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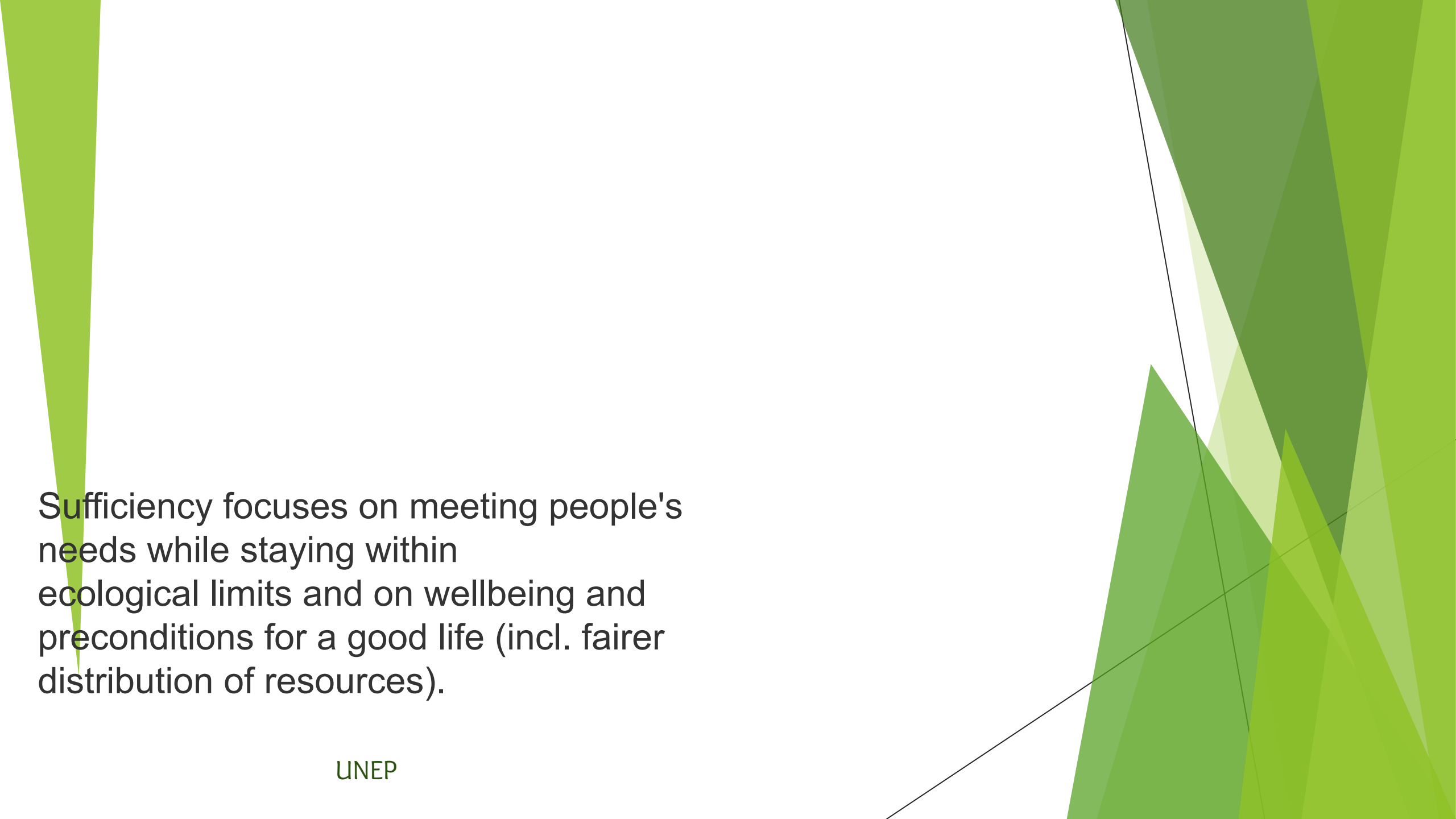
# FROM SUSTAINABILITY TO SUFFICIENCY – THE NEXT STEP FOR CITIES

**Workshop in Stockholm, 11 May 2026**

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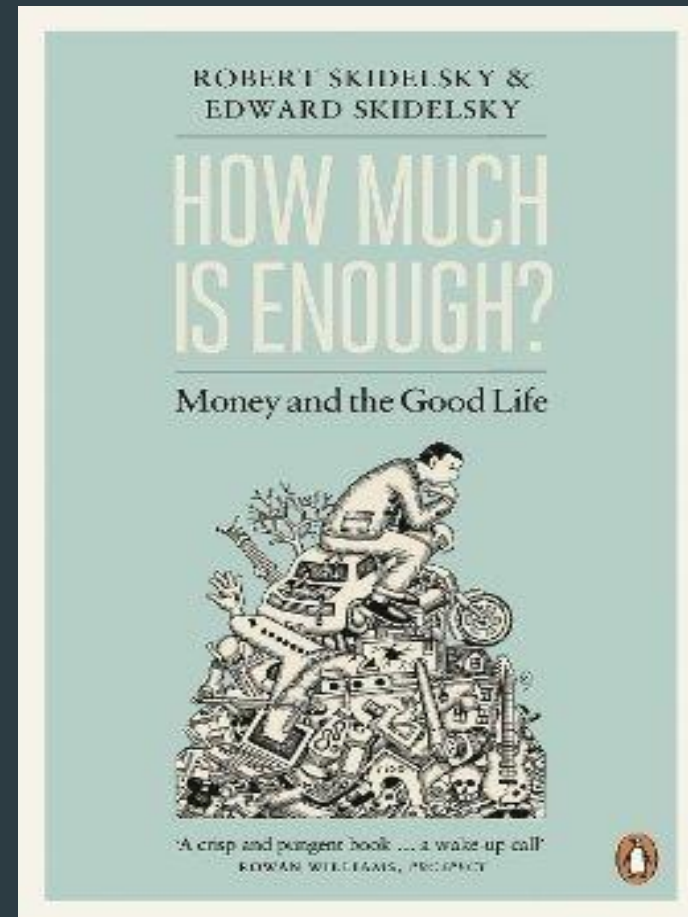
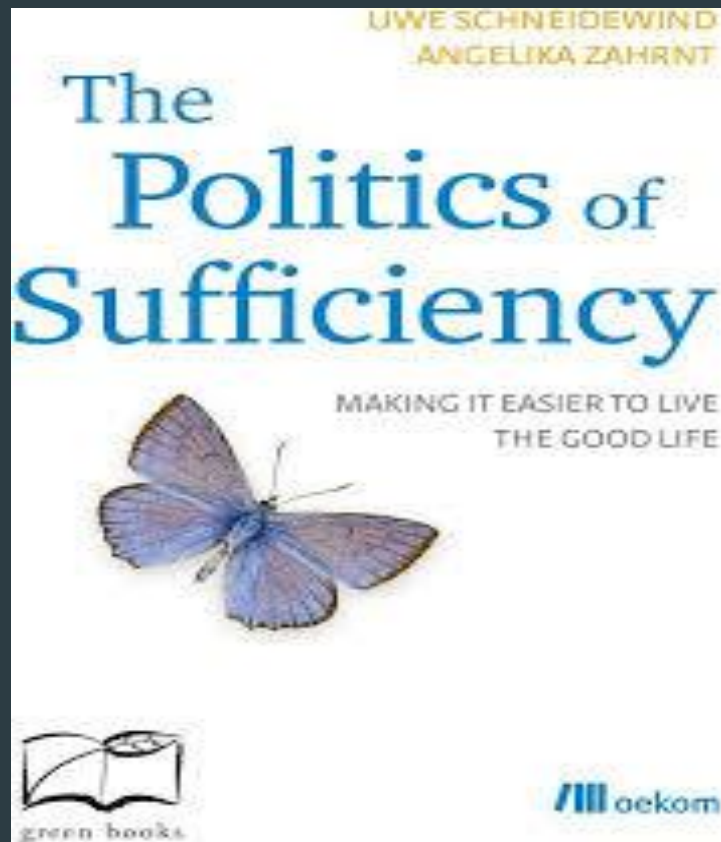
# IPCC

- ▶ ‘Sufficiency as a set of measures and daily practices that avoid demand for energy, materials, land, and water while delivering human well-being for all within planetary boundaries.’

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Sufficiency focuses on meeting people's needs while staying within ecological limits and on wellbeing and preconditions for a good life (incl. fairer distribution of resources).

# BEFORE WAVE STARTED



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- ▶ The concept of sufficiency has gained increasing attention in recent years as a way of decreasing emissions and environmental footprints while securing sustainable wellbeing for all within planetary boundaries.
- ▶ An increasing interest in reducing resource demand stems from a situation where research shows that technological changes and efficiency improvements alone are too slow to reach the Paris Agreement objectives (Vogel & Hickel, 2023).
- ▶ Sufficiency as a demand-reduction strategy, therefore seen as necessary to reach sustainable and equitable societies within planetary boundaries
- ▶ Material throughput reduction

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**In the focus: production and/or consumption to go beyond technological improvements to redefine and explore how human needs can be met in more sustainable ways.**

**Phasing in more sustainable practices and phasing out unsustainable ones.**

# SUFFICIENCY at local level - politicising proximity

- ▶ Moving from isolated actions to integrated policy mixes. Requires coordination across departments, alignment between policies, and a combination of both 'pull' measures that enable sustainable practices and 'push' measures that limit unsustainable ones.
- ▶ Experimentation, evaluation and adaptation to local conditions are also crucial to understanding what works.
- ▶ Citizen participation and cooperation with stakeholders. Deliberative citizen panels. The new report highlights the importance of ensuring that costs and benefits are distributed in a just manner. Local governments need to collaborate with civil society, companies and social movements, and support bottom-up initiatives aligned with sufficiency.

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# **SUFFICIENCY PRACTICES IN EUROPEAN CITIES**

# VIENNA, AUSTRIA



- Vienna aims to curb urban sprawl and sets upper limits on living space by treating the existing building stock as a "material stock of the future". Housing initiatives, including rental caps, help ensure reasonable space per person.
- **Resource Conservation (Circular Economy):** The city focuses on repairing, reusing, and sharing items to reduce raw material extraction. This includes the "[ÖkoKauf Wien]" initiative, which ensures public procurement prioritizes sustainable, eco-friendly products.
- **Food and Nutrition:** Vienna supports local, organic, and seasonal food production (Stadternte Wien), reducing transport emissions and strengthening food literacy to combat waste.
- **Public Space and Mobility:** The city promotes "Grätzloasen" (neighborhood havens), converting parking spaces into community gardens and pedestrianizing streets to improve urban life without high resource consumption.

# ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND

- **Housing and Spatial Efficiency:** Since 2024, municipal flats in Zurich have implemented strict occupancy requirements that must be met throughout the entire tenancy to ensure efficient use of living space, a practice influenced by successful cooperative models.
- **Urban Living and Mobility:** Strategies include promoting smaller living spaces per person shifting to sustainable transport and adopting consumption patterns that require lower resource intensity.
- **Energy Consumption:** Zurich's Energy Master Plan promotes energy-sufficient behavior by encouraging residents to change consumption habits, such as reducing energy-intensive activities.



# PARIS, FRANCE



- **Buildings and Heating:** Limiting heating to 19°C in public/commercial buildings, reducing hot water boiler temperatures to 60°C and banning open shop doors to prevent heat loss.
- **Transportation:** Encouraging reduced speeds (e.g., 110 km/h) on highways), curbing short-haul flights, promoting carpooling, and enhancing cycling infrastructure.
- **Consumer Behaviour and Planning:** Prohibiting overnight commercial advertising and illuminated signs, reducing office hot water, and planning for higher-density housing to reduce energy consumption.
- **Energy Management:** Developing the "Plan de sobriété énergétique" to reduce total energy demand.

# GRENOBLE, FRANCE



- **Public Lighting & Energy Management:** Following the 2015 "Plan Lumière," the city halved public lighting consumption. It now uses an energy-saving mission, featuring staff who review weekly, sometimes daily, heating data for municipal buildings to immediately correct excessive use.
- **Temperature Regulation:** Municipal buildings, including schools and offices, have reduced heating levels and optimized cooling systems.
- **Advertising Ban:** Since 2014, Grenoble has removed nearly 90% of commercial billboards, reducing energy for light-emitting signs and discouraging overconsumption.
- **Mobility & Fleet Optimization:** Measures include reducing the city's vehicle fleet and increasing support for cycling, aimed at structural changes in mobility.
- **Land Use:** The city maximizes land use in its planning, focusing on reducing construction and prioritizing renovation. The Mur|Mur program, which specifically targets industrial and residential energy consumption.

# GHENT, BELGIUM



- **Energy:** Ghent is increasing local renewable energy (sun/wind), with a self-sufficiency rate of 20.6% in 2019,
- exceeding the 15% goal set in their climate plan.
- **Food Policy:** The "Ghent en Garde" strategy (started 2013) boosts short food supply chains, reduces food waste, and promotes sustainable production.
- **Environment:** The city has Europe's largest low-traffic zone, promotes vegetarianism ("Thursday Veggie Day") and focuses on climate neutrality by 2050.

# FREIBOURG, GERMANY

- **Sustainable Housing and Planning:** Projects like Vauban and Rieselfeld emphasize dense, low-energy housing, reducing the need for individual space and energy.
- **Mobility Transition:** Car journeys have dropped to 16% of total transport, aided by excellent public transport and cycling infrastructure, emphasizing a shift away from personal car ownership.
- **Waste Management:** The city's biogas digester converts food and garden waste into energy, reducing annual waste disposal from 140,000 to 50,000 tons in 12 years.
- **Energy and Ecology:** 40% of the city is forested, with a high concentration of renewable energy research and so infrastructure.



## IN THE DEBATE:

- sufficiency vs. sustainability
- sufficiency vs. scarcity
- sufficiency vs degrowth
- sufficiency vs efficiency
- sufficiency vs abundance

- scaling up

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- consumption (GS)
- systemic change
- social inequalities
- normativity
- limits
- negotiability
- price of growth?