

Science Capital  
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**“Rebuilding Brisbane and Rebuilding The Mind”**

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# The Australian Challenge: A World Challenge

Politics, Democracy, Resilience, Science and Change





“We’re rich. Rolling-in-it rich.

According to the Reserve Bank a shipload of rusty red dirt five years ago would have bought 2200 flat screen tellies, now it buys 22,000. And, we’re paying off personal and government debt at the rate of 12% per annum.”

Australian Financial Review, 28-29 May 2011

‘All 17 economic groups in Australia have higher disposable incomes in 2011-12 than in 2007-8’.

Brian Toohey, AFR, 28-29 May 2011

Australia:

Human Development Index: 2 (UNDP)

Democracy Index: 1 (Economist)  
(22 m > 15 parliaments > 1 politician/10k voters)

Economic stability: 1 (IMF)

Carbon emissions per capita: worst (IPCC)

Greatest natural capital resources in world per capita

‘If everyone lived like Australians then global consumption would rise from 7 bn to 72 bn. If it took place over the next 40 years we are talking about 105 bn people.’

*The New North: The World In 2050*

Laurence Smith quoted in John Gray AFR 21 April 2011



## Brisbane

2006: City offers to buy out anyone living in the flood area at market price because of warnings about the next flood (January 2010): 10% accept offer

2011: Liveability > 60.2%

Good public transport > 45%

Good road network and minimal congestion > 21%

Property Council of Australia and Auspoll,  
The Australian, 22-23/1 2011

## Rio Tinto (2010)

‘The Anglo-Australian mining giant revealed an almost tripling in annual net profit this week to \$14.32 billion US dollars as commodity prices skyrocketed on strong demand.’

13 February 2011 Sydney Morning Herald

Tom Albanese  
Chair, Rio Tinto (2010)

‘The issue is how to make public and private policy  
for something that won’t really impact us for 30 to 40  
years.’