

1.1

Ted's speech: the index of the happy planet.

Our national accounting system is based on production. In one of Robert Kennedy's speeches, he criticizes GDP because **it doesn't consider** such important things as social justice, sustainability, and people's well-being.

Social scientists think that what people want is happiness for themselves, for their families and their communities and **money** is not nearly as important as happiness or love. **Nick Marks** created, thanks to the New Economics Foundation, **the Happy Planet Index**.

HPI is a measure of a nation's environmental efficiency.

He showed a **graph** to explain it better:

In the **Horizontal axis**, there is "**ecological footprint**" (how much resources we use)

In the **vertical axis** there is a measure called "**happy life years**." It is about the well-being of Nations and quality and quantity of life in a nation.

To the top right of the graph, there are countries which are doing well and producing well-being (the **U.S.A., other Western countries**) At the bottom left of the graph, there are countries that are not producing much well-being such as **African nations**.

Some countries are doing better than global average. **First** of them, **Costa Rica** is the happiest nation on the planet. 99% of its electricity comes from renewable resources; they abolished the army in 1949. And they invested in social programs. After then, Nick Marks shows **an additional graph** to explain how **efficiency is decreasing**. The ecological footprint is increasing much faster than well-being, so we are **less efficient** at turning up our scarce resources **into the goal** we want to.

He proposes **5 actions to be happy**:

- 1) **to be connected**, which means that your social relationships are the most important thing.
- 2)The second one is to **be active**: step outside, go for a walk.
- 3)to **keep informed** on what it is happening around the world. Take a notice.
- 4)to **keep learning**.
- 5)And the final one is to give our **generosity**, our compassion. These things do not have any carbon content.

[Nic Marks: The Happy Planet Index | TED Talk](#)

1.2

The OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) **Better Life Initiative**

In 2011 the OECD launched **Better life initiative**. It distinguishes between **current** and **future** well-being. *Current well-being* is measured in terms of **material conditions and quality** of life. *Future well-being* is measured by looking at some of the **key resources** that drive well-being and that are affected by today's actions.

This framework considers some features:

- it **focuses on people**, their situation and how they relate to others in the community where they live and work.
- it focuses **on people's satisfaction**.
- it considers the **distribution of well-being** in the population.

Moreover, **material living conditions and quality of life** are broken down into 11 dimensions:

1. **Income and wealth**: it measures the economic resources people can use today.
2. **Job and Earning** it is important for to get your ambitions, to develop skills, to feel useful to society.
3. Access to **housing** and its quality satisfy people's basic needs.
4. **Physical and mental health** is important for people's well-being.
5. **Education and skills**
6. **Work-life balance** is important in terms of family life. Because if I work too hard, I can't spend time with my family.
7. **Civic engagement** as having political voice in the society where people live. The **good governance** is needed to translate people's voice into policies that support their aspirations for a good life. people's vote. (demand)
8. **Social connections**. It is important for the relationship and to stay connected.
9. **The quality of the natural environment**
10. For the same reasons, living in a **secure environment** is important to generate well-being.
11. Finally, need to consider how people feel about their life and experience, their **subjective well-being**.

1.3

Michael Green: What the Social Progress Index can reveal about your country.

On January 4, 1934, an economist, Simon Kuznets, delivered a report to the United States Congress, that was called "National Income", nowadays this is known as Gross Domestic Product, **GDP**. But Michael Green wants to talk about a different way to measure the **success of countries**.

Basically, GDP is a measure **of income produced** in a country. We live in a world where **GDP is the benchmark of success** in a global economy. Michael Green has introduced the **Social Progress Index** and **It is a measure of the well-being of society**, they don't measure how much a country spends on healthcare, but **we measure the length and quality of people's lives**. The Social Progress defines **that a good society is based** on three dimensions:

1. Everyone have **the basic needs** for survival: food, water etc.
2. Everyone **must access to the building blocks** to improve their lives: education, information.
3. Everyone **must access to a chance to follow their goals and dreams**.

Moreover, Michael shows a **graph**: on the **vertical axis** there is the **social progress** and on the **horizontal axis** there is **GDP per capital**. The country in the world with the **highest social progress is New Zealand**. The country with the **lowest** social progress is **Chad**, for example He also considers two other countries, United States is richer than New Zealand, but with a lower level of social progress. And then Senegal has a higher level of social progress than Chad, but the same level of GDP. Another example, **Costa Rica** has the same level of social progress than Western countries, with a lower-level GDP. **If poor countries can get a higher GDP**, and **if they invest it** in doctors, nurses, and health, etc. they **can increase their social progress**, but this mechanism is decreasing for rich countries.

For example, in Brazil, the policy makers are going to **double up the GDP per capital**, but this is only a half part of the plan, because it can become like Russia or New Zealand regarding the Social Progress.

[Michael Green: What the Social Progress Index can reveal about your country | TED Talk](#)