Van Doesum et al. (1) report a positive correlation between social mindfulness and national environmental performance represented by the Environmental Performance Index (EPI), that is, a higher EPI for countries with higher scores of social mindfulness (SoMi). This result comes at a crucial time, as it highlights the relationship between people’s mindset (culture) and environmental sustainability.

Nevertheless, we have identified two issues with their analysis. The first issue is that Van Doesum et al. (1) fail to consider differences in GDP per capita among countries: The identified correlation between SoMi and EPI might be a statistical artifact. Indeed, we found positive correlations of GDP per capita with both SoMi and EPI for countries with GDP per capita less than $20,000. When using data for countries with GDP per capita greater than $20,000, the correlation between SoMi and EPI becomes weak ($r = 0.199$ with a 95% bootstrapping CI of $[-0.230, 0.569]$; Fig. 1A). The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.199$) is much smaller than that for the relationship without considering the variations in GDP per capita among countries ($r = 0.594$). Our findings thus suggest that the relationship between SoMi and EPI reported by Van Doesum et al. may be a statistical artifact, and therefore we should use caution when considering the results.

The second issue of Van Doesum et al.’s (1) analysis is that it uses an environmental index that prioritizes local environmental sustainability over global environmental sustainability (i.e., EPI). A country that performs well according to EPI could have detrimental impacts on global environmental sustainability (e.g., high CO$_2$ emissions). The shift in perspectives is crucial as the world faces the climate crisis on a global scale. We thus replace EPI used by Van Doesum et al. with 1) EPI that was revised recently to emphasize global sustainability by including the magnitude of CO$_2$ emissions as one component (2), 2) Ecological Footprint of Consumption (EF) that has been traditionally used to assess global sustainability (3), and 3) planetary

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**Fig. 1.** Relationships of social mindfulness (SoMi) with (A) the original EPI, (B) revised EPI, and (C) 2017 EF for countries with GDP per capita greater than $20,000. A solid line denotes the regression line determined by the least-squares method. The samples are those used in figure 2 of Van Doesum et al. (1) and with GDP per capita greater than $20,000. A also includes data for countries with GDP per capita less than $20,000, for comparison (crosses). We use 2016 International Monetary Fund GDP per capita data included in SI Appendix of Van Doesum et al. (1).

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boundaries that were recently proposed to assess global sustainability more comprehensively (4).

Interestingly, the correlation between SoMi and revised EPI is stronger than that between SoMi and the original EPI (Fig. 1B and Table 1). More importantly, we find even stronger correlations of SoMi with EF and with many of the planetary boundary indicators (Fig. 1C and Table 1). It is true that none of the relationships are statistically significant, possibly due to the small sample size. However, effect sizes (i.e., the absolute value of \( r \)) are not small for EF and four planetary boundary indicators (i.e., CO2 emissions, phosphorus, freshwater use, and land system change). Our findings suggest SoMi can be a useful predictor for achieving global sustainability, rather than local sustainability. Our findings and those reported in several recent studies (5, 6) thus further underscore that people’s mindset is perhaps even more important than Van Doesum et al. (1) suggest, particularly when we turn attention to combating climate crisis and environmental problems at a global scale.

**Data Availability.** There are no original data underlying this work. Only previously published data were used for this study (1–4).

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Table 1. Correlations between SoMi and indicators that emphasize global environmental sustainability

| Index                  | Correlation coefficient (r) | 95% bootstrapping CI          |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Revised EPI            | 0.272                       | [−0.006, 0.707]               |
| EF                     | −0.406                      | [−0.769, 0.126]               |
| Planetary boundaries   |                             |                               |
| CO₂ emissions          | −0.383                      | [−0.640, 0.049]               |
| Phosphorus             | −0.330                      | [−0.706, 0.223]               |
| Nitrogen               | −0.194                      | [−0.657, 0.465]               |
| Freshwater use         | −0.355                      | [−0.704, 0.046]               |
| Land-system change     | −0.326                      | [−0.747, 0.073]               |
| Material footprint     | −0.232                      | [−0.615, 0.193]               |

The sample sizes are 19 for all cases.

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