



for a sustainable future

Population Growth at the Rio Earth Summit

Statement by Patrons and Supporters of Population Matters

The Rio Earth Summit must address population growth if it is to make real progress toward sustainable development. **Stable populations are an essential part of any sustainable future.**

Ever more people multiplied by ever more consumption per person increase our environmental impact and deplete our finite resources, worsening all our environmental and resource problems. Thus whatever we do to improve technology and limit individual consumption, we can only achieve sustainability if we also stabilise our numbers. **Reducing our personal footprint does not help if we keep increasing the number of feet** – we need to limit both.

We therefore welcome the recent Royal Society's 'People and the Planet' report and the WWF's '2012 Living Planet Report'. Like Population Matters, both recognize the immense challenges we face this century of ecological degradation, resource depletion, food, water and energy security, and biodiversity loss, exacerbated by climate change and peak oil; and both agree with us that these will all be easier to overcome with a smaller future population.

We therefore urge the Rio Earth Summit:

* to recognize the importance for sustainable development of stabilizing populations as soon as possible;

* to urge all Governments to adopt non-coercive population stabilization or reduction policies;

*to recommend the provision of universal access to family planning services, with women's empowerment and education, as an urgent priority.

Endorsed by:

Sir David Attenborough; Prof Paul Ehrlich; Prof John Guillebaud; Susan Hampshire; Prof James Lovelock; Prof Aubrey Manning; Lord Robert May; Sara Parkin; Jonathon Porritt; Prof Christopher Rapley; Dr Nafis Sadik; Carl Wahren

Population Matters

www.populationmatters.org

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