capita:

1. Reduce the area of personal per capita living space by 25%, and deep-energy retrofit residential houses in order to reduce heating and cooling by 50%. Acquire state of the art energy-saving equipment.

2. Reduce individual driving by 50 %; walk and bike when possible, and take public transit and share rides when feasible; reduce commuting; choose residential housing close to public transit and shopping, working, and schooling areas.

3. Reduce meat and dairy consumption by 80 %; cook 80% of meals at home with fresh and possibly local ingredients; shop at farmer's markets and endorse local urban farming; reduce size of meals. Additional benefits are obesity reduction and health improvement.

4. Reduce the working hours by 30%, by means of shorter working week, longer holidays, furloughs, and sabbaticals. Improve working conditions and benefits. Encourage part-time working to improve child care.

5. Conserve water by 50 % by means of less (warm) water use in households; increase grey water use in buildings; increase rainwater harvesting and use.

6. Reduce shopping for new products by 80%; encourage sharing; bartering; leasing; re-use; and repairing.

7. Reduce waste by 90% through composting; recycling, and buying less.

8. Create progressive taxation of income and assets, a carbon tax to incentivize renewable energy generation and consumption; and reduce income tax to create more employment. Taxation to

be used for green investments in energy, transportation, and ICT infrastructure. Internalize external costs in products and services. Create a Tobin tax for global financial transactions.

9. Create a universally accepted metric for well-being, which would replace GDP.

10. Create incentives and policies for living within our ecological and carbon footprint, including personal carbon budget; smart metering; product information and labeling; competition and prizes for good behavior; smart grid; transit-oriented and mixed-use city development.

These goals are targets and should not obscure the fact that systemic and transformational changes are necessary to achieve them; individuals cannot reach them on their own, but incentives, policies, social norms, and cultural change are all needed to help. However, individuals can lead the way by setting examples and publicize them widely. This is the power of the MDGs.

Policies for implanting these MCG's:
1. Education, outreach, awareness raising programs on schools, workplaces, sports facilities.
2. Individual pledges by rich, famous, and powerful people
3. Training courses to acquire skills for all wealthy citizens.
4. Competition, contests.
5. Government policies including (discarding of) subsidies, taxation, information and outreach.
6. Global accounting system for measuring progress and performance indicators
7. Stakeholders' activities to help implement these goals