

For developing countries, economic development needs to be a higher priority than environmental protection and conservation of natural resources.

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Economic development may be the best path toward environmental protection.

But what if there are real tradeoffs to be made?

How to electrify Africa?

Can Africa avoid building coal-fired power plants?

Should African leaders trade off electricity production for environmental protection?

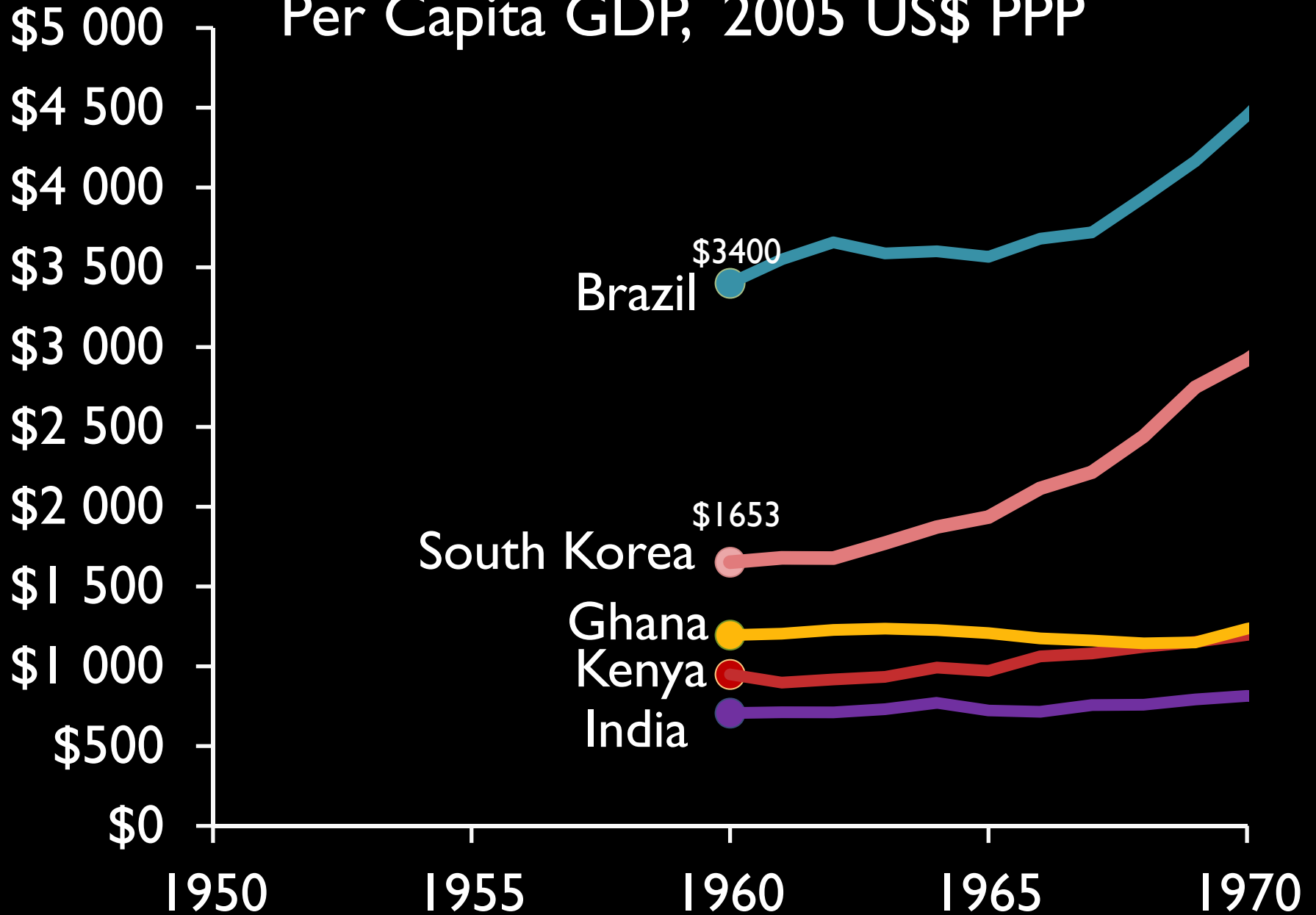
Economic development must be the priority.

What will people think 50 years from now about the decisions we make today?

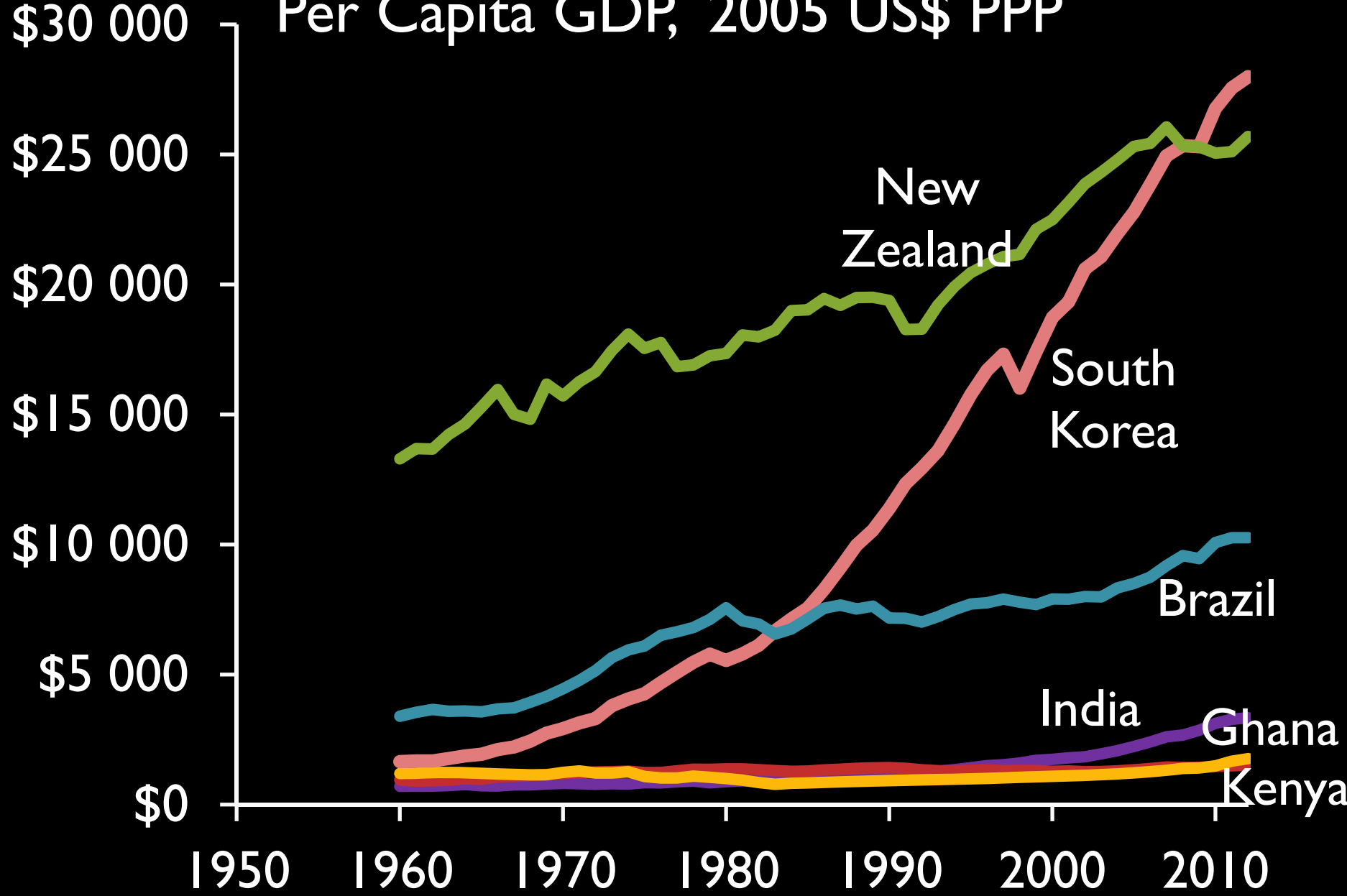
What do we think about the decisions made 50 years ago?

Consider the case of South Korea.

Per Capita GDP, 2005 US\$ PPP



Per Capita GDP, 2005 US\$ PPP



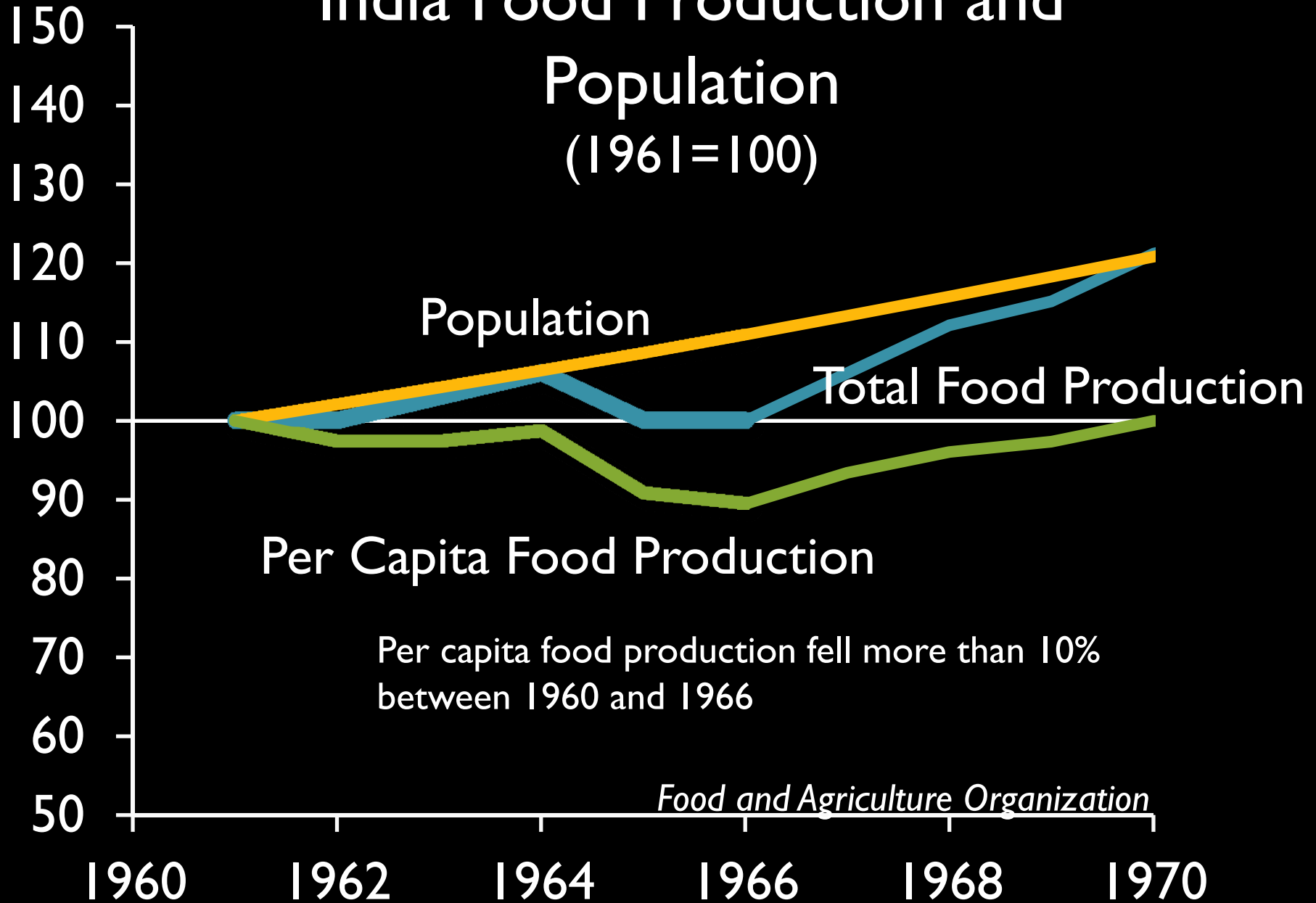
How should today's Korean young people feel about the investment in economic development made fifty years ago?

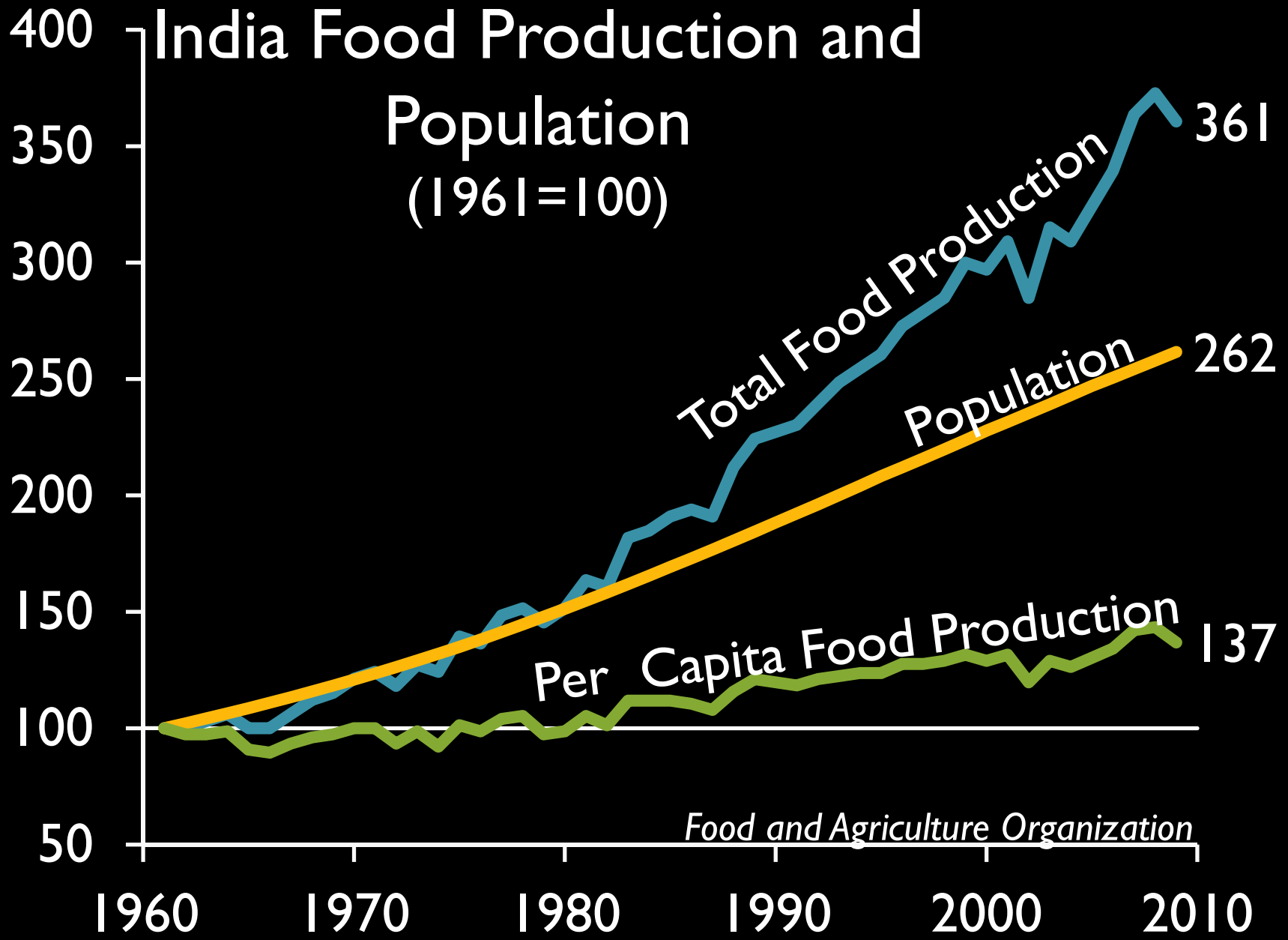
In addition to its high standard of living, South Korea is much better placed to address environmental issues than is Kenya, Ghana, or India.

Suppose you were the Minister of Agriculture in India in 1966.

Should you have encouraged Green Revolution technologies, or should you have resisted them because they might not be a sustainable technology?

India Food Production and Population (1961=100)





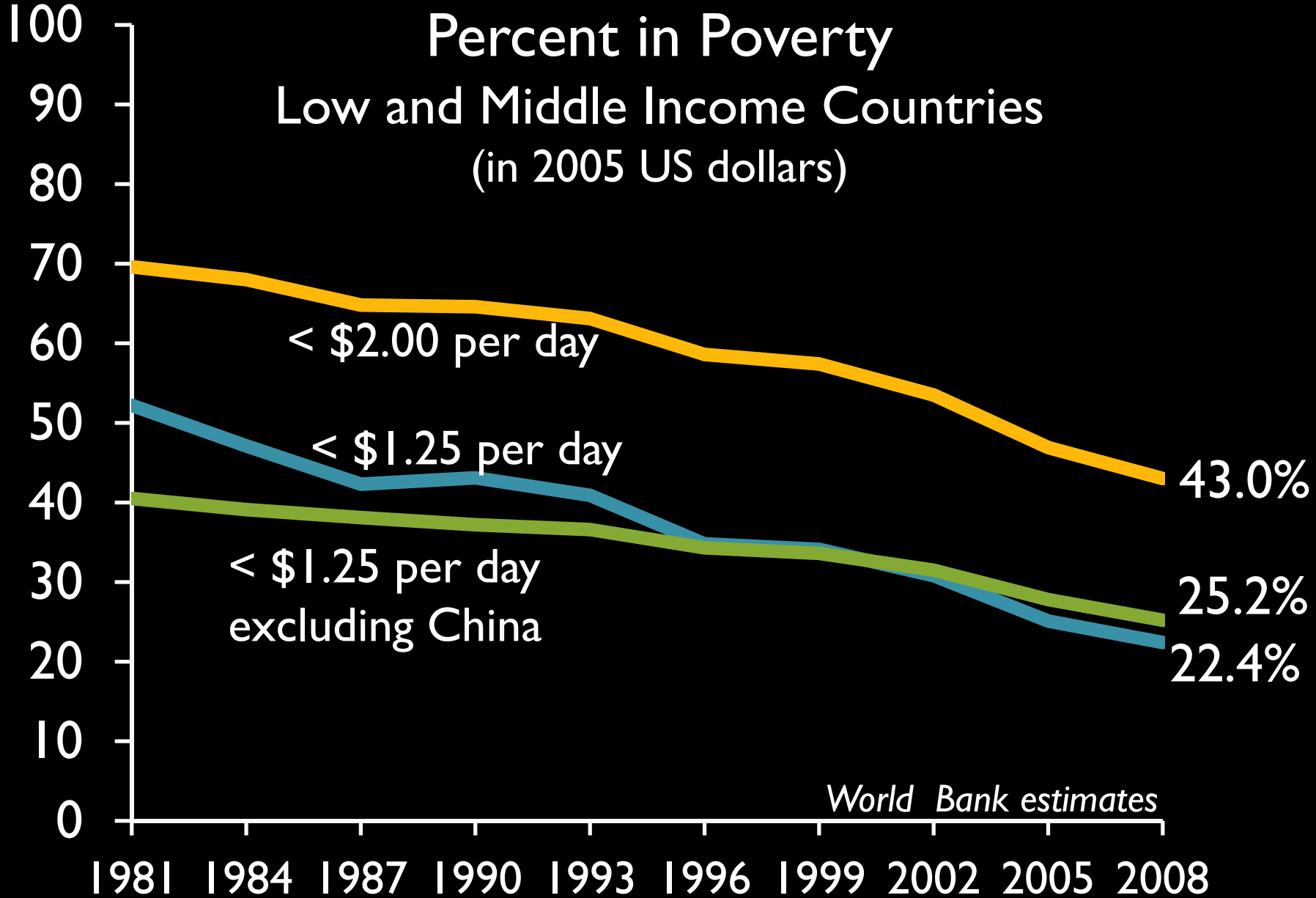
Green Revolution technologies saved millions of lives and lifted millions of people out of poverty.

We now have to deal with the environmental consequences, but could we have made any other decision in 1966?

Economic development in the last 50 years has produced the biggest declines in poverty the world has ever seen.

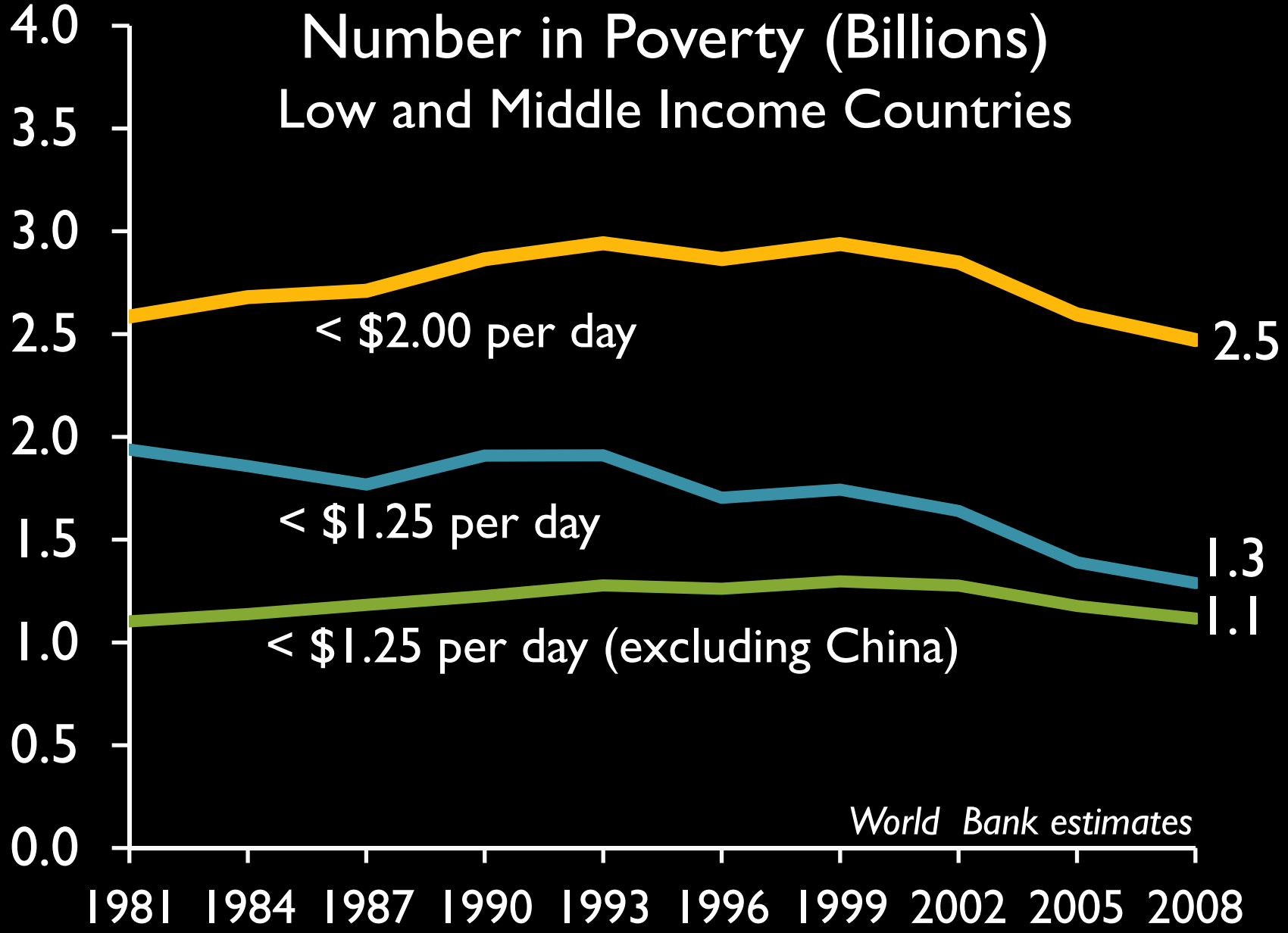
Percent in Poverty

Low and Middle Income Countries
(in 2005 US dollars)



World Bank estimates

Number in Poverty (Billions) Low and Middle Income Countries



World Bank estimates

An area of agreement:

Development policy and resource management

- Good economic development policy must look at resource issues, especially when markets may not work.
- Water: We won't continue reducing poverty or feed another 4 billion people without addressing the overuse of aquifers.
- This would be a critical area even if population growth and consumption levels were frozen at current levels.

- Economic development is the best path toward environmental protection.
- Economic development requires sound resource management.
- Economic development must be the top priority of developing countries.