Exciting New Ad Campaign

We are thrilled to begin an exciting ad campaign this fall. We have received special funding to run this and other ads in several Minnesota publications, including tpt Magazine and the programs of the Guthrie Theater, Minnesota Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and other organizations. These full-color ads will gain much attention with many who already are familiar with our messages run earlier on public radio.

We are eager to create new ads every month, and we are refreshing our website to tie in more closely with these ads. We need your help now.

To run these powerful messages we need funds beyond our modest annual budget of only $60,000 in recent years. If you would like to help us publish these ads, please donate an additional tax-deductible contribution above your usual amount. You will make an incredible difference! Thank you.

Help Save Us Money: Renew Your Membership Today

Our membership year begins every summer, and you can help save us money. Since it has been our policy to send only one membership renewal letter per year, you can help us save the expense of mailing you our annual renewal letter by sending in your tax deductible contribution today. Every dollar we save from the cost of this mailing is another dollar we can put into population education.

Your contributions are urgently needed at this time. It is essential that we replace some foundation support that has ended.

Here’s to a sustainable planet!
Thank you.

Current Population is 3x Sustainable Level

Current global population of over 6.6 billion is already two to three times higher than the sustainable level. Several recent studies show that Earth’s resources are enough to sustain only about 2 billion people at a European standard of living. An average European consumes far more resources than any of the poorest two billion people in the world. However, Europeans use only about half the resources of Americans, on average.

Currently the 6.6 billion of us are consuming about 25% more resources than Earth is producing – during any given time period. For example, in the past twelve months we have consumed the resources that it took the planet about fifteen months to produce. We are consuming our resource base. Obviously, this 25% overshoot is not sustainable. Another crucial point to understand is this: the longer we over-shoot and consume more resources than the sustainable level, the more the long-term “sustainable level” actually declines!

One illustration of this is what’s actually been happening to fresh water aquifers all around the world. Currently over half of us are in countries where aquifers are being over-pumped. As “fossil” aquifers are pumped, that water is not replaced. So when that water is depleted, pumping ends since there is no more water flowing in.

Non-fossil aquifers have a “recharge rate” – the rate at which new, fresh water flows in. As long as water is pumped out at or below the recharge rate, the aquifer will continue

Continued on page 8

For detailed information about global sustainability issues, visit http://www.footprintnetwork.org/gfn_sub.php?content=datamethods and select “2006 Report.”
David, how do you keep going?

How do you keep working on this issue, especially when so many “leaders” and others ignore it? Many ask me this question. At times I do find it challenging to stay energized when nearly all elected “leaders” abdicate from true leadership on what, arguably, is the single greatest problem we face in this century.

We are consuming many of our vital resources faster than they can be replenished. This is unsustainable and cannot continue for much longer. For those of you who have been reading Balanced View, that’s information you’ve seen many times before. What is new in our message is clearly saying the following: there are two to three times more people already on the planet than its resources can adequately provide for. Therefore, if we want to leave a viable planet for our children’s children, we need to humanely reduce birth rates below death rates so that human numbers decline to a sustainable level.

No doubt, some of you will find the above unsettling. That is understandable. It is not an easy message, and I have been uncomfortable with it, myself, even thought I have seen the evidence mounting over many years.

We can no longer afford to ignore the following three realities: (1) Already the world has far more people than Earth’s resources can sustainably support. (2) Many countries, including China and India, are rapidly increasing their consumption of already dwindling resources, which means many vital resources are declining even faster! (3) Most U. S. politicians – on both sides of the political aisle – take little or no leadership on the population stabilization issue.

Time is fleeting. Humane options to solve the ever-growing list of resource and environmental problems are shrinking. Therefore, it is imperative that we act quickly to humanely reduce human numbers – sooner rather than later! The longer we collectively continue to kid ourselves into thinking otherwise, the worse our situation and our positive actions for changing course become.

The process of planting seeds of greater understanding about the realities of the population growth/reduction issue with you in this Balanced View energizes me tremendously. Yes, this more comprehensive information presents a far more sobering picture of our situation. But, understanding that we already have far more people than is sustainable is a vastly more realistic picture of our true situation than saying that population increase is the primary problem.

I am encouraged by you! I trust that you will enlighten your friends and elected officials. Show them the ever-mounting evidence that: (1) Already there are far more people on the planet than resources can sustain; (2) Many vital resources are declining rapidly; (3) All of us need to work to humanely reduce human numbers.

Yours for humane population reduction!

You Can Help Us Grow

by Cindy Koehler

Increasing population is now my greatest concern. Recently I realized that I needed to act on this number-one concern — to walk my talk. So I called David Paxson and volunteered to help.

For a start, I wrote an article and helped proofread this newsletter.

In my month of involvement, I have been surprised by what I have learned about World Population Balance.

I’ve learned that World Population Balance works with an annual budget of only $60,000 and one part-time Office Manager. David Paxson co-founded it seventeen years ago when he left his full-time job.

He is a national leader on the issue of population growth and speaks across the United States. He has also participated at international meetings including the UN Population Conference in Egypt.

To me, one of his most impressive speaking props is his metronome that ticks at 140 beats per minute, representing the rate of population growth on the planet, net gain. As a former teacher and trainer, he makes use of other creative props to reach audiences of all ages, from 4 to 95.

Since I began volunteering a month ago, I’ve been amazed by the many articles in newspapers and magazines, as well as talks on radio and television, about population-related issues. David has also guided me to other interesting resources, which are helping me prepare to speak in school classrooms.

World Population Balance is fortunate to have many people volunteering their time and talents. If you would like to help, please call us at 612-869-1640.

Cindy Koehler, a Physical Therapist and Personal Trainer, is a longtime World Population Balance member.

Balanced View

is a publication of World Population Balance

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Our Mission

World Population Balance is committed to educating the general public, policymakers, and the media about current population facts and trends, the consequences of population growth, and the benefits of stabilization. We are a non-profit organization and deliver our message through public presentations and conferences, appointments with elected officials, written articles, our newsletter, web site, media interviews, and advertisments.
How do you inform 80,000 students about population stabilization? Our Frank Babka can answer that. Since becoming World Population Balance’s Public Educator in 1999 he has done exactly that. He’s spoken in the classrooms of over 600 teachers in 175 different schools throughout Minnesota and surrounding states.

So, he’s educated these 80,000 young people – one classroom and student at a time. Quite an amazing accomplishment! And he’s now gearing up to reach 100,000 during the next couple of years. Without Frank’s dedication to population education and his message to all these young people, most of them would move into adulthood without the slightest awareness that humanely stopping and reversing the planet’s population growth is a crucial challenge – for all 6.6 billion of us.

My position is simply stated. Within the next half-century, it will be essential for the human species to have fully operational a flexibly designed, broadly equitable and internationally coordinated set of initiatives focused on reducing the then-current world population by at least 80%. Given that even with the best of intentions it will take considerable time and exceptional diplomatic skill to develop and implement such an undertaking, perhaps on the order of 25 to 50 years, it is important that the process of consensus building - local, national and global - begin now. The mathematical inevitability that human numbers will continue their dramatic increase over the next two generations, to perhaps 9 billion by the year 2050, and the high probability that this numerical increase will exacerbate still further the systemic problems that already plague humanity (economic, political, environmental, social, moral, etc.), only reinforces this sense of urgency. There are, however, hopeful signs. In recent years, we have finally begun to come to terms with the fact that the consequences of the 20th century’s rapid and seemingly uncontrolled population growth will soon place us - if it hasn’t already done so - in the midst of the greatest crisis our species has yet encountered.

I therefore argue that over the next several generations, and beginning as soon as possible, humanity must not only take significant steps to arrest the rapid growth of human population but also begin to reduce it dramatically. However, it will be very difficult if not impossible to stop current growth short of 9 to 10 billion. This is due not only to demographic momentum but also to the great difficulties, both diplomatic and temporal, in developing and implementing the necessary political,

Impact of Population Growth on U.S. Democracy – A Quiz

Our thanks to Oregon population educator/activist and World Population Balance supporter Boyd Wilcox for sending us this quiz. What did our nation’s founders think your representation in Congress should be? Take this short quiz to find out:

1a. What was world population 200 years ago? 1a. ____________________________
1b. What is world population now?

2a. What was US population 200 years ago? 2a. ____________________________
2b. What is US population now?

3a. How many constituents did the U.S. Constitution specify each member of the House of Representatives should have? 3a. ____________________________
3b. How many does each represent now?

4a. How many members currently make up the US House? 4a. ____________________________
4b. Looking at the answers to question number 3, how much has the ratio between Representative and constituents changed?
4c. How many members of the House would it take to restore the founders’ original intended ratio?

5a. What year did the Rockefeller Commission on U.S. Population present its findings? 5a. ____________________________
5b. What did the Commission conclude?

For answers and conclusions, go to page 6.
Smail: Hidden Crisis (From page 3)

Even a population optimum in the four billion range would still require a significant decrease in global human numbers.

On the other hand, even if future research shows that this global carrying capacity figure has been underestimated by at least 1/2 - that is, if further analysis demonstrates that an optimum population estimate of two billion is “off-target” by a factor of two or more - the argument put forth here loses little if any of its validity or persuasive power. For example, even a population optimum in the four billion range would still require a significant decrease in global human numbers, roughly on the order of 60%.

Future Prospects

I am cautiously optimistic that this crisis can be averted, if only because all humans - despite our many differences - share a deep-rooted “investment in immortality”, an individual and collective concern for posterity. This powerful commitment to the future manifests itself biologically (through the children we beget), socioculturally (through our relationships with others) and morally (through our religious and/or ethical systems).

As an essential first step, our species will soon have to establish a difficult but very necessary balance between individual reproductive rights and collective reproductive responsibilities. That is, all of the world’s peoples must come fully to terms with the fact that a person’s (biological) right to have children must be mediated by his or her (social) responsibility not to have too many.

Certainly, any hope for success in this massive realignment of basic biological propensities and strongly-held sociocultural expectations will require attention not only to quantitative but also to qualitative issues and concerns. In fact, it will likely be easier to elicit broad-scale agreement on the pressing need for a significant reduction in human numbers - the “quantitative dimension” - than it will be to foster a broad scale consensus on the “qualitative restructuring of individual, political, economic, social and ethical perceptions that will also be necessary.

In pragmatic terms, the initial stabilization and subsequent 80% reduction in human numbers suggested earlier could be brought about with relative ease by establishing a worldwide average fertility rate of approximately 1.5 to 1.7 over the next several generations (lasting well into the 22nd century at least). Essentially, all that would be necessary is for couples to “stop at two”; because some women have no children, and others only one, this would rather quickly result in an overall (sub-replacement) fertility rate in the desired range. Once an optimum population size is within reach - perhaps toward the end of the 22nd century when global numbers begin to come into balance with carrying capacity as then understood - fertility rates could then be increased to the previously mentioned ZPG replacement level (ca. 2.1).

However, it is also abundantly...
Smail: Hidden Crisis (From page 4) clear, to judge by the agenda and controversies emanating from the 1994 United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Population and Development, that implementation of these greatly reduced fertility rates is inextricably intertwined with a number of very sensitive political and ideological concerns. Chief among these are matters pertaining to: the enhancement of gender equity; the educational and economic empowerment of women; ongoing controversies surrounding family planning, birth control and abortion; problems of development and modernization; differential access to resources and/or inequities in their distribution; various forms of pollution and environmental degradation; endemic poverty and implementation of effective public health measures; the growth of nationalism and ethnic/religious tensions; human migration and political/ecological refugees; etc.

These are all very important issues, and there is little doubt that they are frequently interconnected in complex cause-and-effect relationships with population growth. However, it is even more important not to confuse short-term means with longer-term ends. More specifically, it is essential that humanity does not lose sight of the over-arching and exploding demographic “forest” in the midst of legitimate and deeply-felt concerns about particular political/ideological “trees”.

For the stark reality is this. Population reduction is the primary issue facing humanity; all other matters are subordinate. Proponents of the above-mentioned agenda items, at the United Nations and elsewhere, must become fully cognizant of the fact that solutions to the problems that deeply concern them will be far more likely (and lasting) in a world that is moving rapidly and effectively toward population stabilization and eventual population reduction. For it must be obvious that the alternative - a world inexorably expanding toward 10 to 12 billion people by the end of the current century - offers much less hope for successful resolution of these matters. Quite simply, hard-won gains would almost certainly be overwhelmed by continuing and uncontrolled numerical growth, similar to what can be observed even now in those regions of the world where population doubling times of 25 to 35 years are the norm.

In fact, to judge by the available evidence, it is entirely possible that the conventional wisdom of the past 50 years - particularly to the extent that this “wisdom” has been characterized by large-scale economic aid (transfers of wealth) and liberal immigration policies (transfers of people) - has done more to stimulate rapid population growth than inhibit it. It’s almost as if a demographic Parkinson’s Law were in effect, to wit: “Births tend to expand to fill the perceived socioeconomic space.” In other words, when the true limits of this “perceived space” are obscured at the local level by overly-generous international aid and relatively easy opportunities for emigration, the unfortunate demographic result has all too often been “counterproductive” incentive structures, creating reproductive contexts in which local fertility rates have generally tended to increase rather than diminish.

This leads to a crucial final point, the ineluctable fact that in our multinational world solutions cannot be imposed from without. Ultimately, the people of each sovereign state must come to terms with, and subsequently resolve, their own local and unique demographic problems (hopefully motivated by a full awareness of global realities). In this regard, given the limited time available and the excruciatingly difficult decisions that must be made, it is daunting to realize that population problems are often the most pronounced in areas of the world where national sovereignty - and the requisite political, economic and social stability - is most tenuous.

It remains to be seen whether humanity will be capable of mounting a unified and lasting effort toward population reduction. For surely this is an undertaking that has no quantitative nor qualitative precedent, an effort that must be conducted on a species-wide scale, and an endeavor that by its very nature must be sustained for a century or more. While posterity demands that we be successful, I am only cautiously optimistic that such success can be achieved by rational human forethought, or by means compatible with contemporary social, political and ethical norms.

J. Kenneth Smail is Professor of Anthropology Emeritus, Department of Anthropology, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio 43022 (smail@kenyon.edu)

Ken Smail recently wrote the following to World Population Balance President, David Paxson, about the population and related issues.

To add to what I have previously written, I want to give much greater emphasis to the critical issues of rapidly declining, non-renewable energy resources (i.e., fossil fuels) as well as the potentially deleterious consequences of what appears to be a measurable increase in climatic instability (or more popularly, “global warming”). And I also want to focus on the numerous and difficult problems that modern civilization – and a still-expanding human population – will soon encounter in the “post-carbon era,” as we enter what is likely to be a rather steep energy downslope following “peak oil” and “peak gas” production.

More specifically, the evidence seems increasingly to suggest that by mid-century humanity could well be faced with a global population of some 9 billion, trying to maintain – or in several instances still trying to acquire – some semblance of modern industrial technological civilization on but 1/4 to 1/3 of the oil and gas the world currently produces. Their situation will be
Quiz Answers and Discussion

1a. 1.5 billion
b. 6.6 billion +
2a. Less than 8 million
b. 300 million +
3a. 30,000
b. 690,000 +
4a. 435
b. 690,000 / 30,000 = 22
435 x 22 = 9,570
5a. 1972
b. “...no benefits to further growth in population and that our problems would be easier to solve if we stopped growing...” This was presented over 35 years and 100 million fewer Americans ago!

I imagine our House having over 9,000 members! Clearly, population growth has drastically diluted citizen representation and the entire governing process that our founders envisioned. And every four years each Congressperson has to try to cope with an additional 30,000 constituents. It’s no wonder Congress is finding it harder every year to “do the people’s business” and that constituents are increasingly upset and frustrated with Congress.

Have you ever tried to set up a personal appointment with your member of Congress? Were you successful? How did it go? Here’s how it usually goes for many of us. First, a screener attempts to handle your issue or concern over the phone. If you firmly refuse that, they may then agree to make an appointment – with the staff member who handles your particular concern. Only rarely will you get to see the actual Congressperson on your first try (and, frequently, not on your next several tries, either).

Contrast that frustrating experience with that of arranging to see your Representative in the Minnesota Legislature. Constituents nearly always can set up a face-to-face appointment with their legislator in a phone call or two.

Quite a difference! Why such a contrast? The very simple answer is: numbers – of people, constituents. It’s a fascinating coincidence that each member of the Minnesota House of Representatives has only slightly more constituents than the 30,000 figure that was the original number in our federal Congress for the first fifty years of our country’s existence – light years from the current 690,000-and-growing figure!

Population growth directly undermines some fundamental pillars and freedoms of our great democracy. Humanely reducing U.S. population will help restore many of these basic principles and freedoms upon which our nation was founded.
What is Ecological Footprint and Why Should I Care?

Ecological Footprint is a resource-management tool that measures how much land and water area a human population requires to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb its wastes under prevailing technology.

In order to live, we consume what nature offers. Every action impacts the planet’s ecosystems. This is of little concern as long as human use of resources does not exceed what Earth can renew. But are we taking more?

The chart below is a summary of the global data for 2003.

Today, humanity’s Ecological Footprint is 25% larger than the resources the planet is generating [5.5 acres (average amount each person is currently using) – 4.4 acres (average available per person) = 1.1 acres (average overshoot per person). 1.1 is 25% of 4.4.]

In other words, it now takes fifteen months for the Earth to regenerate what we use in a single year. We maintain this overshoot by liquidating the planet’s ecological resources. Obviously, this overshoot cannot continue for long! An individual nation’s Total footprint = \( \text{Production footprint} + \text{Imports footprint} - \text{Exports footprint} \). This is computed for 72 product categories such as grains, timber, coal, oil, and cotton.

Is the United States Sustainable?

Let’s look briefly at the U.S. numbers and what they mean. In 2003 there were 3.4398 billion acres of biocapacity in the U.S. (294 million people times 11.7 acres/person), and our average overshoot was 12 acres per person. As noted above, the overshoot is a combination of imports and liquidation of our nation’s resource base.

In other words, today it takes fifteen months for the Earth to regenerate what we use in a single year. We maintain this overshoot by liquidating the planet’s ecological resources. Obviously, this overshoot cannot continue for long! An individual nation’s Total footprint = \( \text{Production footprint} + \text{Imports footprint} - \text{Exports footprint} \). This is computed for 72 product categories such as grains, timber, coal, oil, and cotton.

For example, every acre of farmland we pave over reduces our sustainable level even further.

What if we cut our average consumption to European levels? First, it will not be easy for our nation to slash our consumption in half! That is a monumental reduction! However, if we could accomplish that, sustainable population would still be below our current 302 million! And, unless we change course, the United States is on track to have well over 330 million in only ten more years!

It is for these two reasons – extremely high overconsumption and rapid population growth – that many senior scientists contend that the nation with the greatest population/human numbers problem is the United States. Therefore, it is vitally important that we move rapidly to humanely reduce both our population numbers and consumption.

### Ecological Footprint and Biocapacity

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### World Population Balance

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and mail them to **World Population Balance**

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We welcome your contribution at any level.
understand the potential implications of Human overpopulation and overconsumption. A balanced view suggests that sustainable practices are necessary to prevent overpumping of aquifers. If an aquifer holds a million gallons of water, and each year it is replenished with 100,000 gallons, the recharge rate would be 100,000 gallons. As long as everyone collectively pumped no more than 100,000 gallons out, that would be sustainable for years to come. However, if people begin pumping more than the recharge rate, the aquifer might fall back to the recharge rate, 100,000 gallons a year, and eventually it will have pumped all of the million gallons of reserve out. At that point, the annual capacity for that aquifer would fall back to the recharge rate – 100,000 gallons a year. When aquifer reserves are depleted, it could take years to refill. For example, if an aquifer is depleted, it might take 200,000 gallons out, and eventually it will have pumped all of the million gallons of reserve out. At that point, the annual capacity for that aquifer would fall back to the recharge rate – 100,000 gallons a year. When aquifer reserves are depleted, it could take years to refill.

Furthermore, aquifers are not the only resources that require careful management. Other resources, such as fresh water, are also being depleted at an alarming rate. According to the United Nations, the world's population is expected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050, putting a strain on already limited water resources. It is estimated that by 2030, 1.8 billion people will live in regions with water scarcity. This highlights the need for sustainable practices, such as water conservation and efficient use, to ensure the availability of fresh water for future generations.

Moreover, there is a growing recognition of the interconnection between human populations and the environment. The Earth's carrying capacity, which is the maximum number of people the planet can support sustainably, is currently being exceeded. The Global Footprint Network estimates that humanity is using 14.7 billion hectares of biologically productive land and water, while the Earth's capacity is only 11.7 billion hectares. This imbalance is unsustainable and indicates the need for a shift in consumption patterns and population growth.

In conclusion, the importance of adopting sustainable practices cannot be overstated. These practices include reducing consumption, improving efficiency, and conserving resources. By working together, we can ensure a more sustainable future for ourselves and future generations.