The New Middle Class in India and Brazil

Green Perspectives?

Editors

DAWID DANILO BARTELT
AXEL HARNEIT-SIEVERS

ACADEMIC FOUNDATION
NEW DELHI

www.academicfoundation.org

11

ASHISH KOTHARI

Consumerism and the Indian Middle Classes

Walk down any big city centre in India today, and the dominant image is of an explosion of global brands, with in-your-face adverts by companies convincing you that life is worthless unless you own one of their products. Gurgaon outside New Delhi takes the cake in the sheer concentration of glitzy shopping malls, but every city of indecent size has its fair share of these orgasmic centres of retail, many of them, ironically, lined up along a Mahatma Gandhi Marg. You'd have to excuse anyone who wonders whether India is still poor. The way a section of Indians is spending its money, with collective consumer frenzies during festivals and individual ones on birthdays and weddings and anniversaries, it would seem that the image of emaciated people in rags that so characterised the country is history. Nothing, of course, could be farther from the truth.

In April 2015, I circulated a news item announcing that the Government of India had set a Sustainable Consumption Line, and all those consuming above that line would have action taken against them. Several readers wrote to me asking for more details, some even wanted to write to the Government congratulating it for the bold step. Eventually, of course, people figured out it was a spoof.

But my intention was more than using April Fool's Day for some fun. It was a light-hearted attempt at addressing the issue of rising consumerism amongst India's rich including its middle classes. What percentage of India's population is middle class and above, is disputed, but what is clear is that the absolute numbers are huge (the middle class figures ranging from 70 to about 200 million, depending on definition used). This number of people with high or relatively high buying power, makes for an impressive amount of consumption, a fact long ago recognised by both Indian and foreign brands, the latter using the opportunities offered by the 'opening up' of the economy in 1991.

There is here a need to distinguish between consumption per se, and consumerism. Every human being needs to consume to stay alive, be healthy, fulfil basic needs. Consumerism, on the other hand, stems from the desire to have more and more ('*dil maange more*'), way beyond one's basic needs, and where a combination of social and psychological factors leads even luxury items to appear to be needs. Of course the dividing line may sometimes be fuzzy and very subjective, mixed up with the complexities of today's urban lives; I might say, for instance, that owning a refrigerator is being consumerist, but a couple working through the day to make ends meet in a city may consider it a need so they can cook once in a couple of days and still come home to a readily available meal. Most people would agree, though, that the desire to change a basic fridge to one of the new-fangled ones that offer multiple compartments one of which can store your *aam ras* (mango puree) for a year, moves over the line into consumerism.

But why is this an issue at all? Should we not be celebrating higher consumption, given that it stimulates higher economic growth rates, and is supposed to be a key driver in any nation's move out of underdevelopment?

Why do we Need to Limit Consumerism?

There are many reasons to interrogate the rise of consumerism globally, and in India. One is that it is part of the forces trashing the earth. Collectively, humanity has in many ways already overstepped the ecological limits that the earth places on us. In 2005, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment already found that "60 per cent (15 out of 24) of the ecosystem services examined ... are being degraded or used unsustainably, including fresh water, capture fisheries, air and water purification, and the regulation of regional and local climate, natural hazards, and pests." In 2009, a large team of scientists led by Johan Rockström of the Stockholm Resilience

Centre concluded that of 9 'planetary boundaries', "humanity has already transgressed three ... for climate change, rate of biodiversity loss, and changes to the global nitrogen cycle." The Global Footprint Network estimates that we are already on 'planetary overshoot', consuming what the earth provides us 50 per cent faster than can be replenished with horrifying implications for both future generations and those in current generations who are victims of environmental damage. The currently prevalent form of human development is, clearly, unsustainable and unjust.

While sheer numbers of people are certainly one factor behind this trend, an equally or perhaps more serious factor is the wasteful consumption patterns of industrial countries and of the rich in so-called developing countries. Profligate consumerism and the destructive production processes linked to it are stripping the earth. If you've got a car, air conditioner, refrigerator, electrical appliances in your kitchen, a home theatre and stereo system, or exotic food items that have come from half-way across the world, or if you simply use a new disposable plastic bag every time you shop, or (like me) take flights across the world (to conferences about saving the world!), chances that you are part of this class that is treating the earth like a giant extraction machine and as big a dump.

We Don't all Consume the Same

Rich (industrialised or urbanised) countries of the world are today consuming far above their fair share of the earth's resources. Each average citizen in the United Arab Emirates needs over 10 global hectares (gha, calculated as a hectare of land that can produce resources needed by humans and also can absorb human waste), each American over 7 gha—whereas each Indian needs less than 0.9. According to the Global Footprint Network, the earth can accommodate a per person consumption of 1.8 gha (i.e. if on average each person uses up to this amount, we will not overstrain the earth's capacity).

But the relatively low per capita consumption of countries like India hides another, equally important, reality. The inter-country contrast is mirrored by the inter-class contrast within such nations.

A back-of-the-envelope calculation that my co-author Aseem Shrivastava and I did for our book *Churning the Earth* (Shrivastava and Kothari 2012), indicated that per capita ecological footprint of the richest 1 per cent people in India (folks like us owning the products mentioned above) is 17 times that of the poorest 40 per cent. These folks have a footprint well above the global acceptable limit of 1.8 gha.

One factor behind these levels of consumption and impact is the enormous wealth owned or controlled by the rich; the same 1 per cent of India's population owns over 50 per cent of its private wealth, the richest 10 per cent nearly three-fourths, and in contrast the poorest 10 per cent have less than 0.1 per cent. The inequality has been steadily growing, with the richest 10 per cent increasing their share of wealth from 65 per cent in 2000 to almost 75 per cent in 2014. This mirrors a global trend. So while on one side there is shameless profligacy and waste in consumption, on the other (and partly because of), there are several billion people (worldwide) or several hundred million people (in India) who do not have enough to consume, suffering deprivations of food, energy, water, shelter, clothing, and other basic needs. This too is a reason for the rich to cut down, because only then will global ecological space be created to enable the poor to enhance their lives; else such enhancement will take us further along the path of ecological suicide and socioeconomic conflict.

Unfortunately, we live in an upside-down world in which the poor and powerless continue to face all kinds of limits to their consumption, while the rich and powerful have a virtual free-for-all. Take for instance, natural resources. In many countries, communities that live inside or adjacent to forests have quotas on the amount of timber, non-timber forest produce, fuel, and other such products they can use. If they happen to fall within a protected area (over 13% of the earth's surface is under such land use), the restrictions are even stricter, and in some cases absolute (leading to physical displacement). This is justified in the name of forest and wildlife conservation.

But is there any such limit on rich (mostly urban or semi-urban) consumers? Their distance from forests and other natural ecosystems makes their use of natural resources virtually invisible, but it is very real. So for instance there is no limit to how much electricity an urban (or rich rural) family can consume, notwithstanding that it comes from power stations or dams that have had major ecological impacts on forests, wetlands, grasslands or marine areas, and have displaced or dispossessed local communities. There is no limit on the amount or kind of minerals the rich can use, regardless of the fact that mining threatens crucial ecosystems and cultures worldwide. In India alone, over 100,000 hectares of forest land has been diverted for mining in the last 30 years, and countless rivers and lakes have been polluted beyond repair by mining run-off. There is no limit on how much vehicular fuel the rich can use, for we are collectively blind to the impact this has on areas from where fuel is extracted, or the pollution and climate change being caused by vehicular emissions. Americans and Europeans are of course past masters at this, but parts of the erstwhile poor world are also fast catching up, joining their consumerist big brothers in what can be called the 'Global North'. For instance, Greenpeace India estimates that the richest Indians are already reaching the global average of per capita carbon emissions (of about 5 tonnes per year); and that their emissions are almost double the per capita limit (2.5 tonnes) considered necessary if we want to restrict temperature increase to below 2° (Ananthapadmanabhan et al. 2007).

Perhaps amongst the few limits imposed on urban populations is landholding; in India for instance there was a ceiling on how much land a family could own. Increasingly, though, in the post-1991 economic globalisation phase, such ceilings in both cities and villages are being done away with or diluted.

The Sustainable Consumption Line

'Sustainable development' has become quite a buzzword. Virtually every agency of the United Nations (UN), every big multilateral and bilateral agency, and most big civil society organisations have bought into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda, which replaced the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in late 2015. Sustainability is supposed to be a fulcrum of this framework. One crucial component of this is 'sustainable consumption', but unfortunately, there is very little talk of the need to drastically cut down existing consumption levels of the global North.

To make consumption truly sustainable, there is a need for a measure to determine what is sustainable, and ways to implement this measure. Several countries have measures or indicators by which they determine people eligible for social welfare schemes, e.g. in India we have a BPL (below poverty line). As a counterpart, what is needed now is a SCL (sustainable consumption line), which determines whether as an individual (or, extrapolated, a family, community or region) is living sustainably. Then those transgressing (being above) the SCL would be eligible for actions that help or force them to scale down.

Of course, both the conceptualisation of the SCL and even more, its implementation, will be highly complex. Full information on what kinds and levels of consumption are sustainable is sketchy, and global averages could be misleading. Any individual or group will have a unique mix of products and services being consumed that will make composite calculations difficult. Assessments will need to include not only how much of what is consumed, but how it was obtained, transported, processed, and so on.

This complexity should however not keep us from making a start; the SCL can be made more and more sophisticated and meaningful over time. At the beginning, some relatively simple aspects can be taken. As examples:

- *Sustainable energy consumption*: Every household of average size is to be allowed only a certain kw per month of electrical power from the grid, at subsidised rate; it can buy more at the full cost incurred to supply it, but up to a limit beyond which no-one is allowed; concomitantly, the government and other agencies commit to vigorously promote energy-saving in all devices so the family quota can go a longer way, as also to support energy self-sufficiency at household and community level using decentralised renewable sources. In calculating consumption, 'embedded' energy that goes into the making of various products and services, could also progressively be integrated.

- *Sustainable water:* Every household of average size is allowed only a certain number of litres of water use in a day. To begin with, this could be the direct water use, but eventually the 'embedded' water use (i.e. needed to produce the products and services that a household is using) can also be integrated, or dovetailed with a measure for sustainable materials consumption.
- *Sustainable transport*: Every household of average size is allowed only one private motorised vehicle, and its use too is restricted within some limits, e.g. in the form of the odd-even numbers policy of the Delhi government; concomitantly there is a commitment by governments or other public agencies to urgently improve public transport, cycle lanes and footpaths, and special facilities for the elderly and disabled, in all settlements; eventually private motorised vehicles could be phased out almost completely. Additionally, every individual is entitled to a certain maximum number of trips by air and by train in a year.
- *Sustainable shelter*: Every household of average size is allowed some maximum sq ft built up area for its dwelling; anything in excess of this already owned or used by the household will be made available for housing the homeless or those with less than average built up area. Unoccupied houses will be eligible for take-over by the homeless, as is the case in some European countries.
- *Sustainable waste:* Every household of average size can generate only a certain maximum amount of waste in a month; anything in excess has to be recycled, composted, or otherwise dealt with within its premises or the premises of the community/colony it resides in; for its part the government and businesses commit to eliminate wasteful use of materials in all products (e.g. in packaging), and facilitate

household and community-level recycling, composting, and other safe disposal of waste.

And so on, for the consumption of materials, food, and other products, and for the use of spaces and services (land, roads, other infrastructure). There would need also to be some exceptions built in, for instance in the case of travel for essential services like medical professionals, government officials on necessary duty, etc.

Setting and Implementing the Limits

How would the actual amounts in each of the above be calculated? One option is to calculate what would be a sustainable ecological footprint per person, building in the impacts of the use of various resources and services, and then working out the per capita that could be allowed if the total footprint was not to cross the relevant country's or region's ecological and social capacity. This is of course simpler said than actually worked out, but it is possible to get a rough idea, and keep refining it over the years. There is an average worked out by the Global Footprint Network, of 1.8 gha, as the per person upper limit of what the earth can provide. This does not include freshwater use, and planetary space needed for other species, so the figure is likely to be smaller. Also this would need to be further nuanced for specific ecological and cultural conditions. But it is a reasonable starting point to build on.

But if setting limits is complex, even harder will be their actual implementation. We need social, cultural and legal measures that (i) guide and facilitate the transformation towards sustainable consumption patterns, (ii) impose strong disincentives and penalties for those seriously breaching the ASCL, (iii) provide incentives for those who proactively and voluntarily comply, (iv) empower communities from whom resources are being snatched away to feed the consumerism of the rich, and (v), underlying all the above, create conditions in which psychological satisfaction and happiness is met through affective relations with nature and each other rather than through 'retail therapy'.

The last point may well be the most important. The recent refusal by 12 *gram sabhas* in Odisha to allow Vedanta corporation to mine bauxite from their hills and forest lands, and similar actions by other communities in many parts of the world, have shown the potential of local, direct democracy. Villages impacted by waste dumping from nearby cities (e.g. Devachi Urali near Pune) are also increasingly protesting such stinking imposition by their more powerful neighbours. The more such resistance takes place, and the more the victims are empowered by policies such as the requirement of free prior informed consent and the conditions of self-reliance and self-governance (*swaraj*), the more difficult it will be for the rich to extract or dump what they want wherever they want.[1] On a broader level, the extraction of labour surplus in a capitalist economy, one of the foundations of the enormous profits that some are able to make, requires resistance from the labouring classes (including women) and more democratic modes and ownership of production (on which a bit more, later in this essay).

A potentially strong measure to achieve consumption limits would be to provide upper limits to incomes and wealth. Some civil society organisations do this voluntarily. They impose both an upper limit of salary or honorarium because it is considered profligate for someone to earn more, and a minimum ratio between and maximum and minimum pay to reduce the levels of inequity. Governments too set limits, though these are based more on what is affordable rather than on considerations like personal profligacy and equity. The private sector and the world of virtual incomes have hardly any such limits, as is clear from the obscenely high incomes or returns that CEOs and investors around the world take home. A path-breaking national referendum on limiting pay in Switzerland in 2014 (with top executives not getting more than 12 times the lowest paid employee) was defeated by the private sector saying it would reduce the country's competitiveness and cut tax revenues; nevertheless the fact that a referendum was held and received considerable support (about 35% of the vote) is a hopeful sign (Hooper 2013).

Inevitably this is also linked to questioning the very fundamentals of today's model of 'development' and growth, and the political economy of both capitalism and state socialism as also the much older inequities of patriarchy. These are all based on ignoring the ecological limits that the earth places on us, not to mention the serious inequalities of power and wealth such models inevitably result in. And arguments that technology will provide ways out of the limits the environment places on us, have repeatedly been shown to be false. It is therefore crucial to envision fundamentally transformative pathways of well-being, on which there is considerable work already in various parts of India. But this is not the place to go further into this complex subject, it is only necessary to flag it here to put the ASCL into a macro-context.[2]

---

[1] For some discussion related to this, see Kothari 2014.

Of utmost importance is reigning in the advertising industry, and other ways that companies push their products, including the use of mass media, movies, celebrities, fashion shows, professionals, and so on. Civil society naming and shaming of companies that use unethical means of various kinds to create consumerist demand, such as for instance done by forums like Adbusters, is one method. But government regulation will also be necessary, at least till social pressure and monitoring are adequate. Prohibitive taxation on luxury and wasteful items, till such products exist, would also be required, taking care that these are not misused by the rich to avoid becoming responsible consumers. Then, as a part of the restructuring and reinvention of education and learning (towards creating responsible and self-thinking adults rather than willing cogs in the system), curricula and materials have to be made sensitive to these issues.

Should some form of 'consumption trading' be allowed, in which individuals and families can use the quota of those who voluntarily agree to use less that what they are entitled to, like carbon trading? I would not recommend this, considering the widespread and systematic abuse of the carbon trading mechanisms (or related ones like clean development mechanism). Market-based measures have a way of being hijacked and distorted by the powerful, and in any case are a bit like asking the crime mafia to regulate itself!

---

[2] For some views on fundamental alternatives to development, see Kothari 2014, and Kothari et al 2015.

Unfair and Unfeasible?

Most readers will think that these ideas are downright unfair, and impossible to implement. There will be the inevitable outcry regarding the supposed infringement of private or personal freedoms, and the restrictions on what are claimed to be 'deserved' renumeration and compensation. But keep in mind that such freedoms cannot be a license for trashing the earth, or taking up more than one's fair share of the earth's resources thereby depriving someone (or something) else. In so far as overconsumption leaves other people impoverished, or results in ecological catastrophes that leave others homeless or dead, or snatches away the space of other species to survive, it is akin to theft or murder. Consider the movement against smoking in public, so successful in so many countries; if over-consumption of any product is socially harmful, why should it be tolerated in the name of personal freedom?

For forest-dwellers in India, it would seem equally unfair that they can take out firewood only as much as they can lift on the head, when they could be cutting much more to sell. Those of us who make environmental policy (forest-dwellers rarely do!) think it is justified to put this limit, because the forest needs to be protected from over-harvesting. But then why not the same for our consumption, which has an equally if not worse impact, albeit often in far-away ecosystems invisible to us?

As for being impossible to implement, that's a function of governance, and of convincing people that this is for their (our) own good—or at least the good of our children. Ultimately, more than laws and regulations, it will be awareness and concern about our collective future, social compacts and customs, and peer pressure, that will make the ASCL system work. A culture of 'enoughness' (*aparigraha*) rather than 'more and more', creating conditions for people to achieve happiness and satisfaction through affective relations (with the rest of nature and other humans), the celebration of voluntary simplicity (not to be equated with poverty) rather than profligacy, a respect for other humans and the rest of nature such that we continuously, almost subconsciously assess the impacts of our actions on them, creating awareness that it is not the earth's resources and material goods that are in unlimited abundance (the supermarket syndrome) but rather the human potential in intellectual, cultural, and social development which do not require us to trash the earth ... these and other aspects need to be the basis of a powerful culture and psyche underlying our lives and lifestyles.[3] Then, we will be looking at our neighbour with envy if they are BSCL (yes, you guessed it, Below Sustainable Consumption Line) while we are still that little bit profligate.

Will the Middle Classes Adopt a SCL?

To any observer, it is obvious that a SCL like measure will not go down well with the rich in India, and perhaps especially the middle classes as they aspire to move even further up the economic and social ladder. But the middle classes are internally diverse, and there are many sources of hope, and avenues of influence, that could be used for making the SCL more palatable and implementable.

Firstly, there appears to be a growing ecological awareness and concomitant concern in the middle classes. An explosion in information and news regarding the environment, the inclusion of environmental issues in school and college curricula, and other factors have contributed to this. A substantial section of the civil society active on environmental issues is from the middle classes. By no means are all environmental CSOs (civil society organisation) sensitive to the complex issues of social injustice and inequalities; many are abysmally ignorant of the condition of marginalised people like Dalits, many even advocate policies that cause further marginalisation such as exclusionary wildlife conservation. By the same token, many such CSOs do not strive for fundamental structural changes in society (or even having an understanding of these as driving forces of ecological destruction), with many restricting themselves to reformist and often superficial solutions. But there are indeed sections of environmental CSOs that do confront the system or ally with peoples' movements who do, and that argue for an environmentalism inclusive of the rights of the marginalised. One can, of course, question whether the radical elements within civil society can still be called a part of the middle classes, but that depends on one's conception of what constitutes a class, and I won't get into that complex issue here.

---

[3] I am aware these are complex issues and need more detailed treatment, but am leaving that for another occasion; for the moment I would point to the following sources for thoughtful commentaries: Cox 2013, Sterling 2016 (and accompanying comments), Alexander and McLeod 2014.

An issue raised in some circles is whether a Green Party can be successful in India, as it has (partially) been in some countries of Europe. Lahiri (2015) argues that some parties may become green as middle class attitudes towards the environment get stronger, but that they will be more reformist than radical, which I agree with. I am not sure, however, how this squares with his view that middle classes have a "strong commitment to ... social justice, grass roots democracy, non-violence, and respect for diversity"; if indeed they did (especially to justice and grass roots democracy), they would be much more open to radical ecological ideas, for in a country like India where the majority of people have day-to-day and survival dependence on the natural environment, there is no way to separate political, economic, social, and ecological issues. I doubt that the majority of the middle classes are today, or will be in the near future, ready for a system in which community consent is needed for all development projects (which would surely be an essential tenet of 'grass roots democracy').

Nevertheless, I believe there is a fringe but strong (and widening) part of the middle classes that are willing to be radical. An example of this reality or potential is the continuing support that Greenpeace India is receiving, despite a head-on attack by the government that has dubbed it 'anti-national' and 'anti-development' and tried shutting it down in recent times. Rather than get scared by such tactics, over 60,000 people have continued to provide the organisation their financial support, and many more their support in campaigns. It is also indicated by the outbreak of support (notably from many middle class youth) for students and others persecuted by the state when they have tried to raise critical political voices (e.g. the ongoing issue, even as I write this in early 2016, of the JNU students charged with sedition). Not all these people will come out on the streets for open protests, nor would all be aware of or empathetic to environment-rights-justice links and the plight of marginalised populations. But arguably, many of them are or would be open to supporting such radical agendas.

At both individual and collective level, parts of the middle classes are also challenging and asking for changes in consumerist patterns. This includes simple personal actions such as seeking out organic food (outlets for which have sprung up in many cities), or switching to ecologically sensitive household products (increasingly being produced by many collectives), or doing rooftop gardening (Bangalore has 10,000 households doing this), or composting one's wet waste. It also includes more collective actions such as neighbourhood water recycling and renewable energy production (Rainbow Drive in Bangalore is a good example), helping communities to make producer companies or consumer-producer-investor links to promote sustainable agriculture and other livelihoods (e.g. the individuals who catalysed Just Change in the Nilgiris, and Timbaktu Collective in Andhra Pradesh), and helping marginalised sections to mobilise for more equitable distribution of resources and greater local community controls (such as civil society organisations facilitating community claims under the Forest Rights Act). It could also be doing research on how to cut down consumption demand through technological or policy innovations, such as less energy-guzzling appliances and more ecofriendly architecture, and advocating relevant policies and programmes; a recent Indo-German collaborative report identifies several such topics for further work (Lehman and Chella Rajan 2015). And it needs to transform the consumer movement (if it can be called such) in India from one focusing on prices and quality to one that also demands fairness, ecological principles, and justice to be embedded in products and services that are accessed by consumers.

There is of course a danger that some of these actions become a substitute for the fundamental structural changes required to make society more ecologically sustainable and socially just, or at times even make it worse by allowing the rich to live healthier lifestyles while the poor are condemned to degrading ones (the poor in cities are forced to eat junk food which ironically is cheaper than organic food!). It is important that they be located within movements of fundamental transformation towards radical democracy, economic localisation and community/public control over means of production, cultural diversity, knowledge commons and other actions leading to a future of eco-swaraj or radical ecological democracy (Shrivastava and Kothari 2012, Kothari 2014). One of the earliest reports to focus on consumption in the Asian region also stressed the need for "a more holistic approach towards sustainable consumption ... (which) rejects the notion that eco-innovation or greening the consumer should be the main focus of sustainable consumption in Asia, and essentially proposes that the primary goal of sustainable consumption should be to assure quality of life for all. It suggests that sustainable consumption planning should target to enable well-being and ensure happiness for all people ... (and) argues that sustainable consumption needs to be discussed in the interest of half of the world's population that are in poverty, while addressing the over consumption issues of the developed countries" (de Zoysa 2007, bracketed text added).

But can the middle classes be part of a transformation that would mean the erasure of the middle classes themselves (if a classless society is part of the end-goal), or at the least a considerable reduction in inequities which could include restrictions on the wealth of the rich? This is a question I am unable to answer, except to say that I do believe sections of the middle classes could and indeed have to be part of this transformation.

A crucial component of the above is greater awareness of the impacts of the lifestyles of the rich, and greater dialogue and engagement of the middle classes with marginalised sections of society. Several organisations are attempting such processes, including amongst the youth of cities and villages. One of the platforms of dialogue that promotes sharing and collaboration around alternatives in a range of fields is Vikalp Sangam, initiated by several civil society organisations.[4] Such processes hope to not only point to the problems and crises we face, but also to alternatives, both practical for individuals and collectives, as also conceptual and visionary leading to structural transformations in economic, political and social spheres.

---

[4] *http://www.kalpavriksh.org/index.php/alternatives/alternatives-knowledge-center/353-vikalp-sangam-coverage*

References

Alexander, S. and A. McLeod (2014). *Simple Living in History: Pioneers of the Deep Future.* Melbourne: Simplicity Institute Publishing.

Ananthapadmanabhan, G., K. Srinivas and V. Gopal (2007). *Hiding Behind the Poor: A Report by Greenpeace on Climate Injustice.* Bangalore: Greenpeace India.

Cox, S. (2013). *Any Way You Slice It: The Past, Present and Future of Rationing.* New York: The New Press.

de Zoysa, U. (2007). *Sustainable Consumption: An Asian Review.* Colombo: Centre for Environment and Development.

Hooper, J. (2013). "Switzerland Votes against Cap on Executive Pay", *The Guardian*, 24 November. *http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/24/switzerland-votes-against-cap-executive-pay*

Kothari, A. (2014). "Radical Ecological Democracy: A Path Forward for India and Beyond", *Development* 57(1): 36-45. *http://www.palgrave-journals.com/development/journal/v57/n1/full/dev201443a.html*

Kothari, A., F. Demaria and A. Acosta (2015). "Buen Vivir, Degrowth and Ecological Swaraj: Alternatives to Sustainable Development and the Green Economy", *Development* 57(3-4): 362-75. *http://www.palgrave-journals.com/development/journal/v57/n3-4/full/dev201524a.html*

Lahiri, A.K. (2015). "Green Politics and the Indian Middle Class", *Economic and Political Weekly* 1(43): 35-42, 24 October.

Lehman, H. and S. Chella Rajan (2015). *Sustainable Lifestyles: Pathways and Choices for India and Germany.* Berlin: Indo-German Expert Group on Green and Inclusive Economy, GIZ.

Shrivastava, A. and A. Kothari (2012). *Churning the Earth: The Making of Global India.* Delhi: Viking/Penguin India.

Sterling, P. (2016). *Why we Consume: Neural Design and Sustainability.* Great Transition Initiative. *http://www.greattransition.org/publication/why-we-consume*

Others:

Global Footprint Network. *http://www.footprintnetwork.org/*

Vikalp Sangam. Alternatives India. *http://www.vikalpsangam.org/*