

Ecotopia:



Everyone accepts climate change as inevitable, and because we still want economic growth, we adopt a low-carbon economy. The government encourages us to consume less and people appreciate the natural environment more. New legislation around energy and water is strongly enforced – there's universal water metering. The region's waterways become vital sources of renewable energy – through microhydro generation and larger tidal power initiatives. The rising cost of fertilisers helps reduce diffuse pollution, which improves water quality.

DIY:



The recession of 2009 becomes a long economic depression, made worse by rising energy costs. Frequent extreme weather events raise awareness of climate change, but cash-strapped governments can't respond to the threat. People leave our cities, believing that small, rural communities will cope better with environmental problems. Local food production is encouraged, as are traditionally economically productive industries like petrochemicals as a way out of recession. This results in more diffuse and point-source pollution incidents. The government is reluctant to regulate, for fear of limiting economic recovery.

Technofix:



New water technologies emerge, improving water quality and delivery. However, these developments encourage people to believe that technology will solve all our environmental problems, so our behaviour doesn't change. The government are reluctant to introduce measures like water metering for the public, so new legislation and regulation is aimed at the private sector. Real-time water quality monitoring allows for more effective regulation. There's a boom in environmental technology industries in the Mersey basin.

Troubled Waters:



Following three dry summers the Northwest experiences a severe drought, then an exceptionally wet winter with large scale flooding. The government continues to prioritise economic growth, with a lack of regulation and no action on climate change. People aren't interested in environmental issues. Material consumption is high, but so is social inequality because the Northwest has seen significant climate change immigration. Domestic food production increases to feed the extra mouths, causing more diffuse pollution. Lack of foresight and poor infrastructure leaves the government unable to respond to mounting climate change impacts.