Global Sustainability Scenarios

Description	Scenarios of future vulnerability are poorly framed by existing scenarios developed for bracketing future greenhouse gas emissions. Alternative scenarios of sustainability have been developed in various forms, and these correspond to many of the conditions of vulnerability and adaptive capacity that are of concern to development planners and practitioners. A major suite of sustainability scenarios was developed by the Global Scenarios Group. These include a conventional wisdom of market forces, a world of increasing degradation and impoverishment, and a sustainability transition. They are similar to scenarios developed for the UNEP Geo assessment. The GSG suite of scenarios include storylines and quantified indicators for major world regions using the PoleStar scenario tool developed by SEI-Boston.
Appropriate Use	The GSG and PoleStar data can be used to frame national or local scenarios of vulnerability, or to place national development scenarios in context.
Scope	Global to regional; with some extensions they can be used to frame more local scenarios.
Key Output	Quantitative indicators of environmental change, economic conditions, and social welfare that can be linked to climatic vulnerability.
Key Input	The storylines and overview are described in an SEI monograph, Great Transitions (see References below). Very little effort is required to appreciate the storylines. PoleStar is not a simple model to understand, although it is well documented. It may take several days to extract the quantitative data and format for specific purposes; it is possible to create new subregions within PoleStar, but that will require additional time and possibly training.
Ease of Use	Simple for storylines and to frame local scenarios; complex to understand the quantified indicators.
Training Required	None necessary, although further training in PoleStar may be warranted.
Training available	SEI has used this tool in many contexts — contact SEI-Boston for training in PoleStar and the GSG scenarios; SEI Oxford has developed explicit links to climate vulnerability using South Africa and India as examples.
Computer Requirements	PC Windows.
Documentation	GSG web site, monograph and PoleStar software and manual are available through the SEI Boston office: see www.sei.se.
Applications	Global to local socioeconomic scenarios of future climate vulnerability and adaptive capacity.
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Cost	Polestar is available for free in a demonstration version, which includes the GSG scenarios. The GSG monograph is available free in an electronic version.
References	P. Raskin, et al. 2002. Great Transitions. Stockholm Environment Institute, Boston.