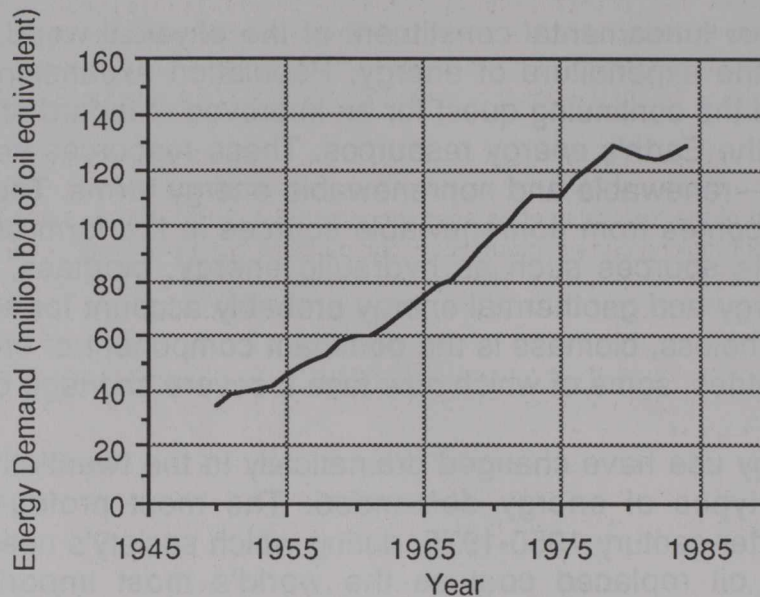


Figure 1: The Global Demand for Commercial Primary Energy



Notes: 1. Recent U.N. data are given in millions of tonnes of oil equivalent and are here converted to millions of barrels of oil equivalent, using the approximate conversion factor 1 tonne of oil = 7.33 barrels. Older U.N. data are given only in millions of tonnes of coal equivalent and have been converted to oil equivalent using 1 tonne of coal equivalent \times 0.687623 = 1 tonne of oil equivalent.

2. U.N. data include unallocated energy use – which primarily refers to data that cannot be attributed to one of the solid, liquid, gaseous or electrical energy categories – and the non-energy use of petroleum. Consumption also includes international aviation and marine bunkers.

Source: United Nations, 1986, p. 33; 1984, p. 51; 1983, p. 93; 1981, p. 39; and 1976, p. 2-3.

Global energy demand rose throughout the postwar era until the second oil price shock of 1979-80, which temporarily reduced demand and caused a substantial drop in oil consumption in the industrialized world. It remains to be seen how much the exponential rate of growth in energy consumption, which characterized the 1950-1973 period, has been permanently modified. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987, p. 172) has observed that the continuation of these earlier high rates of growth in energy use would magnify four particularly disturbing environmental concerns:

- the likelihood of climatic change generated by the "greenhouse effect" of gases emitted to the atmosphere, the most important of which is carbon dioxide produced from the combustion of fossil fuels;