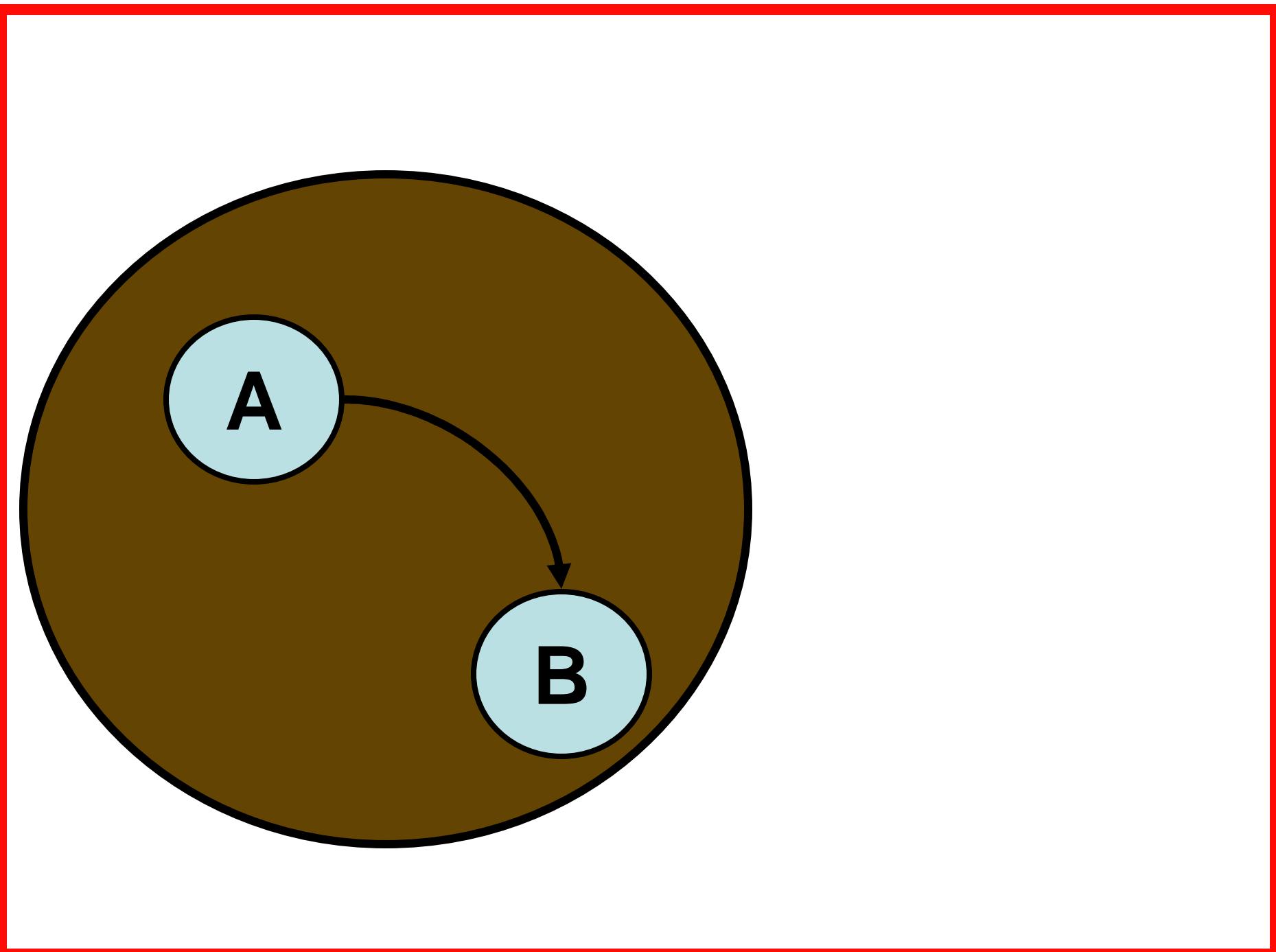
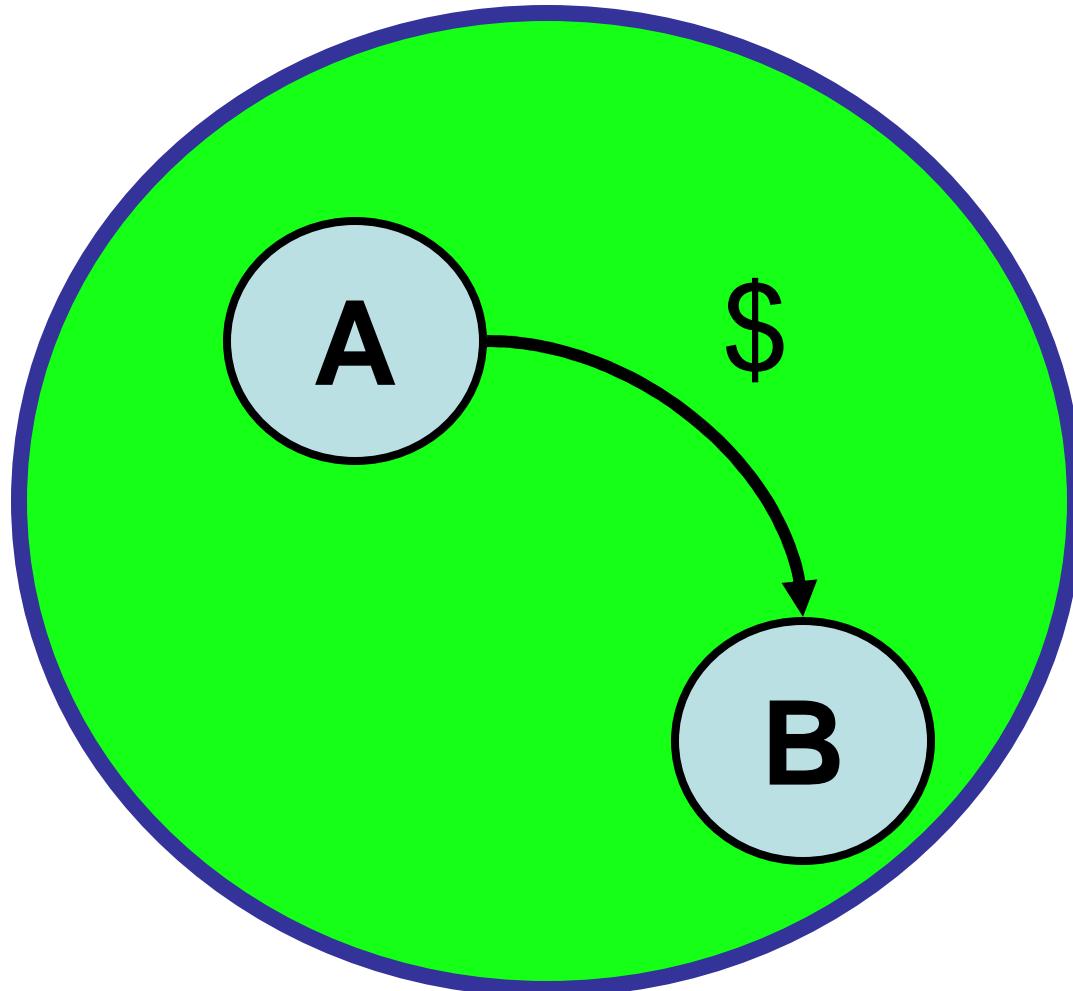


# Partnerships for Sustainability: Some Musings and Observations

Charles M. Vest  
President, National Academy of Engineering

Partnerships for Sustainability  
The National Academies  
Washington, DC  
June 18, 2008





*“Saving our environment is a question of whether people in Country A will spend money in Country B for the common good.”*

--Jacque Cousteau

# True, but Sustainable is more complex

Partnerships are key

- Cross-sector
- Cross-national

# PARTNERSHIPS

# Partnerships

- What choice is there?
- There is no other path.

# What I have learned about Partnerships

- They are hard to put together.
- They work well on the ground.
- **Trust** is their most essential element.

# What else I have learned about Partnerships

**Arrogance** is the biggest danger:

Each sector thinks it alone knows how  
to do the job.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

***“There can be no such thing  
as sustainability.”***

***“There can be no such thing  
as sustainability.”***

-- A Distinguished Economist

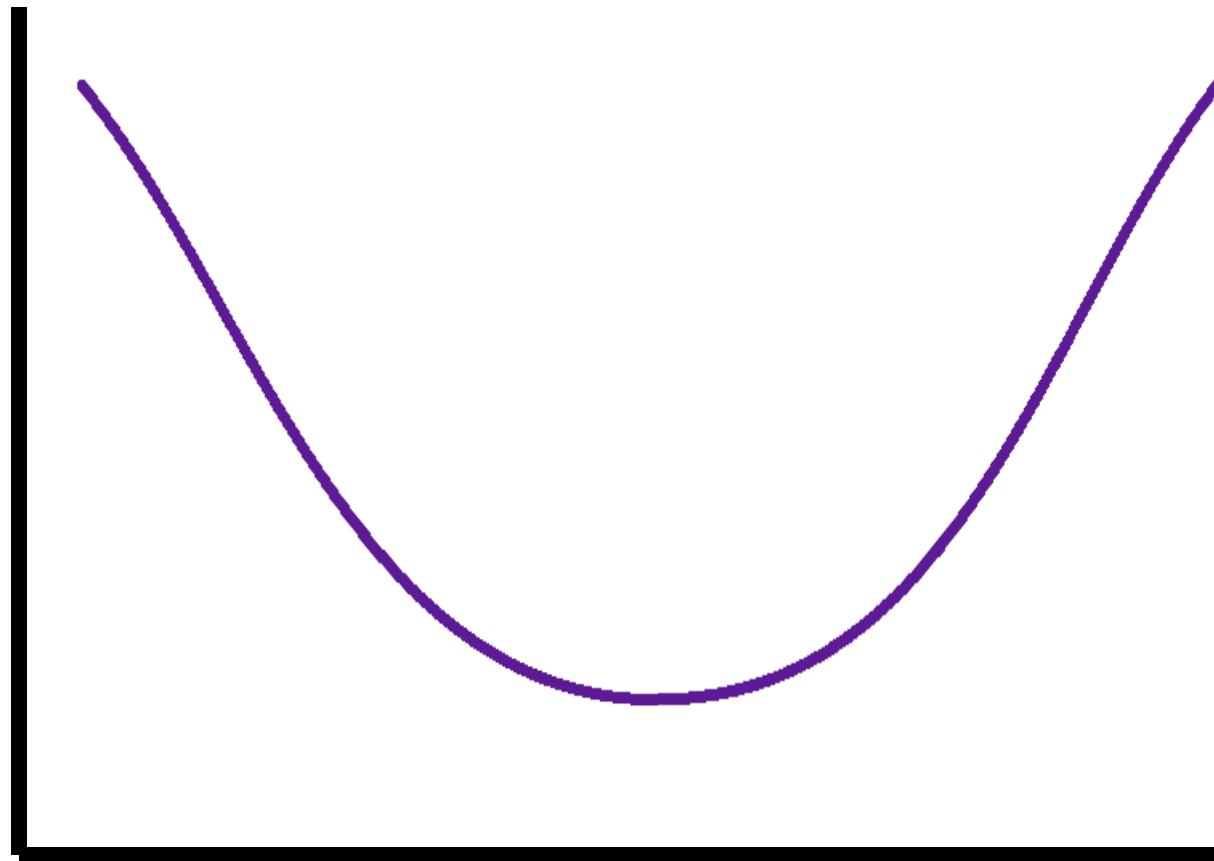
*What does it mean anyway?*

# *What does it mean anyway?*

It depends on whom you ask  
... and when ... and where

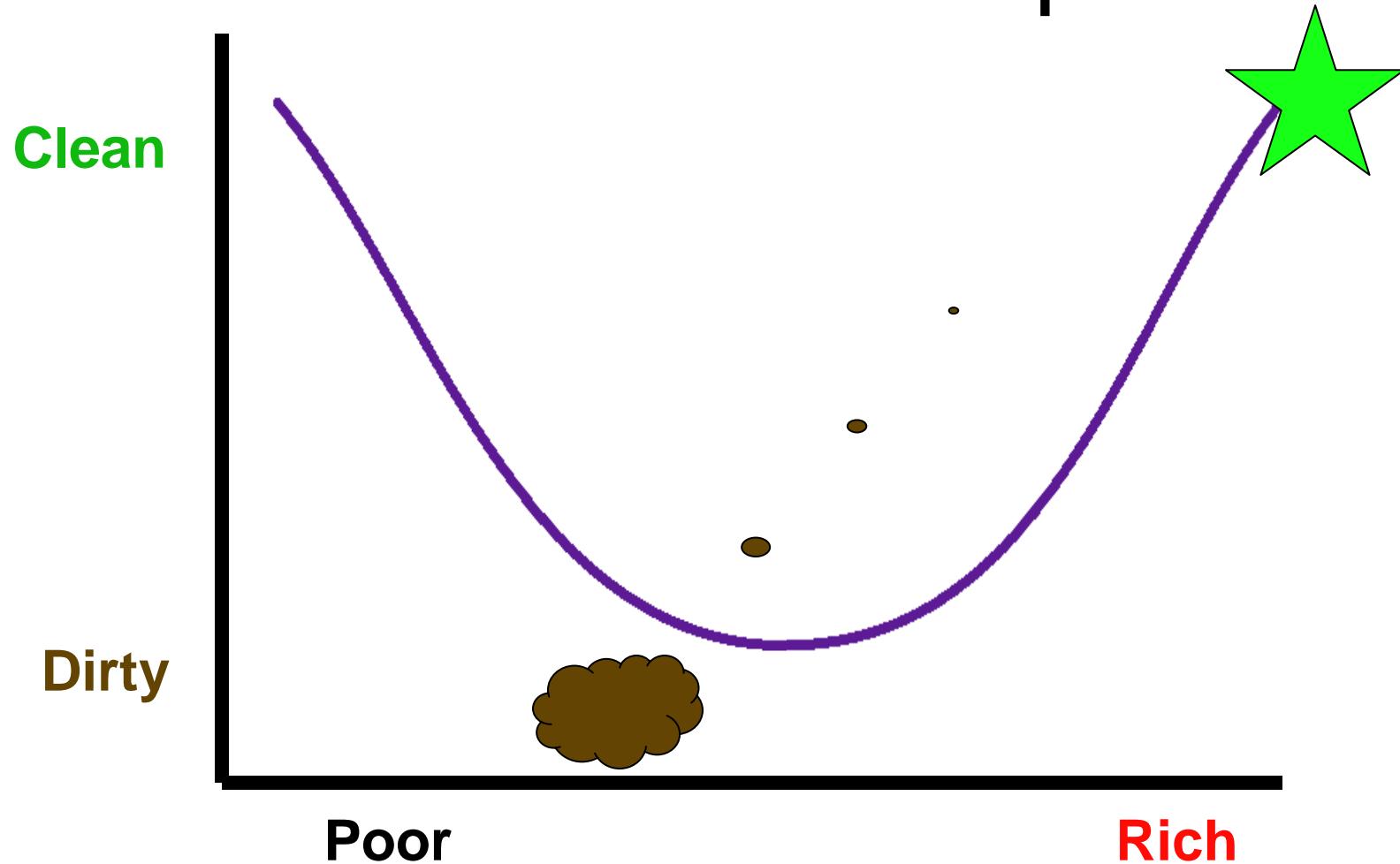
*Is it about an inevitable  
relationship?*

# Pollution and Development



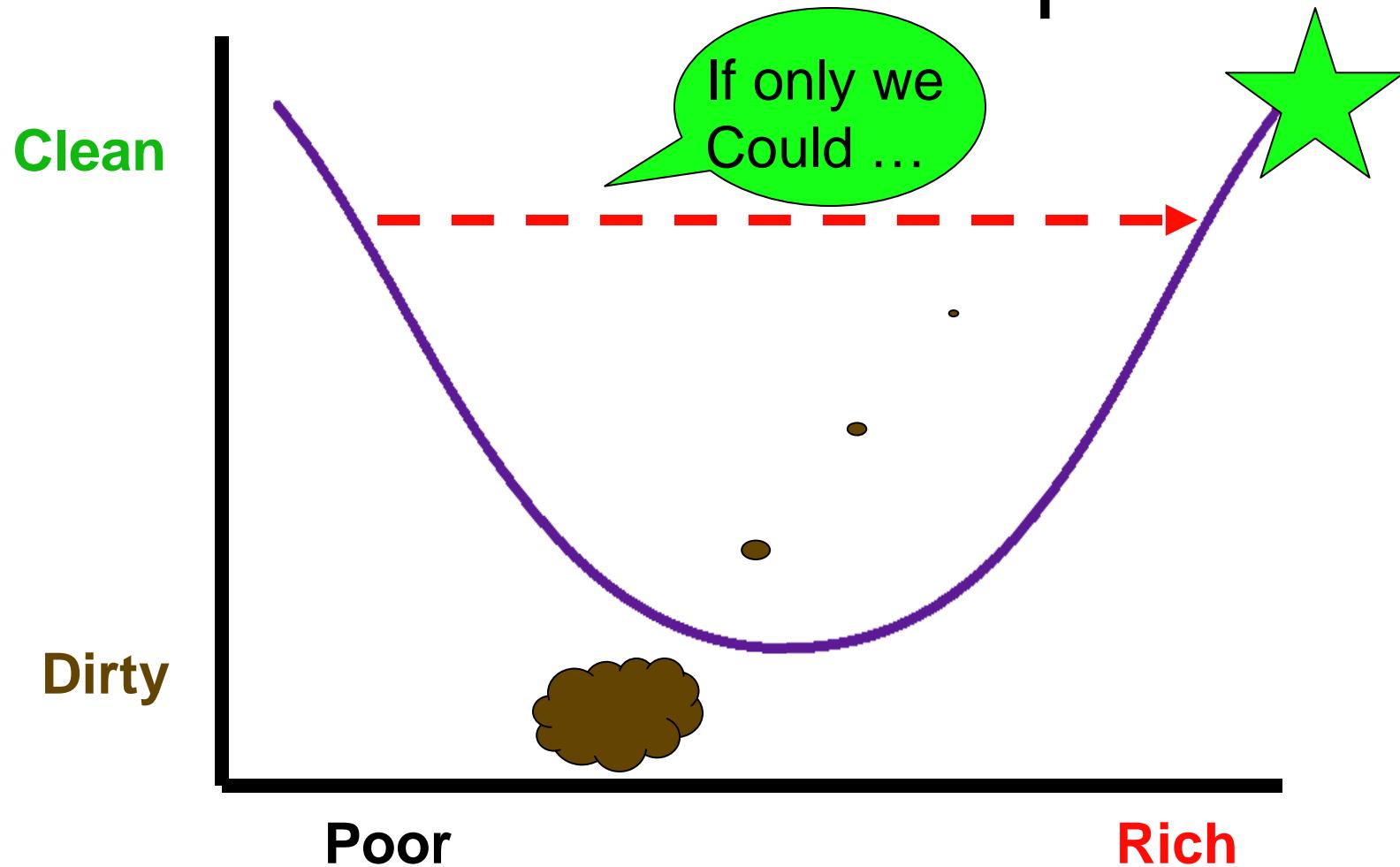
Source: Xu Kuangdi, President, Chinese Academy of Engineering

# Pollution and Development



Source: Xu Kuangdi, President, Chinese Academy of Engineering

# Pollution and Development



Source: Xu Kuangdi, President, Chinese Academy of Engineering

*Is it about running out of oil?*

***“The Stone Age didn’t end  
because we ran out of stones.”***

***“The Stone Age didn’t end  
because we ran out of stones.”***

-- A Japanese Colleague

# Whatever it is, it involves

- Globalization
- Development
- Technological Progress
- Human needs and aspirations

# What is really globalized?

- Flow of knowledge and information (IT)
- Business
  - National Companies → Multinationals → Globally Integrated Enterprises
- Innovation
- Opportunity

Food for fuel?

Food for ~~fuel~~ thought?

*The public is gaining at least a sense of how energy, food, and fuels are interrelated.*

Food for thought

***“You can’t sell a Prius  
in Germany.”***

*“You can’t sell a Prius  
in Germany.”*

-- A German Engineer

Glimmer of Hope?

***Hot, Flat, and Crowded:***

Glimmer of Hope?

***Hot, Flat, and Crowded:***  
*Why We Need a Green Revolution--  
and How it Can Renew America*

-- Thomas L. Friedman  
Forthcoming Sept. 8, 2008

Glimmer of Hope?

# **The Rise of the Humble Engineer**

Glimmer of Hope?

# The Rise of the Humble Engineer

*Demand for Efficient Data Centers Puts  
Skilled Workers in the Spotlight*

The New York Times  
June 17, 2008

**CLOSING COMMENT**

# What we will need

- An objective understanding of the situation
- A view of the future
- A determination of our legacy
- A resolution of the interests of Rich and Poor

# What we will need

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  - Scientists, Engineers, Economists
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  - Us
- A resolution of the interests of Rich and Poor
  - **Diplomats, Politicians**

Thank you, and best  
wishes for success in your  
important work.