



ASIAN TRANSFORMATIONS

Some Discussant's Comments

Will Martin

International Food Policy Research Institute

Helsinki | 14 September 2018

Myrdal Perspectives

- Need for multidisciplinary
- Historical legacies
 - ethnic and religious diversity
- Democracy, governance and economic performance

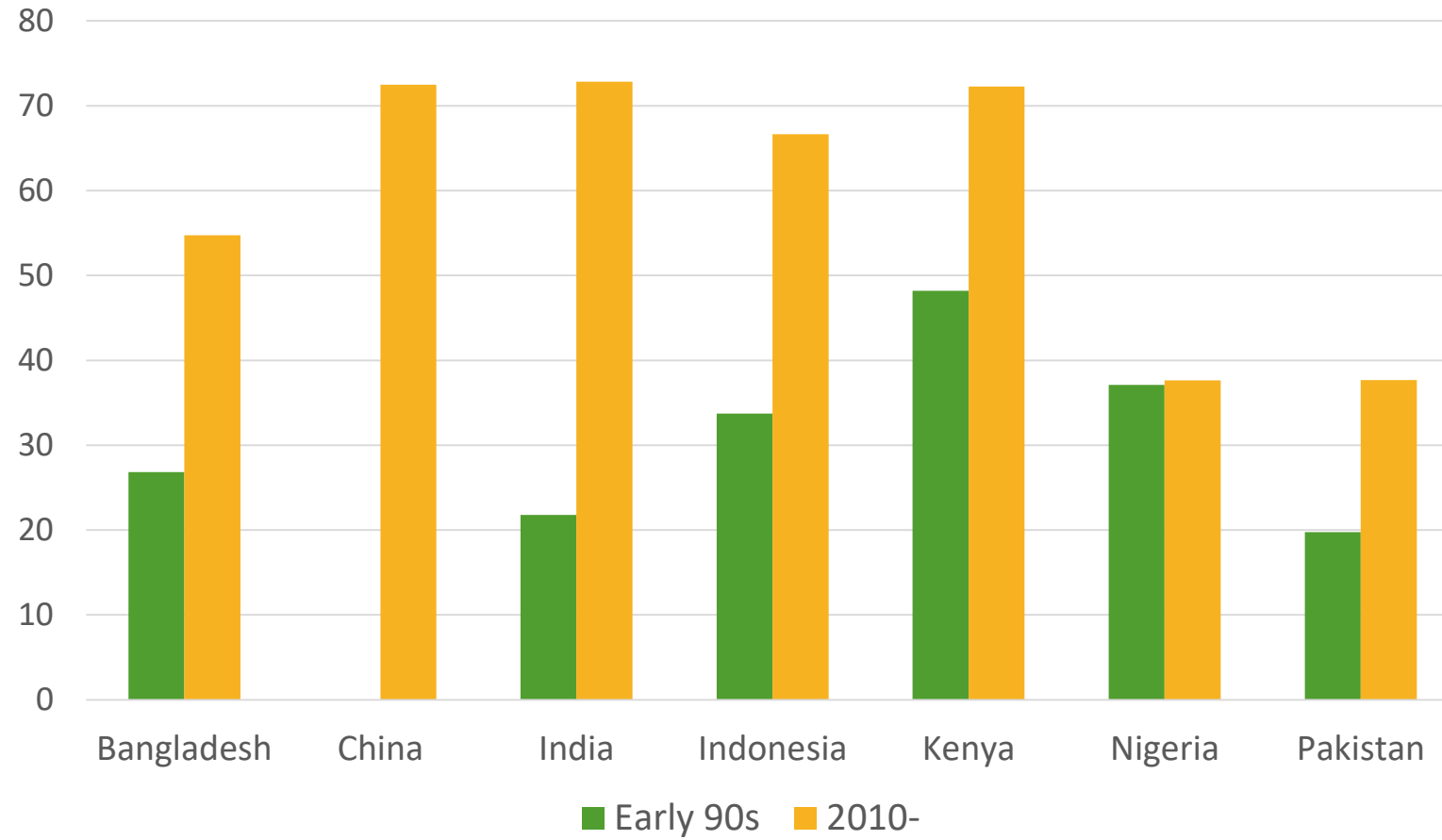
Some Other Key Myrdal Perspectives

- Economic development requires a slowdown in population growth
- Traditional views and limited education a brake on growth
- Low agricultural productivity is central to low incomes and poverty
- Slow economic growth

Fertility Rate: Children per Woman

	1965	2016
Bangladesh	6.9	2.1
Cambodia	6.9	2.6
China	6.4	1.6
High income	2.9	1.7
India	5.8	2.3
Indonesia	5.6	2.4
Lao PDR	6.0	2.7
Malaysia	5.9	2.0
Myanmar	6.1	2.2
Pakistan	6.6	3.5
Philippines	6.8	2.9
Singapore	4.7	1.2
Sub Saharan Africa	6.7	4.8
Thailand	6.1	1.5

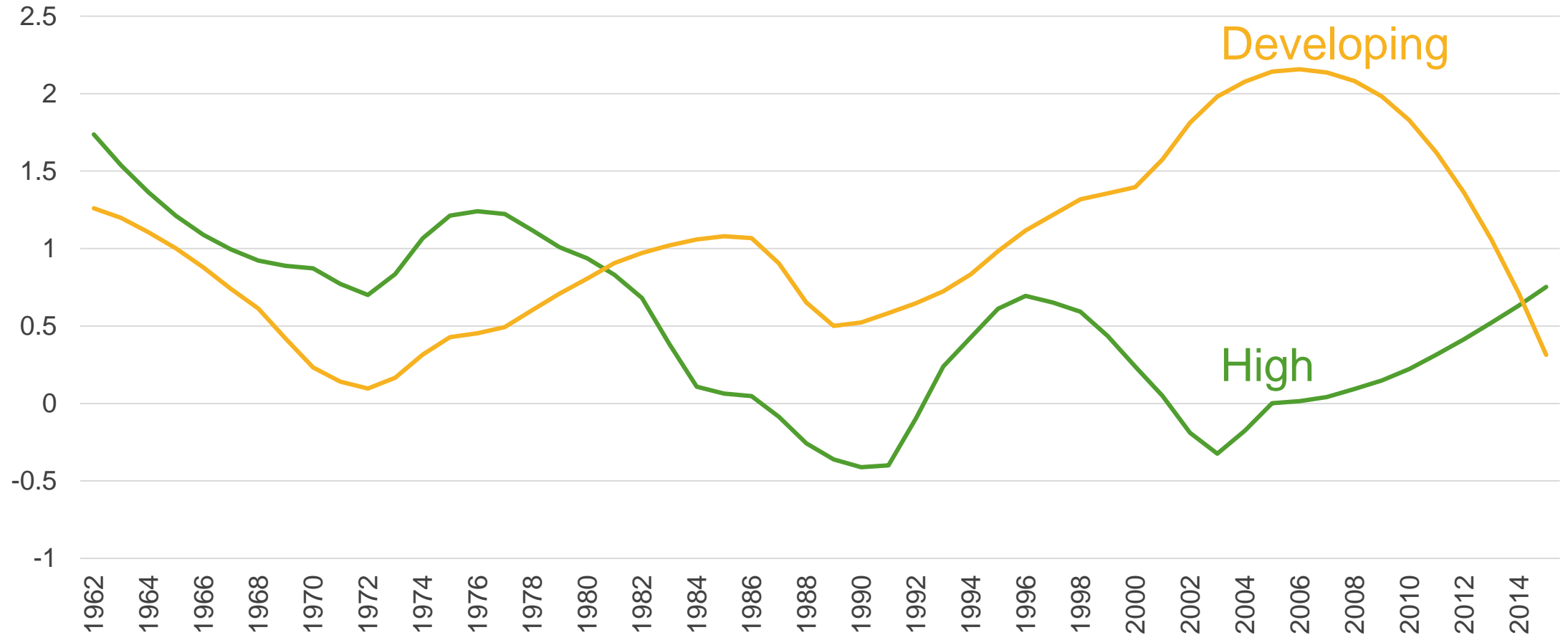
Completion rates, lower secondary school, rural areas, %



Source: UNESCO



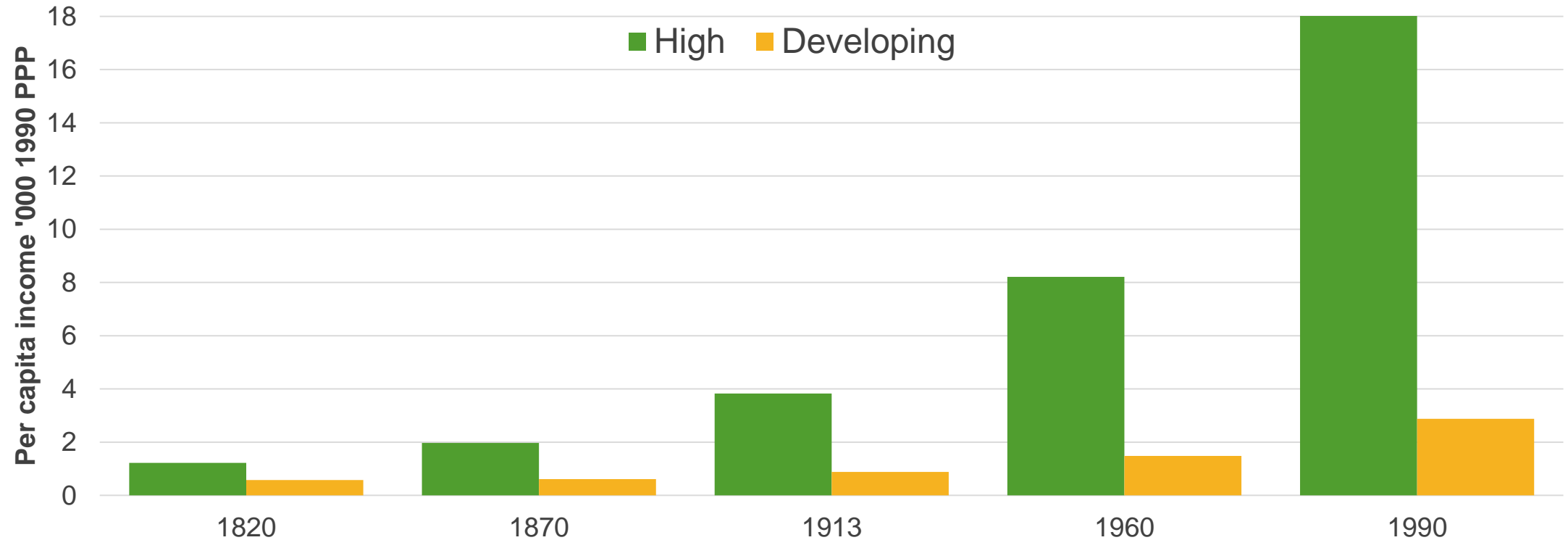
GROWTH IN AGRIC OUTPUT PER CAPITA



Source: FAO data on output at world prices, smoothed using LOESS Regression

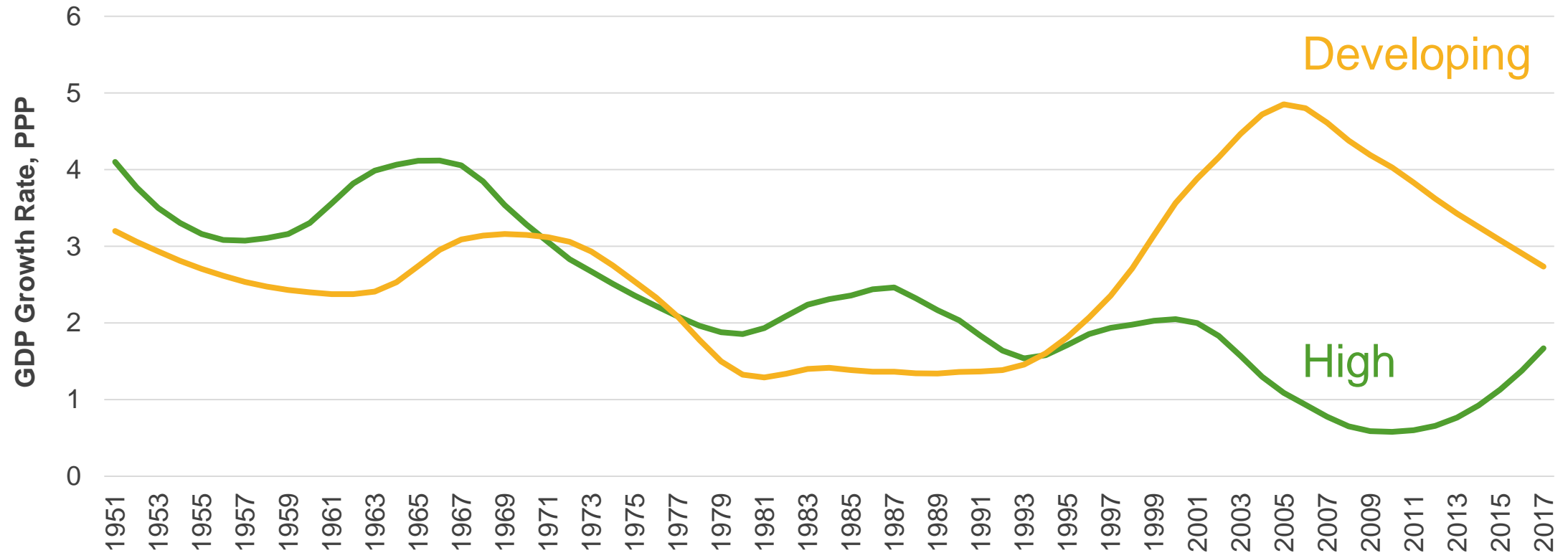


ECONOMIC DIVERGENCE “BIG TIME” 1820–1990



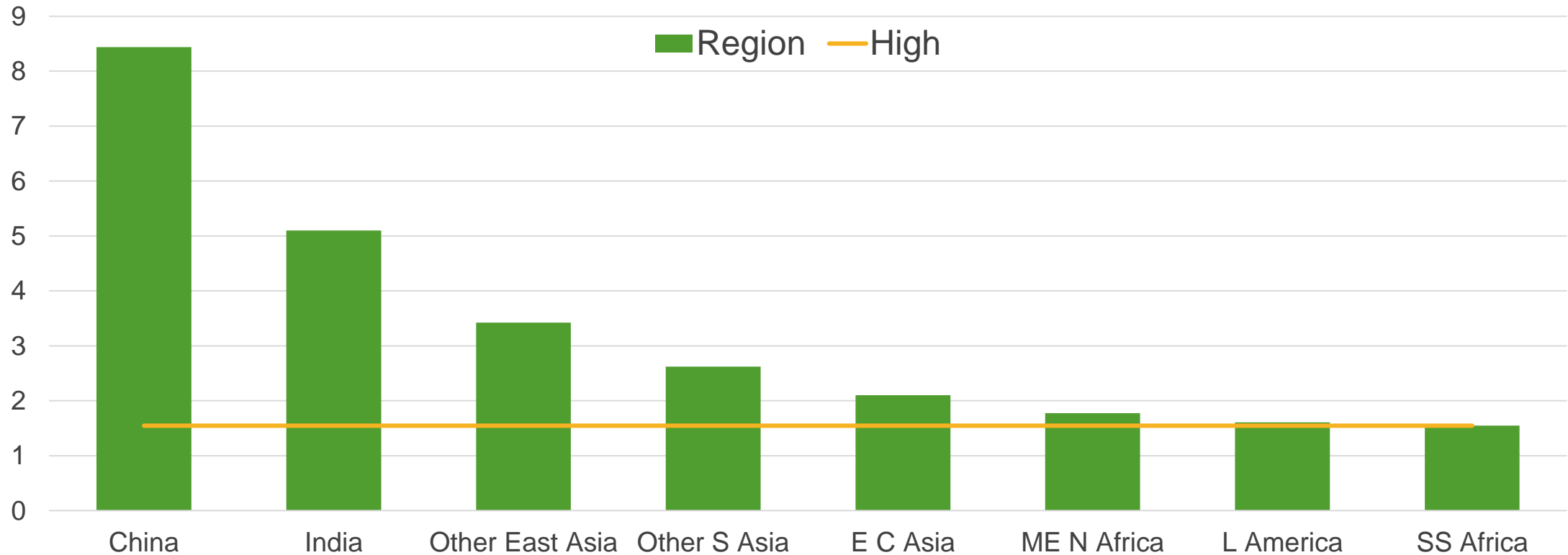
Average growth: High inc.: 1.6% pa Developing: 0.9% pa.

MUCH HIGHER GROWTH IN POOR COUNTRIES 1993–2017



Developed: Aus, Can, Jpn, NZ, US, W. Europe

PARTICULARLY RAPID GROWTH IN ASIA



Source: WDI, 1991–2016

Asian Transformations

- Asia has been transformed since Myrdal wrote
- Some areas of great concern to Myrdal have turned out well
 - Demography and population
 - Education and economic dynamism
 - Agricultural productivity
- New data shed light where Myrdal could not see
 - Long term divergence followed by rapid convergence