



**for a
sustainable
future**

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Population Matters Magazine

Issue 31 Autumn 2017

Big Foot makes his mark
Sustainable Population Policy

Welcome to the Anthropocene
Climate change and family size

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Cover photograph: Roxene Anderson Photography

About Population Matters

Population Matters is a membership charity working towards a global population size that can provide a good standard of living for all, a healthy environment and environmental sustainability. We are funded by our members, donations and grants and receive no funding from official or commercial bodies.

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PM's permanent staff are supported by a vital and dedicated team of volunteer and intern coordinators. Please see www.populationmatters.org/about/people-and-story for details of the current team.

Magazine

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Additional copies are available on request; a donation is appreciated. Information about how to contribute to the magazine is available on our website.

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References

We aim to ensure that our articles allow readers to identify their sources and obtain them through internet search engines if needed. This and future editions of *Population Matters* magazine will therefore no longer be providing references as a matter of routine. We believe this will make the magazine more accessible to a wider readership.

Population Matters also produces the *Journal of Population and Sustainability*, a fully referenced, biannual academic publication. For more information see our website or contact PM.

We are a registered charity under the name Optimum Population Trust (no.1114109) and a company registered in England and Wales (no. 3019081). Registered office: 135-137 Station Road, London E4 6AG.

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Live and kicking

This has been the summer of Big Foot – with our life-sized model of a ‘new’ species of human being, ‘*Homo magno pedites*’, spotted at public institutions, visitor attractions and events across the country.

As we report on page 7, Big Foot premiered outside the Natural History Museum in London, coinciding with the museum’s opening of its new Hintze Hall exhibit – the swapping of the skeleton of a long extinct dinosaur with the more contemporary one of a blue whale (not extinct, but still endangered). A feat of engineering, but not, as claimed by the museum, a communications coup offering visitors, “*a symbol of hope for the future of the natural world*”. More a convenient diversion from giving visitors the facts about the devastating impacts our species is having upon almost all other life on Earth; described by scientists recently as “biological annihilation” (see pages 5 and 6).

Innovative, creative campaign tools like Big Foot get the issues and our name across to the public, and it is great that several local groups have signed him up to appear at events and outside institutions in their patch. There’s no doubt he’s delivering value for money – but having an exhibit-quality sculpture fabricated isn’t cheap (even at the donated, discounted rate). So whilst Big Foot’s been out on tour, we’ve also been looking at how to increase our funding and grow our supporter numbers (see Richard Cottrell’s report on page 12).

Bluntly, we need more money in the bank and more people supporting us if we are to make enough of a difference in the ever-shrinking wriggle-room and time available. So it’s encouraging to see that Richard believes we could increase the number of people supporting PM eight-fold over the next 4- 5 years – by appealing to new audiences, and to access funding from largely untapped grants, charitable trusts and businesses, as well as identifying wealthy individuals sympathetic to our cause

To appeal to those new audiences and funding sources, we need to set out a big, ambitious, long-term vision for PM; one which sees the organisation extending its operations, activity and credibility internationally. A vision for building an organisation with greater profile and expertise across several strands: on overall global population issues, as well as at the continental, country and regional level. One which offers solutions in the sectors that impact upon and are, in turn, strained by



Photo: Roxene Anderson Photography

human population pressures – such as economics, development, health and environment to pick just a handful. And which has the communications nous and insights to overcome the deep psychological, social, cultural, and religious barriers that currently stall political action and stand in the way of individual choice and positive behaviour change.

That is the vision and ambition emerging from the High-Level Strategy Review – which we will report on in more detail in the next issue. ‘Big Foot’ is live and kicking: bigger steps to follow!

Thank you, as ever, for all your support.

Very best
Robin

Robin Maynard was confirmed as Population Matters’ permanent director in May.

Tough challenges and robust responses: family planning and the Global Gag Rule

A sector under threat

In the last edition of Population Matters Magazine, we reported on the decision by the Trump administration to reinstate the Mexico City Policy, more commonly known as the 'Global Gag Rule' (GGR), which prohibits US overseas aid funding to organisations which provide abortion information and/or services.

While the GGR has been implemented by most Republican presidents, President Trump went further, expanding its remit beyond family planning organisations to any health programme supported by the US. The effect of this expansion is to hit programmes in fields such as HIV/Aids and the Zika virus, in which abortion may be offered or counselled as a health protection measure. US aid funding for family planning prior to the GGR was about \$575m per year – overall health-related aid, which is now vulnerable to the effects of the rule, is nearly \$8.8bn

In April, the US administration also cut all funding to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)—an agency that promotes family planning in more than 150 countries worldwide. Remarkably, US officials claimed that UNFPA supports coerced abortions and involuntary sterilisation in China, something vociferously denied by the agency. Responding to the announcement, UN Foundation President and CEO Kathy Calvin said “Eliminating US funds threatens the health and rights of millions of girls and women around the world, particularly those in crisis situations.”

Increasing global commitments

Shortly after the Global Gag Rule was re-established, the Dutch government responded by creating the She Decides campaign. The initiative was intended to generate funds to replace those withdrawn, as well as to lobby other governments to provide additional funding. In March, an international conference was held in Brussels governments to examine the issues and generate action. To date, She Decides has raised over \$180 million from governments and major funders such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Renewed momentum at London Family Planning Summit

In light of the challenges posed by US policy, the long-planned 2017 Family Planning Summit in London provided the opportunity for a renewed sense of momentum in global family planning. Held on 11 July, World Population Day, the Summit was co-hosted by the UK Department for International Development, UNFPA, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. It was slated as the follow-up to the first London summit in 2012, where participants committed to ensuring that 120 million more women and girls would have access to family planning by 2020.



Melinda Gates speaking at the 2012 London summit. Photo: Russell Watkins/Department for International Development.

While, as reported in the last PM magazine, the FP2020 project has brought contraception to millions more women, it is not currently on target to meet that goal. The 2017 summit examined the challenges facing the project and considered solutions addressing issues such as child marriage, the needs of teenagers and myths about side-effects associated with contraception - which is known to be a significant obstacle to the uptake of modern contraceptive methods in some communities.

Sessions surrounding the summit also examined the integration of family planning and conservation projects, such as Chase Africa (see page 9 and the Spring 2017 PM magazine) who attended the summit.

During the meeting, more partners and countries signed on to the 2020 targets and there have also been at least \$2.5 billion in new funding commitments for reproductive health services, spread over a number of years. The UK - currently the world's second-largest supporter of family planning through aid - pledged an extra £45m in new funding over five years.

A change in the wind?

Population Matters in the news

Longstanding observers of the population debate are cautiously noting what appears to be greater willingness to address the issue in the mainstream media recently.

Population Matters has been contributing to that higher profile and addressing a wide range of issues across a spread of major UK media outlets, such as BBC One, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph*, and BBC Radio 4.

In March, PM trustee Karin Kuhlemann appeared on the BBC One programme *The Big Questions*, as it debated the important question 'Does the planet need the Vatican to accept contraception?' In the face of vague arguments from defenders of the Vatican's position, Karin made a lucid, persuasive case underpinned by robust facts and figures.



In his first media appearance since joining Population Matters, our director Robin took part in an authoritative debate on BBC Radio 4, in April. Recorded in front of an audience at the London School of Economics, the *Glass Half Full* programme discussed whether a global population of nine billion is sustainable. Robin answered the claims of "anti-pessimist" Johan Norberg that human ingenuity would somehow sort out our environmental problems with a clear, fact-based and positive vision for ethical, effective action to address our consumption and population growth.

Population Matters' responses to the publication of ONS statistics about UK population (see p16) were also widely reported, including in the *Mail*, *Mirror*, *Times* and *Sun*.

After the announcement in September that the Duchess of Cambridge was expecting her third child, PM was in-

vited to submit an opinion piece to the online newspaper *i*. Our piece noted that " 'Population' and how it grows isn't about billions of faceless humans – it's as personal, tangible and simple as how many kids we each choose to put in the back seats of our cars."



In a very positive development, *The Guardian*, a publication long reluctant to address population, gave high prominence to a Letter to the Editor from Robin Maynard and Jonathon Porritt. Following publication of the climate change study reported on page 17, the letter unequivocally challenged the unwillingness of environmental and conservation organisations to address population, describing having fewer children as a 'no-brainer' that will benefit both people and planet.



Our Big Foot campaign has also generated much-needed news and discussion about population. In addition to a *Times* story about our challenge to the Natural History Museum, Big Foot's appearance in Oxford led to three newspaper stories and a television interview with Robin shown on BBC regional news (see page 7).

Welcome to the Anthropocene

The Earth has existed for more than four billion years and has sustained life for more than three billion.

Human beings have existed for just 200,000 years but our impact on our planet over the last century is so great that scientists from a range of disciplines including biology and climatology are calling for this period in the Earth's history to be called the Anthropocene – the age of humans.

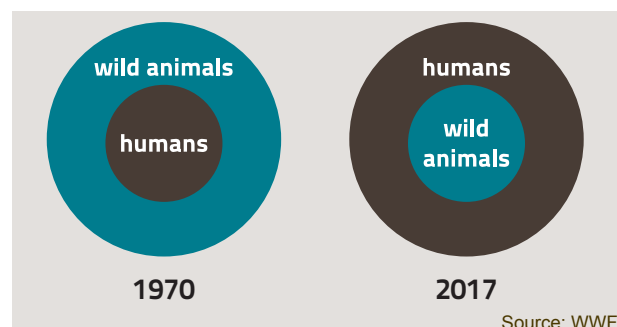


That term's official adoption as a geological era is currently being considered by the global scientific body responsible for these classifications, the Subcommission on Quaternary Stratigraphy, following a recommendation for its adoption by a dedicated working group in 2016. Its use is not confined to the scientific sphere, however. It has gained increasing currency since being coined in the 1980s by biologist Eugene Stoermer and popularised by chemist Paul Crutzen in 2000, and was even recently featured in a headline in the *Daily Mail*. It is now widely recognised as a useful description for the period in which human activity has caused a transition from a planetary system which furnishes human beings with natural resources enabling them to flourish, to a system in which human beings drive changes which threaten its ability to support us – and other species too.

Catastrophic change in the natural world

WWF's *Living Planet Report 2016* reiterated the growing view among biologists and conservationists that the natural world is entering the 'Sixth Mass Extinction'. Only five times before in our planet's history have so many species and so much biodiversity been lost so quickly – the fifth being the end of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. In July 2017, a report in the prestigious *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* by a group of scientists including leading population advocate and PM patron Paul Ehrlich went even further, describing the loss of biodiversity today as "biological annihilation".

With some estimates placing the rate of extinctions at 1,000 times that it would be without human impact, human-related causes include "harvesting", habitat loss or fragmentation, pollution, climate change and human-animal conflict. The extinction of species also reflects a massive decline in populations of animals, with a 58% fall in vertebrate populations between 1970 and 2012 (over which same period the human population doubled) and a projected decline of 67% by 2020.



Source: WWF

Anthropocene air, water and weather

Anthropocene impacts extend to the chemistry of the planet itself. Because of industry, agriculture and fossil fuel use, carbon dioxide in the air is at its highest permanent level (more than 400 parts per million) for millions of years. Its consequence – climate change – is rising sea levels, melting glaciers and causing an increase in severe weather events. Disruption of other chemical cycles, those of nitrogen and phosphorous as a result of agricultural and industrial practices, is leading to eutrophication – unsustainable overgrowth of plant life in aquatic environments, ultimately turning seas and rivers into dead zones.

Anthropocene fossils

The geological justification for the reclassification of our age as the Anthropocene is the remarkable fact that human activity is now being embedded permanently in the fabric of the Earth. Radioactive elements from atomic tests, carbon spheres emitted by power stations, plastic waste and even factory-farmed chicken bones are all becoming fossilised, producing geological markers that will be detectable as long as the Earth survives.

More humans, more impact

Our Welcome to the Anthropocene campaign is intended to make the key, and usually neglected, connection between the “age of humans” and the number of humans. As the idea of the Anthropocene gains traction among the environmental, scientific and conservation communities, it provides an opportunity for us to demonstrate to them that population and consumption pressures drive the issues of concern to them – and build support and agreement between ourselves and those dealing with the threats the Anthropocene poses. At the same time, as the idea gains ever greater visibility among the general public, it is an opportunity for us to stake a claim on it, and start a process of associating the word with population.

In the initial stage of the campaign - focussing on museums and other institutions which educate the public about the natural world (see page 8) - we have already found that it strikes a chord with members of the public and experts alike. It takes more than a word to change perceptions but the label of the Anthropocene is unquestionably helping to move the debate along.

“The significance of the Anthropocene is that it sets a different trajectory for the Earth system, of which we of course are part. If our recommendation is accepted, the Anthropocene will have started [around 1950]. We have lived most of our lives in something called the Anthropocene and are just realising the scale and permanence of the change.”

Prof Jan Zalasiewicz, chair of the Working Group on the Anthropocene.



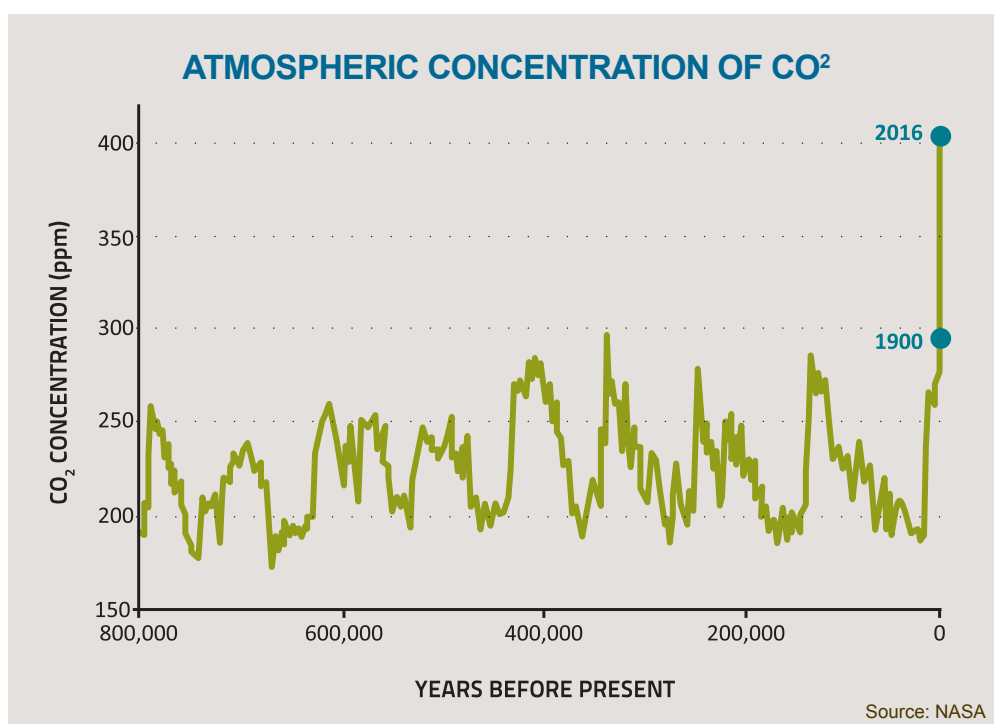
10,000 YEARS AGO
99% Wild Animals*
1% Humans

TODAY

1% Wild Animals
99% Humans and Livestock



*weight of vertebrate animals on land



Above: calculations by Vaclav Smil (2011) indicate the enormous change in terrestrial mammalian biomass in the period of human civilisation.

Left: the dramatic spike in the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide commences around the onset of the Industrial Revolution and corresponds to human population growth over the 20th century.

Big Foot makes his mark

In July, Population Matters launched our new campaign to persuade natural history organisations to provide the public with the complete truth about the impact of human beings on the planet – and how reversing population growth can help.

We launched our public campaign on 14 July with the public unveiling of Big Foot outside London's Natural History Museum (NHM). Big Foot was an instant hit, stimulating surprise, engagement and numerous photos from the crowds queuing outside the museum.

Life-sized Big Foot is made of hundreds of steel mesh "babies" and is standing on, or rather in, a squashed planet Earth with the remains of living things stuck to his over-sized foot. We found members of the public were quickly able to work out for themselves what he represented – the impact of ever more people on a finely-balanced ecological system. Many agreed with us that an exhibit such as Big Foot belongs in the museum, not outside it.



Our event followed a letter to the museum from our director Robin and two well-qualified PM patrons – zoologist Professor Aubrey Manning and TV naturalist Chris Packham. In their letter to the museum's director, Sir Michael Dixon, they asked him to ensure the museum "takes the lead in presenting the facts about the impacts of our species upon the Earth, its biodiversity and ecosystems", in line with the museum's stated mission:

"to challenge the way people think about the natural world – its past, present and future. We aim to stimulate public debate about humanity's future and equip our audiences at every level with an understanding of science."

On the day of our launch, *The Times* carried a story about the campaign, prompting a belated reply from Sir Michael which failed to engage with the issues raised. Meanwhile, our tour of one of the world's leading museums revealed almost nothing about the human impact on the planet. Since that initial exchange, however, a cautious dialogue has begun with the museum and we will report on any developments.

All photos except Oxford museum: Roxene Anderson Photography



Above: Prof John Guillebaud and Richard Vernon of Population Matters Oxford Group at the Oxford museum

Big Foot on tour

In August, with help from members of the Oxford Population Matters Group, Big Foot also visited the Oxford University Museum of Natural History and joined activists from the London Group of Population Matters reaching out to people attending the UK premier of Al Gore's film, *An Inconvenient Sequel*. Many other Population Matters Local Groups are supporting the campaign by contacting museums, wildlife organisations and attractions in their local areas and Big Foot is likely to make his appearance at a number of these.

To find out more about how you can support the campaign, visit www.populationmatters.org/anthropocene. If you haven't already done so, please sign the petition to the Natural History Museum on that page. The petition will close and be delivered soon after you receive this magazine.

PopOffsets evolution: 'crowdfunding' supports grassroots projects

Since it began in 2010, Population Matters' PopOffsets project has distributed tens of thousands of pounds to effective, small-scale family planning projects across the world.

Following a comprehensive review last year, the Board decided to bring to a close the PopOffset's grant-giving model, whereby individuals donated into a single pot. We are now in the concluding stages of making the transition to a new 'crowdfunding' model in which donors will be able to choose from a selection of projects to determine where their money goes.

The new PopOffsets project (which will also have a new name) will have its public launch later this year, once all the recipient projects have been identified and fully evaluated. We aim to have four to six projects on offer at any one time, with the emphasis on selecting those that are 'in the field', grassroots, practical and relatively small - projects that additional funds will make a real difference to. The scale of donation targets promoted to donors will fall within the range of £1,000 to £5,000. PM will put in an initial donation to each identified project to start the ball rolling. 100% of all donations will go directly to the chosen project. However, people will be given the opportunity to help cover our administration costs with a further voluntary donation if they choose.

The focus will be on supporting family planning, behaviour change, girls' education and linked conservation efforts in line with our vision, mission and objectives and, unlike PopOffsets, not as carbon offsetting per se - although climate change benefits will arise.

In the meantime, whilst we get the new system up and running, we are supporting a couple of grassroots projects in need of some immediate booster funding. One of our key criteria is to support projects both in developed and developing countries and we are very pleased to be providing funds to **GirlsTalk** in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, and to continue PopOffsets' support of **CHASE Africa's** work in Kenya.

Our initial donation of £1,500 to GirlsTalk will help run their 8-week programme for teenage girls. GirlsTalk was founded and is co-led by Dr Rebecca Foljambe, a teaching and practising GP with a special interest in family planning.

The course emphasises positive education and empowerment. No pressure is put on the girls regarding their future family size. However, a key module involves the girls discussing Population Matters materials. At the end of the programme, each girl receives a Population Matters branded t-shirt bearing the message, 'Some trends you don't have to follow' alluding to the steep curve of current global population growth. As Dr Foljambe concludes, "We all know that an emotionally well woman or girl, that is empowered with an education on contraception, makes the best possible choice for her, as to how many children she has, and when."

We are also supporting CHASE Africa with a donation of £3,000 to extend its partnership work with the Mount Kenya Trust's Community Health Service Project (CHSP). Established in May 2014, the project has already reached over 20,000 women providing them with family planning and over 10,000 for other health services and is now expanding to two new areas. The aim of the project is to empower local community members living around the mountain, particularly women of reproductive age, by educating them about family planning and sexual health. By allowing them to make informed choices on family planning, number of children and spacing of the children they intend to have, less human pressure will be exhibited on their environment. In doing so, there will be less pressure on family income and greater financial stability.

For more information about ChaseAfrica see www.chaseafrica.org.uk. We also wrote about their work supporting Dandelion Africa in the last edition of *Population Matters*.

2017 United Nations projections

Global population: where could we be in 2100?

In July, the United Nations' Department for Economic and Social Affairs published its *World population prospects: 2017* revision containing projections for global population growth up until 2100. UNDESA releases these figures every two years and, following a long-standing trend, all figures have been revised upwards since the last release in 2015. While some of the changes are proportionately very small, in reality they represent hundreds-of-millions of people.

GLOBAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The most commonly used and recognised figure in the projections is the “medium variant” projection. That projection shows that the current world population of 7.6 billion is expected to reach 8.6 billion in 2030, 9.8 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion in 2100. On either side of that central projection, the UN believes that there is a 95 per cent certainty that the global population will be between 8.4 and 8.7 billion in 2030, between 9.4 and 10.2 billion in 2050 and between 9.6 and 13.2 billion in 2100. This last range is so wide that it represents the entire global population as it stood in the mid-1960s.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES AT NATIONAL LEVEL

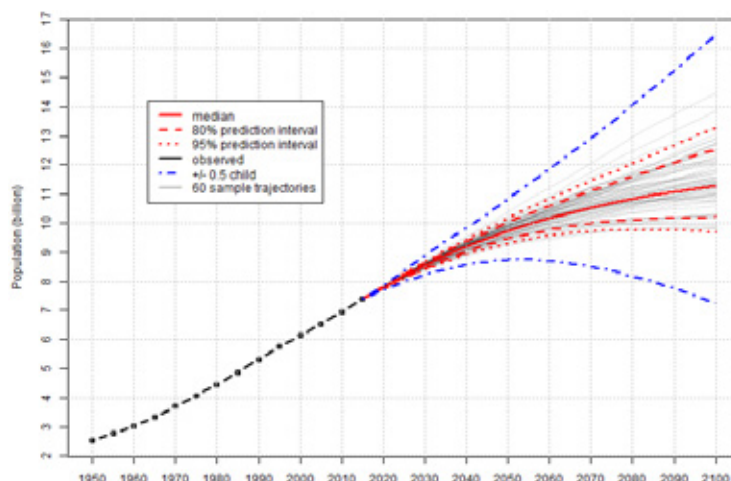
China and India are projected to remain the world's two most populous countries, with the population of India expected to surpass that of China by 2024. India has seen a significant reduction in its fertility rate (which can be broadly defined as average number of children born per woman) but has a large population at or entering childbearing age (see below). Despite the relaxation and then the recent abolition of China's coercive one child policy, lower numbers of people of childbearing age will lead to a reduction in its population by 2050.

The 47 least-developed countries are expected to see their populations more than triple between now and 2100. Among these countries, Nigeria is projected to see the highest population growth, surpassing the United States shortly before 2050 to become the third most populous country in the world.

TRENDS IN POPULATION GROWTH AND FERTILITY RATES

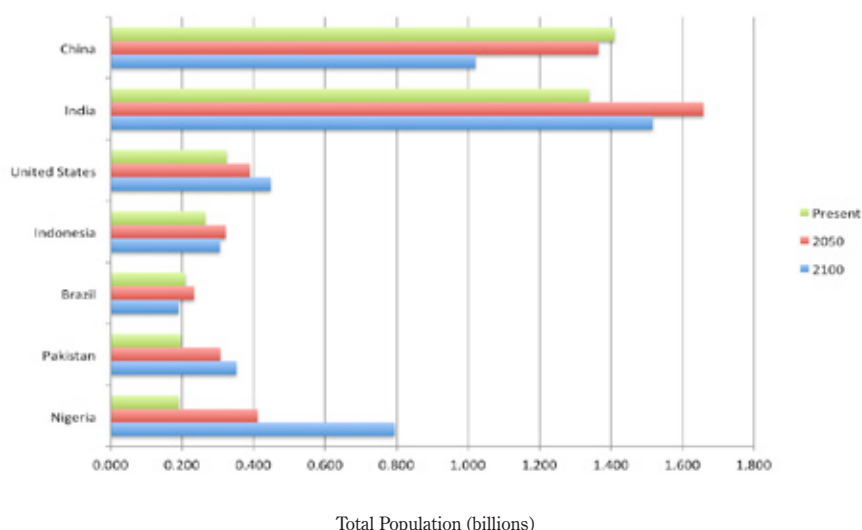
According to medium-variant projections, the global fertility level will decline from 2.5 births per woman at present to 2.2 by 2050 and 2.0 by 2100. Fertility is expected to fall in almost all of the world's most populous countries. Africa remains the region with the highest fertility levels, although total fertility has fallen from 5.1 births per woman in 2000-2005 to 4.7 in 2015. Over half of global population growth up to 2050 will occur in Africa.

World: Total Population



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*. <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/>

World's Most Populous Countries, Present to 2100



The UN's medium fertility and population projections are not based on the assumption that fertility will fall spontaneously, however, but that continued improvements in family planning will lead to reductions. In the words of the report:

"it will be essential to support continued improvements in access to reproductive health care services, including family planning, especially in the least developed countries, with a focus on enabling women and couples to achieve their desired family size."

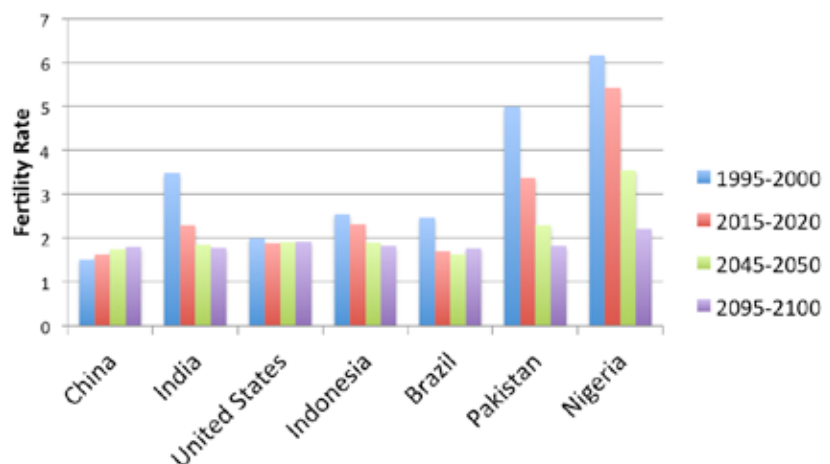
The impact of reduced fertility also takes some time to manifest. Population continues to rise despite falling fertility as a consequence of people living longer, a reduction in child mortality (meaning more people reach childbearing age) and population momentum - the consequence of previous higher birth rates leading to increasing numbers of people of childbearing age, as in India. As a result, the number of families increases, outweighing the effect of a smaller number of children in each family.

SMALLER FAMILIES CREATE SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

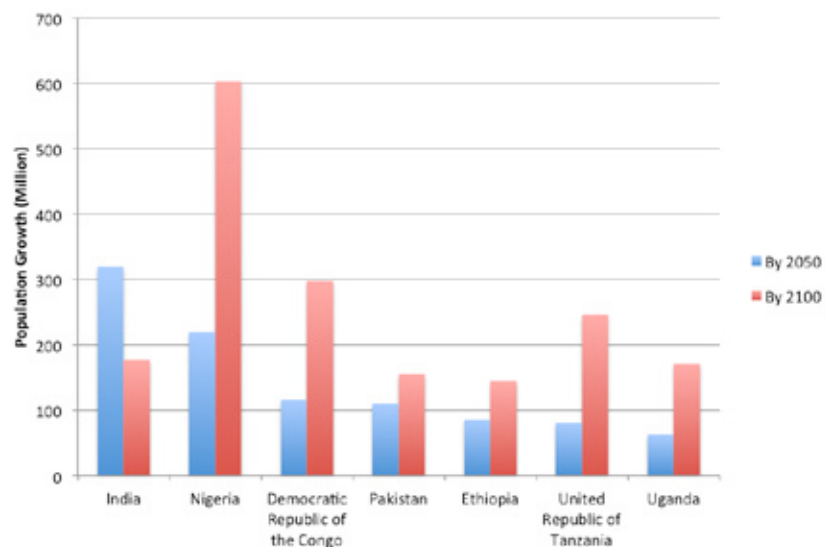
Perhaps the most significant figures in the projections lie outside the 95 per cent certainty range. They are the projections for the impact on population if, on average, half-a-child more is born per woman than is assumed in the medium projection, or half-a-child less. With half-a-child more on average, our population in 2100 could be 16.5 billion: with half-a-child less, it could be 7.3 billion—smaller than our population today. These figures indicate the enormous impact on global population of very small changes in family size. In fact, while *World population prospects* describes continued population growth as "the most likely outcome", it projects that there is a 27 per cent chance that global population could have stopped growing by the end of the century.

Alarming as they are, the latest projections show that sustained, effective, action can achieve the end of growth and progress towards a sustainable population. On p14 we identify just a handful of the ethical and practical policies that are being pursued right now, and on p4 report on how a critical challenge to global family planning is being addressed. Given our impact on the planet right now, the *World population prospects* report provides further, unequivocal evidence that a concerted, dedicated effort to address our population - and our consumption - is needed as a matter of urgency.

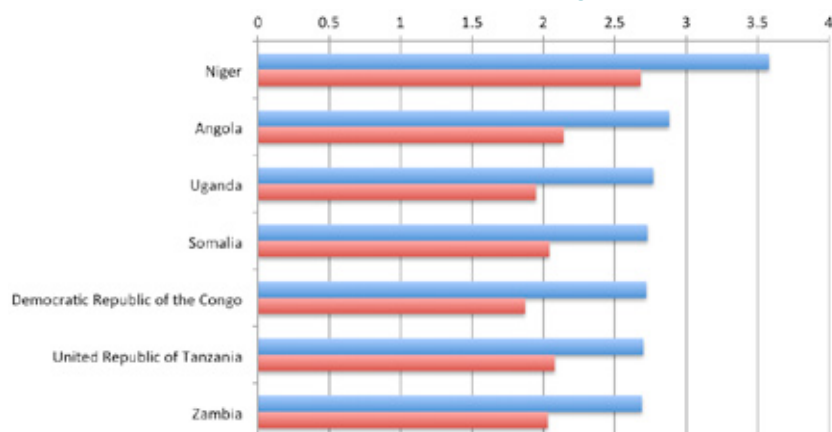
Total Fertility Rate for World's Most Populous Countries



Total Population Growth in Numbers



Population Growth Rate, Average Annual



Raising funds and increasing impact

Richard Cottrell, Fundraising Consultant

The greater impact that Population Matters can have as an organisation, the more it will help avert social, healthcare and environmental problems across the world.

Yet population remains a difficult subject to discuss for many people, and in terms of raising money it currently lags far behind causes – and charities – that simply apply a sticking plaster to symptoms of the larger problem.

I am a firm believer in PM's cause, and am pleased to be able to bring over a decade's professional experience raising funds for environmental and social causes to help it achieve its aims.

One thing that has become immediately evident to me is that its supporters are its life-blood; it simply couldn't survive without every pound, dollar, yen and euro that you donate. But to achieve its ambitions the charity needs to think bigger, to own the population issue, reach more people with its message, and yield a greater influence. To do this it needs to raise more money.

Even standing still isn't without its challenges at the moment. Since 2012 the organisation's income had grown steadily each year, but in the last twelve months income hasn't matched costs. Because PM's current financial reserves are higher than a charity of its size is recommended to have, the board has released money from them which more than covers the deficit in the short term – but the situation has focussed attention on the need to rethink the approach to fundraising in the longer term.

The good news is that there are untapped opportunities for PM. In

the last year 97% of the charity's income came from individual donors and members, so there is a clear need to diversify the sources of funding to include charitable trusts, foundations, grants and businesses amongst others.

People will continue to be a very important source of income however. We want to make it easier for more people, from new audience groups, to donate in a way that suits their lifestyle – including regular giving, one-off donations, cash appeals, challenge events, legacies, sales and events. To make sure that you only ever receive the communications you want to receive from PM, you will be asked for your preferences in the coming months.

Spreading the word to new people and new organisations through new channels of communication is an exciting challenge. It will require a new 'case for support' to make sure the charity is relevant, and you may see some changes in style. The opportunities exist to increase PM's impact, and that can only be a good thing for the future of the planet.



Fundraising in action: 100 miles in the saddle

This year marked the fifth Prudential RideLondon, a 100-mile challenge for cyclists looking to raise money for charitable causes.

Participating in this year's ride were four incredible cyclists who chose to support Population Matters: Derek Moran, Vicky Ingram, Joshua Hobbs, and Melanie Miller. Altogether, these cyclists raised over £400 to support our work.

On behalf of everyone at Population Matters, we would like to extend our great thanks to each of the riders for

their generous efforts! The money raised from this event will help us to develop our projects, campaigns and educational programmes.

"We need a sustainable population so everyone can enjoy a good quality of life, and to leave some room for wildlife." –

Derek Moran, cycling for PM



Population Matters Annual General Meeting

In previous years, the PM AGM and annual conference have been held on the same day. As we have informed members and supporters in previous correspondence, this year, they are being held as two separate events.

The AGM will take place on Saturday, 21 October 2017 at Friends House, Euston Road.

Please note the AGM is open *only* to guarantor members. If you have not received information about the AGM separately by the time this magazine is delivered, you are unlikely to be eligible to attend. Please contact Membership and Finance Manager Julie Lewis at julie.lewis@populationmatters.org if you are a guarantor member but have not yet received notice of the meeting.

At this year's AGM, a key item for presentation by the Board and director will be the outcomes of the High-Level Strategic Review. A presentation summarising that process, its key recommendations and the indicated forward strategic direction of the organisation will form a central part of this year's AGM – including the opportunity for questions and comments from members.



Population Matters Conference

3 March 2018 at Conway Hall, London

The Conference is open to all our subscribers, our wider network of supporters and friends and the general public. For many of our supporters it is the issues and ideas around our work that are of most interest and which attracted people to the organisation in the first place. Hence the purpose of the Conference is: *To inspire people about our work, explore ideas and provide motivation for us all to 'Spring Forward' into another year of campaigning for and raising awareness of the urgent need to address unsustainable population growth.*

The Conference will be advertised and open to members of the public and we are looking forward to an exciting and positive event, showcasing Population Matters and our cause.



News

UK population to hit 70m by 2026



The population of the United Kingdom is likely to reach 70 million within the next 10 years, according to the *Overview of the UK population* released by the Office of National Statistics in March. This would make the UK the most populous nation in Europe by 2050. The number of UK births has exceeded the number of deaths every year since 1955 (except 1976). The direct effect of net migration has also added more than 250,000 people per year on average since 2004. The ONS' separate *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report* issued in May, however, showed a decline in net migration in 2016, driven partly by a reduction in EU immigration and an increase in emigration of EU nationals.

Another significant factor in the projections is that people are living longer. A growing proportion of the country's inhabitants are aged 65 or over, and that is projected to rise from roughly 18% at present to an estimated 25% by 2045.

Reporting on these projections, the media focussed heavily on the aging population and its potential economic effects. In response to these concerns, Population Matters issued a statement noting that:

"The simple solution of adding more young people to care for old people or pay for their care is fundamentally flawed: those young people will themselves become old and require support. A lower birth rate, however, reduces the number of dependent children, which boosts the economy by liberating money for individuals and families to invest in pensions, for instance, and making more people available for paid employment."

Africa: Demographic dividend or population disaster?

By 2050, more than half of global population growth is expected to occur in Africa. While some African leaders see this as an economic opportunity, others perceive a looming disaster unless measures to control population growth and support family planning are put into place. As Africa's overall population is predicted to nearly double – from 1.3 billion people today to 2.5 billion by 2050 – many leaders across the continent have identified that in combination with reducing birth rates, a growing and youthful population could produce economic benefits. The potential for economic growth as a result of an expanded working-age population is known as the demographic dividend and the African Union has dubbed 2017 the year of "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in Youth".



CAR School Girls: Photo by Pierre Holtz | UNICEF

A number of expert bodies and African leaders warn that the dividend may not be forthcoming, however, especially if job opportunities remain stagnant. According to estimates by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, while 12 million young people enter Africa's workforce each year, the continent as a whole creates an average of only 3.7 million jobs per year.

In Malawi, the government has expressed its concern that young Malawis will inherit only poverty as economic gains are neutralised by population growth. Despite success in bringing family planning services and improvements in maternal and child health, Malawi's annual population growth of 3.32% remains greater than

its rate of GDP growth and threatens to derail economic progress. In March, its Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Goodall Gondwe, said:

“The high population is exerting a lot of pressure on our economy. As a country we have made tremendous gains over the years but the impact is not reflected on our economy because the gains have been dissipated by population growth”

According to Malawi media, the Malawi government is urging people to “make less babies”.

A rapidly growing population in Africa also means higher demand for food. African think tank the Institute for Security Studies warned in June that populations across Africa are likely to become more vulnerable to food price spikes and climatic shocks (e.g. floods and droughts), ultimately leading to more frequent domestic food shortages. ISS wrote that “slowing population growth should be part of a strategy to ensure long-term development as well as to mitigate growing food insecurity”.

Global initiatives support smaller families



Rural Indian women: Photo by McKay Savage

As the London Family Planning Summit (page 4) recognised, effective family planning is about far more than putting contraceptives in people’s hands. A range of creative and holistic approaches are being implemented across the world, many responding to the particular circumstances of their communities.

Egypt faces massive population pressures with the latest UN projections suggesting a doubling in population by 2100 (to around 200m people). Its government has launched a programme called “Itnein Kifaya” (“Two is Enough”), specifically addressing mothers who already have two children or fewer. The focus for the programme will be on regions registering the highest birth rates and, according to the Egyptian government, will include work on women’s empowerment, as well as provision of contraceptives and education.

In Rajasthan, the largest state in India, another unique small family initiative is underway. The State government’s Health Department is working to organise “Saas-Bahu Sammelans”—meaning meetings of mothers- and daughters-in-law—in over 16,200 villages. The aim is to promote the norm of having fewer children, with emphasis on the development of local communities. During meetings, experts will provide information about family planning methods, generating awareness among participants as well as addressing any myths or concerns.

Finally, an initiative in Nigeria with aims to increase modern contraceptive use and desire for fewer children has recently been declared successful. A study evaluating the Nigerian Urban Reproductive Health Initiative (NURHI), led by Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (CCP), indicated an associated 10% increase in both contraception use and desires for smaller families. A major focus was on improving contraceptive access at health clinics, as well as to generate demand for family planning services amongst women in the communities.

Nigeria is expected to quadruple its population to nearly 800m by the end of the century. The UN’s higher projections see it exceeding 1bn by 2100.

Technological efficiency drives resource demand

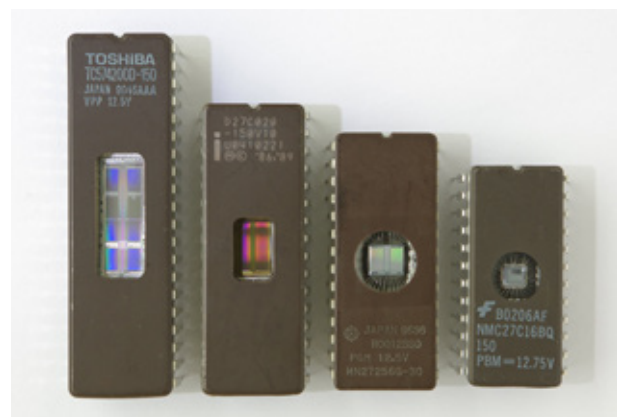


Photo by yellowcloud on Flickr

A study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology published in January has found that increasing efficiency in resource use in the making of products does not reduce the demand for those resources. Instead, technological advances such as more efficient silicon chip-based electronics simply generate more demand, negating the benefits of less materials per item.

The study gathered data for 57 common goods and services - including widely used chemical components such as ammonia and formaldehyde, and hardware and energy technologies such as crude oil and wind energy – and analysed whether “dematerialization” had taken

place – ie reduction in the amount of materials used to meet overall demand for them. It hadn't. The only products for which overall consumption had gone down were chemicals whose use was restricted by regulations for safety reasons. There was one exception to the rule – wool, which has been replaced by artificial fibres.

A key example of the dynamic is silicon. Technological improvements have hugely reduced the amount of silicon required to make transistors of equal power to those of decades ago. Despite this, demand for electronic equipment – stimulated by its reduced size and increased versatility – has driven the world's consumption of silicon to grow by 345 percent over the last four decades. The study's co-author Professor Christopher Magee commented "it seems we haven't seen a saturation in demand. People haven't said, 'That's enough,' at least in anything that we can get data to test for."

The Brookings Institution projects that the global 'middle class' of 3.2bn consuming at a high level will rise to around 5 billion by 2030, while the International Research Panel has calculated that globally, we will use 71% more resources each by 2050. Summarising the implications of the study, Magee commented:

"There is a techno-optimist's position that says technological change will fix the environment. This says, probably not."

Human activity threatens Natural World Heritage Sites

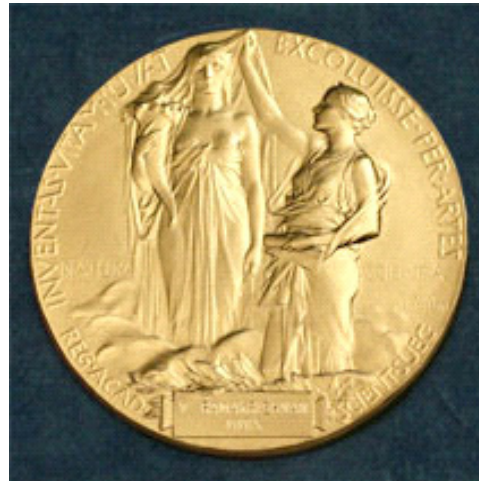
A report published in *Biological Conservation* in February found that recent increases in human pressure and forest loss are causing the degradation of over one hundred Natural World Heritage Sites (NWHS).

Approximately 63% of all NWHS have suffered from increased human pressure since the early 1990s. The largest increases have occurred in Asia, and the vast majority of sites that contain forests have experienced forest loss since 2000. Habitat conversion due to human activities—such as agriculture and urbanisation—have been identified as the leading causes of degradation. This has resulted in the loss of biodiversity, high extinction rates and ecosystems collapse globally. The World Heritage Convention was initially adopted in 1972 to ensure the conservation of the world's most valuable natural and cultural resources.

According to James Watson, Director of Science and Research Initiative at the Wildlife Conservation Society as well as a senior author of this report: *"The world would never accept the Acropolis being knocked down, nor a couple of pyramids being flattened for housing estates or roads, yet, right now, across our planet, we are letting many of our natural world heritage sites be fundamentally altered"*.

Nobel laureates fear impact of population growth

A survey of Nobel laureates in August found that they consider population growth to be among the greatest threats to humanity today.



The Nobel Prize for Chemistry

The survey, carried out by *Times Higher Education* in association with the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings, drew responses from 50 laureates, almost a quarter of living Nobel Prize winners for chemistry, physics, physiology, medicine and economics. They were given a range of questions on scientific and academic issues but also asked: "What is the biggest threat to humankind, in your view? And is there anything science can do to mitigate it?"

According to *THE*, one-in-three respondents cited population growth and environmental degradation, making this the highest-ranking threat in comparison to all other responses.

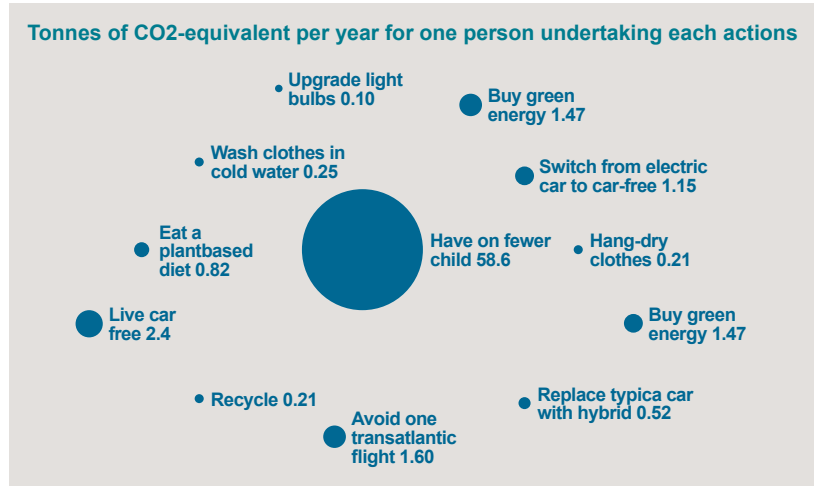
"Climate change [and providing] sufficient food and fresh water for the growing global population... are serious problems facing humankind," responded one Laureate (unnamed in the report). "Science is needed to address these problems and also to educate the public to create the political will to solve these problems."

Other respondents who cited environmental issues also mentioned concerns over feeding and supplying water, as well as opposition to genetically-modified products given their potential to boost agricultural output. The only other threat cited by more than 10 per cent of respondents was nuclear war, raised by 23 per cent. Other threats identified included infectious disease epidemics, fundamentalism/terrorism, "ignorant leaders" (President Trump was named specifically) and artificial intelligence.

Population and climate change: is the penny finally dropping?

While global per capita emissions have begun to flatten out in recent years, overall CO2 emissions continue to rise.

The world's largest emitter is its most populous country, China, at 10.2 kilotons per annum, with the US and India producing 5.1 and 2.03 respectively (World Bank figures). There is immense disparity in per capita emissions, however, with a person from the US producing 160 times more CO2 than someone from Niger, and a Briton 70 times more. While the tendency at present is for emissions per person to reduce in developed countries, growing affluence drives them up in developing countries, and in both China and India, per capita emissions are growing steeply.



Credit: Seth Wynes/Kimberly Nicholas, Environmental Research Letters, 2017

Within the last two months, two landmark reports have explicitly identified the importance of managing population growth as a tool in combating climate change.

The global picture

The first of the two reports examined policy measures to address global warming and placed family planning and educating girls as among the top ten workable solutions available today.

The analysis was undertaken for Project Drawdown. 'Drawdown' is the point in time when greenhouse gas concentrations peak in the atmosphere and begin to go down on a year-to-year basis. The Drawdown initiative is a coalition of scholars, scientists and advocates from across the globe that is modelling an array of substantive solutions, with the goal of reaching drawdown as soon as possible. Its report makes a simple case:

"Carbon footprints are a common topic. Addressing population—how many feet are leaving their tracks—remains controversial despite widespread agreement that greater numbers place more strain on the planet."

"When family planning focuses on healthcare provision and meeting women's expressed needs, empowerment, equality, and well-being are the result; the benefits to the planet are side effects... Education lays a foundation ... for girls and women. It also is one of the most powerful levers available for avoiding emissions by curbing population growth."

The project ranked 80 currently available solutions, including plant-based diets, solar farms and electric vehicles, evaluating them for effectiveness and economic viability. Together, family planning and girls' education would reduce CO2 emissions by 120 gigatons by 2050 — more than onshore and offshore wind power combined.

Individual choices

In July, Lund University and the University of British Columbia published a widely-reported study highlighting the top 'high-impact' actions individuals can take to reduce their carbon emissions and fight climate change. Having fewer children was overwhelmingly found to have the greatest positive effect.

Researchers reviewed multiple behaviours to help reduce individual emissions and identified four high-impact actions: having one less child, living car-free, avoiding airplane travel and eating a plant-based diet. Of these, having one less child saved nearly 25 times more emissions than the next most effective measure, living without a car – 58.6 tonnes CO2 equivalent, to 2.4 tonnes.

Researcher Kimberly Nicholas told *The Guardian* "We recognise these are deeply personal choices. But we can't ignore the climate effect our lifestyle actually has." She continued "In life, there are many values on which people make decisions and carbon is only one of them. I don't have children, but it is a choice I am considering and discussing with my fiancé. Because we care so much about climate change that will certainly be one factor we consider in the decision, but it won't be the only one."

Sustainable Population Policy

66 million and growing: a population policy for the UK today

As we report on page 14, projections for the future population of the UK continue to increase – at a time when our environment, public services and quality of life are already facing unprecedented pressure. The present and future impact of population growth on the UK affects almost every aspect of national life and the work of government, yet the political approach to population – such as there even is one – is reactive, piecemeal and incoherent. A challenge on this scale requires a coordinated and integrated policy strategy.

Such an approach, however, has been wholly absent from the political agenda in recent years. In response to the snap general election in June, Population Matters therefore published a framework for a national Sustainable Population Policy. Our proposal recognises the complexity and scale of the issues surrounding population and demographics, and the critical need to evaluate all the effects of any individual policy changes within a strategic context.

At the heart of the policy is the setting of targets to end population growth in the UK and bring our population to a sustainable level. Only when these outcomes are set as objectives can meaningful progress be made towards achieving them.

Publishing our policy at the time of the election provided a necessary update to the “Manifesto” published by PM for the 2015 election. Significant developments since 2015, such as Brexit and the challenges facing family planning internationally, illustrate how volatile and complex population issues are. Our position in this election represented a shift from individual policy prescriptions to a framework for determining policy that recognises the need for a strategic approach, and places the responsibility on government to determine what needs in practice to be done.

Many PM supporters contacted election candidates to promote the policy, and some responded, despite the intensity of election campaigns. Now that the dust has settled following the election and the summer parliamentary break is over, we are beginning to implement our strategy to promote the policy effectively to influencers and decision-makers in the months ahead. We will report on our progress in the next magazine.

Sustainable Population Policy in the UK

The UK Government and devolved administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales must introduce a UK-wide **Sustainable Population Policy** to:

Accurately determine future national and regional population growth in the UK and quantify the impact of specific policy options on them

The Office for National Statistics and its equivalents in the devolved administrations currently publish projections for national and regional population growth. How changes in government policy may affect these projections is not part of their remit. In order to set policy, the government must have access to the best possible evidence and assessments of the impacts of policy options on population growth. In particular, such projections and assessments must take a long-term view.

Assess the impact of changes in population on other policy fields and objectives and integrate population policies with the relevant policy frameworks

Population affects almost every aspect of government work. For example, meeting climate change targets and providing adequate housing are directly affected by population growth while population numbers and demographic components such as age profiles and birth rates are central to requirements for health and social services. Instead of seeing population and demographics as inevitable forces which policies must accommodate, the government should include measures to shape and reduce population growth into its policies.





On the basis of these assessments, set achievable, specific targets for ending population growth and stabilising population at a sustainable level

Targets are an essential component of policy. Progress in meeting targets is an essential measure for evaluating success and revising or developing policy as appropriate.

Develop an integrated policy framework to meet these targets, including through reduction of birth rate and reduction of net migration

Assessing the effectiveness of policy options requires in-depth evaluation of their consequences and collateral effects. Those include impacts on demographic factors such as the number of older people and on the skills and size of the working age population. Decisions about what specific policies should be adopted must be made in the context of that evaluation.

Measures to reduce birth rate could include education about the consequences of large family size, provision of family planning services, and financial and other incentives for smaller family size. Measures for reducing net migration could include adjusting criteria for approval of temporary and permanent residency, developing policies affecting incentives for immigration and emigration, and actions to reduce 'push' factors which stimulate migration to the UK, such as poverty, conflict and political instability abroad.

The appropriate balance of policies must be established on the basis of evidence and in the context of their overall long-term and collateral effects. Policy prescriptions before such assessments are made and before an integrated approach is devised risk being ineffective or counter-productive.

Commit the UK to taking positive action in support of stabilising the global population through aid and intergovernmental activity

The UK has considerable ability to affect the global picture. It is currently one of the world's largest economies and largest donor nations of international aid. It has a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, is a member of the G7 and NATO and will remain a member of the Council of Europe after Brexit. Demonstrating leadership and effectively using the economic and diplomatic resources at its disposal will give the UK government significant influence on actions to address the threats and challenges of global population growth.

Through easing population pressures in other countries, such actions can also reduce the drivers of migration and contribute to a reduction in net migration to the UK.

Take account of the international impacts of UK domestic policy decisions and the UK's obligations under international law, including in respect of human rights

UK policies on migration will have collateral effects, affecting the global flow of migrants and the impact on other destination countries. Migration policies also affect the economies and development of countries which are sources of migrants, such as by "draining" skilled workers or reducing remittances home from emigrants. A perception that the UK is "pulling up the drawbridge" as a result of limits on immigration may also affect the UK's international standing and reputation.

No policy should adversely affect the UK's ability to meet its legal and moral responsibilities for asylum seekers and refugees. All policies must be non-discriminatory and domestic policies intended to address population must respect the human rights of all UK citizens and residents.

Establish a Committee on Population (based on the model of the Committee on Climate Change) to provide advice to the government on these issues

These complex questions require skilled and independent input and evaluation. In addition to parliamentary scrutiny, a panel of suitable experts should be appointed to serve this function.

The policy must fall under the remit of a single Cabinet minister but engage all relevant government departments. Because of the cross-cutting nature of its activities, it should be scrutinised by a parliamentary select committee on population.



for a
sustainable
future



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