



NEWSLETTER

Sustainable Population Australia Inc

No. 109
April, 2013

Patrons
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Australia to hit 23 million around Anzac Day

Anzac Day in 1915 was both a tragedy and a disaster, so it is entirely appropriate that Australia's population should reach 23 million around Anzac Day this year.

An arid continent that can only support agriculture at its margins, Australia passed its optimal population some time back, perhaps in 1966 when the population was half what it is now. As climate change and oil shortages worsen, our carrying capacity may diminish rapidly through this century. On current trends, we will have 40 million people by 2050. We may then look back longingly to the time, post World War II, when we had a mere seven million, or even to 1900 when we had less than four million.

Meanwhile, a Gallup survey of over half a million people in 154 countries interviewed between 2012 and 2012, found that 13 per cent of the world's adults -- or about 630 million people -- say they would like to leave their country and move somewhere else permanently. Of these, 26 million said they would like to come to Australia. Even more than our current population!

According to McCrindle Research, 52 per cent of Australians think our population growth rate is too rapid and only a third think we are growing at the right rate. A population growth rate of 1.7 per cent is significantly higher than most OECD countries. It means our population grows by a million every two and a half years, or the equivalent of a city the size of Canberra every year. No wonder the 25 March Herald Sun editorial expressed concern that this population growth was "putting unprecedented pressure on the nation's infrastructure and services". It noted how Victorian schools are already under pressure. "Some are full to bursting. Children are being taught in makeshift classrooms in libraries and arts rooms while they wait for new portable accommodation." The editorial added that health services were another problem area with not enough beds in the state's hospitals to accommodate the sick and those waiting for elective surgery.

Mark McCrindle of McCrindle Research, who came up with the Anzac Day estimate, agreed. "Growing

commute times, crowded public transport, and extended waiting times for public services raise the issue of population size," Mr McCrindle said.

Overseas migration accounts for more than half of Australia's population growth rate. Despite fertility rates being below replacement, there are still significantly more births than deaths every year.

Meanwhile, in the most recent Cabinet reshuffle, guitar-playing Tony Burke took on yet another portfolio such that he is now, not only Minister for Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, but Minister for the Arts as well. Poor old Population is getting less and less of a look in.

Population growth rate now 1.7%

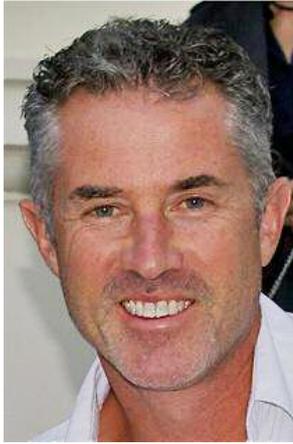
In the latest figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on March 28, the estimated resident population of Australia at 30 September 2012 was 22,785,500 people. This reflects **an increase of 382,500** people since 30 September 2011.

For the year ended September 30, 2012:

- **Natural increase** of 154,500 people was or 6,000 higher than that recorded for the previous year.
- **Net overseas migration** of 228,000 people was 55,500 higher than that recorded for the previous year.

POPULATION GROWTH RATES

- Australia's population grew by 1.7% during the year ended 30 September 2012.
- Natural increase and net overseas migration contributed 40% and 60% respectively to total population growth.
- All states and territories recorded positive population growth. Western Australia continued to record the fastest growth rate of all states and territories at 3.4%. Tasmania recorded the slowest growth rate at 0.1%.



Clive Marks

Democratic hemlock: saving earth from our animal selves

Dr Clive A Marks

“What a chimera then is man. What a novelty! What a monster; what chaos, what a contradiction, what a prodigy. Judge of all things, imbecile worm of the earth; depositary of truth, a sink of uncertainty and error: the

pride and refuse of the universe.” Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

Ever since Charles Darwin roused our species from comfortable delusions of divine grandeur we have procrastinated over the business of coming to terms with our animal selves.

Today, by standards we would easily apply to other animals, we have become earth's pre-eminent invasive species. Not even the brown rat has managed to colonise such a wide range of the planet's ecosystems.

Ironically, humans were once more of an endangered species than a pest.

About 100,000 years ago we may have numbered as few as 2,000 individuals and it was our unique capacity for technological innovation saved our bacon. Our mastery over the environment was at first due to the use of tools, fire, clothing and language, yet many millennia later the agricultural and industrial revolutions truly set us free from natural constraints upon our population growth.

Since then the disparity between the size of the human population and that of other animals has become stark, if not obscene.

Each day some 221,000 new humans are born. In comparison, our closest living primate relative that we share more than 98% of our DNA with, the bonobo, has a paltry looking population of only some 10,000 individuals. Every day we add the equivalent of 22 bonobo populations of humanity to the planet. Daily human births easily outstrip the total populations all the great apes combined. Even the total world population of some top order predators such as African lions ($\approx 16,500$); tigers ($\approx 2,500$); and European wolves ($\approx 18,000$) pale in comparison with the daily output of the human reproductive juggernaut.

Our large neocortex, that thin and convoluted sheet that covers the top surface of our brain, allowed us to become the pre-eminent technological animal. But our

brain has not changed that much in 10,000 years and this makes us rather poorly adapted to inherit the latter day role of global ecosystems managers.

Because our brain evolved to work in moderate sized tribes, inevitably perhaps, ancient tribal behaviours have followed us like genetic chewing gum stuck to an evolutionary shoe.

And it's not hard to see the evidence.

Today in almost 200 sovereign countries of the world there are some 6500 different spoken languages and at least as many ethnic groups. Along with twenty major religions there are thousands of variations on each and many minor faiths too. About 750 political parties exist in India alone.

All of a sudden we must somehow act against our nature to prevent the wheezing death of earth's natural systems, even though our tribal ways make it extremely difficult to act collectively.

Problematically, to our antique human brain, placing prejudice before reason in the pursuit of tribal interest probably had great survival value once. Yet there are far too many of us now to do it the old tribal way.

Not even when tribal dogmas have placed civilisations in peril have they been abandoned. This is perhaps the key message of Jared Diamond's book 'Collapse'. Civilisations most often implode from within by irrational and self-interested human behaviour rather than insuperable external forces.

However, it is not mandatory to cling to ancient ways of course. We don't have to be slaves to our genes and tribal impulses. The important point is that people differ largely because culturally their institutions differ; we are products of our cultural evolution too. It is this non-Darwinian form of evolution that might just protect us from ourselves. Although in order to make this happen fast enough, we might need to get around to finally addressing the 2000-year-old concerns of an old Greek.

Socrates was the quintessential outsider and heretic condemned to death by a democratic vote of his peers after being charged with corrupting youth with his arguments and not believing in the Gods of the state. Before he drank his cup of hemlock he warned that democratic decisions would not necessarily lead to moral or rationale outcomes. After all, democracy may just measure the selfish will of many individuals, held captive by vested interests and manipulated information.

Disturbingly, some eventually learned to use the manner of Socrates' death to their advantage and developed means to harvest the inner demons of the primate ice age hunter within us all.

Shortly after the First World War, Edward Bernays proved the utility of using wartime propaganda and Freudian psychology to manipulate public opinion and desires en masse. Bernays turned the manipulation of primitive desires into a cool and lucrative industry. Depressingly, he also showed that it is all too easy to train the human animal to do tricks for a cunning master.

Today, politics and commerce have become plugged in and switched on to how tribal psychology and self-interest can be easily manipulated. The tools of spin, advertising and marketing are now ingrained in the machinery of the democratic process. Yet, as our populations explode, never has there been a greater risk inherent in the self-serving manipulation of public information.

Edward Bernays' true legacy may be as the progenitor of those who now trade in democratic hemlock. Like the Sirens of Greek mythology, they may well lure us to the rocks with false promise and tribal rhythm that we shall gladly vote for only because they appease the inner wants of our primitive ice age hunter.

Because the democratic process in the absence of real knowledge will condemn us, just as it condemned Socrates. We must realise that democracy without knowledge is merely the servant of the best puppet master of our ancient ways.

Knowledge without agenda needs a new status. It is no less than a vaccine against our tribal maladaptation to global action. Perhaps there is still time for modern humans to use their unique capacity for cultural evolution to engineer robust institutions that protect the planet from the unfinished evolutionary business of our animal selves?

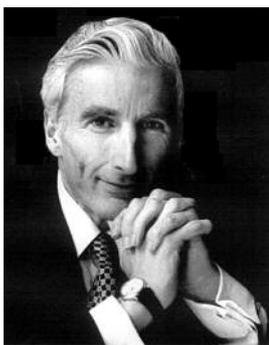
The earth can no longer afford it if we don't.

This article originally appeared in 'Dissent'

Denial of Catastrophic Risks

Editorial by Martin Rees, member of the UK House of Lords and Astronomer Royal.

Science, 8 March 2013



Martin Rees

In a media landscape saturated with sensational Science stories and "End of the World" Hollywood productions, it may be hard to persuade the wide public that real catastrophes could arise as unexpectedly as the 2008 financial crisis, and have a far greater impact. Society could be dealt

shattering blows by the misapplication of technologies that exist already or could emerge within the coming decades. Some of the scenarios that have been envisaged may indeed be science fiction, but others may be disquietingly real. I believe these "existential risks" deserve more serious study. Those fortunate enough to live in the developed world fret too much about minor hazards of everyday life: improbable air crashes, possible carcinogens in food, low radiation doses, and so forth. But we should be more concerned about events that have not yet happened but which, if they occurred even once, could cause worldwide devastation.

The main threats to sustained human existence now come from people, not from nature. Ecological shocks that irreversibly degrade the biosphere could be triggered by the unsustainable demands of a growing world population. Fast-spreading pandemics would cause havoc in the megacities of the developing world. And political tensions will probably stem from scarcity of resources, aggravated by climate change. Equally worrying are the imponderable downsides of powerful new cyber-, bio-, and nanotechnologies. Indeed, we're entering an era when a few individuals could, via error or terror, trigger societal breakdown.

Some threats are well known. In the 20th century, the downsides of nuclear science loomed large. At any time in the Cold War era, the superpowers could have stumbled toward Armageddon through muddle and miscalculation. The threat of global annihilation involving tens of thousands of hydrogen bombs is thankfully in abeyance, but now there is a growing concern that smaller nuclear arsenals might be used in a regional context, or even by terrorists. We can't rule out a geopolitical realignment that creates a standoff between new superpowers. So a new generation may face its own "Cuba," and one that could be handled less well or less luckily than was the 1962 crisis.

What are some new concerns stemming from fast-developing 21st-century technologies? Our interconnected world depends on elaborate networks: electric power grids, air traffic control, international finance, just-in-time delivery, and so forth. Unless these are highly resilient, their manifest benefits could be outweighed by catastrophic (albeit rare) breakdowns cascading through the system. Social media could spread psychic contagion from a localized crisis, literally at the speed of light. Concern about cyberattack, by criminals or hostile nations, is rising sharply. Synthetic biology likewise offers huge potential for medicine and agriculture...

For full editorial, see

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/339/6124/1123.full>

New Immigration Minister



Brendan O'Connor

In the Cabinet reshuffle one before last, Brendan O'Connor replaced Chris Bowen as Immigration Minister. SPA put the following questions to him. This is his response.

Q. You recently tightened the 457 temporary workers' program. What were your reasons?

The Gillard Government has been clear that protecting jobs and training opportunities for Australian citizens is a chief priority. However, the subclass 457 visa program is crucial for some regions and sectors where there are genuine skills shortages that aren't being met.

Some employers do seek to misuse the program to bring in temporary labour when local workers are available, bringing in relatives for jobs that do not exist, or to exploit vulnerable temporary workers. This undermines fairness in our workplaces and community confidence in our skilled migration program.

Our tightening of the 457 visa program means that workers are better protected, while ensuring the jobs of Australian workers are not undercut by abuse of the temporary skilled worker visa.

Q. What steps is your Government taking to ensure greater training by employers to minimise the need to import temporary workers?

We require employers to demonstrate they have a commitment to training Australians before they can employ workers under the 457 visa program.

The Gillard Government is further strengthening these arrangements by amending the existing training benchmarks so that an employer's obligation to train Australian citizens and permanent residents is ongoing and binding for the duration of the period over which they employ 457 visa holders, including for newly established businesses.

Q. While tightening the 457 visa program, you have recently relaxed the 485 graduate visa program. Can you ensure that this will not take jobs away from young unemployed Australians?

Australia's international education sector generates around \$15 billion of export income annually and this revenue supports around 100,000 jobs.

International education plays an important role in developing Australia's diplomatic links with the rest of

the world.

Australian educated alumni return to their home countries with the ability to positively influence policies, including trade, energy, migration, and health.

Post-study work rights are for a limited time, to a limited group of people in limited circumstances.

Only a few hundred people are estimated to be eligible for this new stream in the first 6 months.

Q. Net overseas migration recorded for the year ended 30 June 2012 was 208,300 people, a jump of 22 per cent on NOM in the year ending June 2011. Do you intend to continue this upward trend, even though the number of new jobs created in 2011 and 2012 only matched the number of new arrivals seeking work and without accounting for the increase in the workforce of existing Australians (native-born or pre-2011 migrants)?

Under the Gillard Government, Australia's unemployment rate remained steady in 2011-12 and the rise in the latest preliminary NOM for June 2012 to 208 300 still has NOM at well below its peak of 315 700 in December 2008.

The relationship between NOM and employment growth needs to factor in labour force departures, such as the demographic impact of baby boomers leaving the labour market in the coming years.

We are currently reforming the 457 program, which has grown considerably in recent years, to ensure that the program is only used to fill genuine skills shortages.

Q. Net overseas migration contributed 58 per cent to Australia's population growth of nearly 360,000 in the year ending 30 June 2012. Do you believe Australia can sustain this population growth rate from an environmental, social or economic point of view?

In 2011, the Gillard Government announced the Sustainable Population Strategy, which outlines our framework for a sustainable Australia. We are committed to ensuring that future population change is compatible with the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of our nation, in all communities which are affected by population changes in differing and significant ways.

Our strategy recognises that population change is not only about the growth and overall size of our population, it is also about the needs and skills of our population, how we live, and importantly, where we live.

Q. You have no control over the number of New Zealanders residing in Australia because of the Trans-Tasman Agreement yet they have

contributed significantly to Australia's population growth rate. Is there any intention on the part of the Government to review this Agreement so you have greater control over the numbers of New Zealanders entering Australia to settle?

The principles of the 1973 Trans-Tasman Travel still stand and New Zealand citizens continue to enjoy flexible travel arrangements. These travel arrangements are more beneficial than those that apply for Australian permanent residents.

It has been a key principle of the Gillard Government that conferral of Australian citizenship is via permanent residence and despite the flexible travel arrangements in place for New Zealand citizens, there continues to be a very low rate of application by New Zealand citizens for a permanent visa.

Q. Have you considered the implications of climate change and the environmental refugees that are likely to be created? Australia once rejected requests by Tuvaluans to resettle here. What would you do if, say, Kiribatians made the same request?

We recognise that environmental factors can contribute to displacement. Sea-level rise, or other climate change, can pose serious challenges in the South Pacific region. The Gillard Government is committed to helping our geographical neighbours adapt to the challenge of climate change.

The threat from a possible rise in sea-level would appear to be a long-term one that we will continue to monitor, however, what makes a person a refugee is clearly defined by the United Nations Convention and Protocol on the Status of Refugees. Australia is a signatory to both.

People forced to move as a result of climate change do not fit the international legal definition of a refugee.



Al Gore

Al Gore on population

In his latest book, *The Future—Six Drivers of Global Change*, Al Gore describes six drivers of global change including the following:

The emergence of rapid unsustainable growth – in population; cities; resources

consumption; depletion of topsoil; freshwater supplies; pollution flows; and economic output that is measured and guided by an absurd and distorted set of universally accepted metrics that blinds us to

the destructive consequences of the self-deceiving choices we are routinely making.

The book has many references to population growth and its deleterious effects but he lists the four relevant factors which are key to reducing population growth rates, although, as he writes, none on their own may be sufficient:

- First, the education of girls – the single most powerful factor. The education of boys is also important, but population statistics show clearly that the ability of girls to become literate and to obtain a good education is crucial.
- Second, the empowerment of women in society, to the point where their opinions are heard and respected, and they have the ability to participate in making decisions with their husbands or partners about family size and other issues important to their families.
- Third, the ubiquitous availability of fertility management knowledge and technology, so women can effectively choose how many children they wish to have and the spacing of their children.
- Fourth, low infant mortality rates. As an African leader, Julius K. Nyerere, said midway through the 20th century, “the most powerful contraceptive is the confidence by parents that their children will live.”

Paul Ehrlich in Canberra

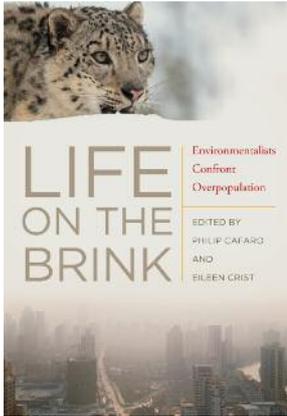
On 21 March, a number of SPA members attended a talk by Paul Ehrlich on the subject "Avoiding a collapse of civilisation. Our chances, prospects and pathways forward." Close to 500 people attended.

Ehrlich said we were now in a period of "endarkenment". He felt there was only a 10 per cent chance of avoiding total collapse. There was *no* debate in the scientific community about the reality of climate change which would affect food production adversely, yet so many universities are graduating students with absolutely no knowledge of agriculture.

“There will be 2.5 billion more people by 2050 which have to be fed from the same agricultural system that is already failing nearly a billion people to provide adequate nutrition and calories. Urban expansion, as in Delhi and Manila, continues to cover good agricultural land so all the extra people will have to be fed from increasingly marginal land.

“What is the path forward? We have to reduce the scale of the human enterprise. We have to lower the birth rate further; we have to give women absolutely equal rights; we have to provide contraception for everyone who is sexually active. We have to get the academic community to move to the front line.”

Book Reviews



Life on the Brink – Environmentalists confront overpopulation *Edited by Philip Cafaro and Eileen Crist*

University of Georgia Press, Athens and London, 2012.
Reviewed by Jenny Goldie

Some books are good for the soul and this is a grand example. If you're feeling all alone in the population fight, buy this book and you will find over two dozen contributors who care as much as you do. Not only do they care, they write well and, in many cases, passionately. All the contributors are aware that human population – to use Dave Forman's term 'the Man Swarm' - is overwhelming biodiversity. They know that preserving biodiversity is impossible without curbing human numbers.

All our old friends in the population movement are there: the Ehrlichs, William Catton Jr (author of *Overshoot and Bottleneck*), Al Bartlett, Martha Campbell, Leon Kolankiewicz, Bill Ryerson, Don Weeden, Bob Engelman, Dave Foreman and Joe Bish. And there are others like Lester Brown and Jeffrey McKee who hover around the edges. And the odd surprise or two like Paul Watson, captain of the *Sea Shepherd*. Then there are some names like Amy Gulick, previously unfamiliar but whose essay *Salmon in the Trees* was so outstandingly beautiful it will stay with me for a long time.

It was good to read Paul and Anne Ehrlich writing about different *kinds* of environmental impacts. Both rich and poor have destructive impacts, the rich with global effects, most notably climate change, but 'the poor for their local and regional effects involving, for instance, deforestation for subsistence agriculture and fuel, rampant killing of animals for subsistence or markets, overfishing, desertification, and sewage and chemical pollution of fresh waters and coastlines.' And in answer to those on the Left who argue it is all consumption, they write that a major factor underlying destructive consumerism is population size: the sheer numbers of consumers around the globe.

This book could not have better editors. Philip Cafaro is an author, professor of philosophy at Colorado State University, president of both the International Society for Environmental Ethics and of Progressives for Immigration Reform. (He's also very funny, singing a semi-bawdy duet of Australian origin with Kelvin Thomson at morning tea at a 2011 population meeting

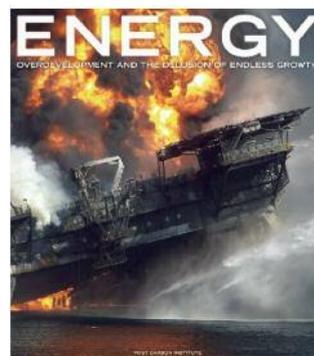
in Washington.) Eileen Crist is also an author and academic. In her polemical essay *Abundant Earth and Population*, she holds the anthropocentric worldview accountable for the current ecological catastrophe. But there is something more deadly than anthropocentrism, she writes, 'the open or tacit stance of human supremacy'. Human supremacy fuels the top-down conceptualisation of Nature as a resource base, a domain to be used for our ends. This is responsible for the magnitude of Life's crisis today.

This view was reflected in other essays. Paul Watson, for instance, writes that it all comes down to this: there are too many of us and too few of everything else. 'We will survive only by rejecting the anthropocentric perspective in favour of a bio-centric point of view, and by living in harmony with all other species'.

Philip Cafaro lays into economists, the 'secular priests of the current age' who have developed an 'elaborate theology' in which perpetual growth is seen as necessary, good and inevitable. Those who acknowledge limits to growth are deemed 'pessimists who oppose human progress.' The contributors to this book, on the other hand, want to work towards a future in which 'humanity limits its appropriation of the biosphere, and wild nature continues to flourish'.

It is a world in which 'our children's and grandchildren's right to enjoy natural beauty remains secure, rather than being sacrificed on the altars of greed, materialism and desperate need.'

Cafaro is unapologetic about limiting immigration to his country. He declines to 'support the folly of nations that have high fertility rates by encouraging them to send their excess inhabitants to the United States.' And reflecting what Bob Carr said about Sydney a decade ago, Cafaro adds that the American frontier closed long ago; we are "full up" he says.



ENERGY: Overdevelopment and the Delusion of Endless Growth *Tom Butler, George Wuerthner (Editors), Richard Heinberg (Introduction)*

Published by Post-Carbon
Institute, 2012

Reviewed by Brian Thompson (SPA NSW Branch)

This book sits well on the coffee table as it weighs in at 2.6kg (36x30cm) and covers all you should know about where energy comes from and the mess we are making

Book Reviews

extracting that energy. There is also “The Energy Reader”, a text only companion to ENERGY for those who like to read in bed (I purchased the Kindle version).

The most startling part of the book is the 150 colour photographs many of which cover two pages. There is even one photograph of an Australian coal strip mine, however the majority of the photographs were taken on the American continent. The forward is written by Douglas R. Tompkins and the introduction is written by Richard Heinberg whom many of us met during his recent visit to Australia.

The book is divided into seven parts all of which are divided again into different topics. Parts 2, 4 and 6 are essays written by specialists in the field of the particular topic covered. Part one gives a good introduction into what energy is and how it maintains us and our lifestyle. It covers the topic of how much energy it takes to produce energy, climate change and how energy fuels population and economic growth.

The first series of essays, 11 in all, start with the history of energy from agriculture to natural gas in five steps. These are followed by essays on topics such as Our Global Ponzi Scheme, Coal: The Greatest Threat To Civilisation and Progress vs. Apocalypse: The Stories We Tell Ourselves.

Part three takes a look at individual energy sources oil, coal, gas, nuclear, wind, biofuels and many others. I was most interested in the section on Hydropower. I had been under the impression it was a fairly clean source of electricity but not so; now I will have to change my views.

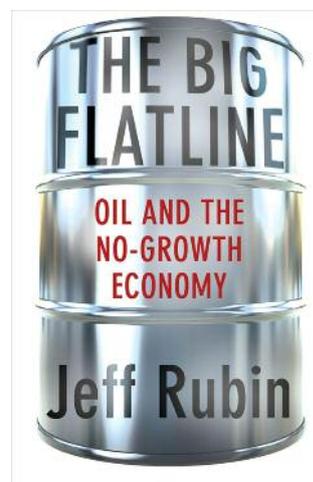
The second set of essays titled False Solutions debunks many of our hopes for the continual flow of energy into the distant future. Again of particular interest to me was the section on Clean Coal – our last Liberal PM (John Howard) should read this one! The hydro fracturing of shale oil, which is currently topical, is another topic discussed.

Part five, Wilderness Under Attack, discusses the environmental impacts we make while finding, extracting and distributing energy. This section includes a series of graphic photographs of the mess we are making of our only home – the Earth. Part six contains six essays by specialists under the heading of Depowering Destruction. I found the essays in this section rather parochial but they still made interesting reading.

The final part is mainly about the way forward, conservation, resilience, beauty, biodiversity and family planning. The afterword “Place Where the Wind Carries the Ashes of Ancestors” by Lisi Krall sums it all up.

While this book was written by mainly Americans for local consumption, the topics covered apply to a worldwide audience especially those with developed economies. Whatever happens in America will affect us; we can't just shut the door on the effects of global warming. Personally, I would like to see this book appear in all Australian high schools as it would give our children an accurate view of the positives and negatives of our current energy sources and how we obtain this energy. I would recommend this book to SPA members.

I purchased my copy of ENERGY from Amazon. The book including postage cost just over \$50.00.



The Big Flatline – Oil and the no-growth economy by Jeff Rubin

Published by Random House Canada, 2012.

Reviewed by Jenny Goldie

This book is in a similar vein to Richard Heinberg's *The End of Growth*, namely, that economic growth always depended on cheap, abundant fuel and resources

but those days are gone. This book follows Rubin's earlier one *Why your world is going to get a whole lot smaller* in which he argued that the end of cheap oil means the end of growth.

Canadian Jeff Rubin was for 20 years the chief economist at CIBC world markets and is now one of the world's most sought after energy experts. He writes clearly, as indeed he speaks, and the book is full of references to population. Interestingly, he refers to the famous wager between economist Julian Simon and Paul Ehrlich in 1980. Simon argued that, because of technological innovations, a basket of five resources (tin, copper etc) would decline in value over the next decade. Ehrlich believed that prices would increase because of population growth. Simon won, but as Rubin points out, had the wager been held in 2000, Ehrlich would have won resoundingly. Rising commodity prices indicate technological innovations can no longer keep pace with the rate at which our economies are consuming key resources.

It barely needs saying but, without economic growth, the world cannot sustain an ever increasing population. This book provides excellent background for those seeking an end to population growth.



Nicole Foss events co-organised by SPA

Sydney

Date: Thursday 4 April

Location: Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney, 1st floor

Time: 6 - 9.30pm

'Economic and Ecological

emergency: The time for action is now'

Other speakers include Mark Diesendorf and Haydn Washington

Bookings essential:

www.automaticearthtour.org/sydney/

Canberra

Date: Wednesday 10 April

Location: Brassey Hotel, Barton

Time: 7pm

Dinner with Nicole Foss

Nicole will answer questions for half an hour.

\$55 – must be paid by midday April 8. <http://act-peakoil.org/>

Adelaide

Date: 27th April 2013

Location: University of South Australia, Allan Scott auditorium h2-16

Time: 9am – 5pm

A full-day change-agency extravaganza, the Adelaide Showcase features strategic showcases from Nicole Foss, Dr. Phil Lawn, Professor David Paton, and Jeremy Miller, all leaders in various facets of the sustainability scene.

Not just your average speaker tour, Sustainability Showcase features a high level of audience participation with breakout sessions between presentations, and finishing with a speaker-panel session for converging over strategies for sustainability.

Be prepared to participate and network at this event that intends to catalyse momentum for change!

Join us at UniSA on 27 April and be a part of the change!

For ticket sales:

<http://www.automaticearthtour.org/adelaide/>

UN to hold special session in 2014 on population



Huffington Post, 21 February 2013

UNITED NATIONS - The U.N. General Assembly decided Thursday to hold a special session next year to assess implementation of a plan

world leaders adopted nearly two decades ago to slow the global population explosion.

The 193-member General Assembly adopted a resolution by consensus summoning heads of state and government to the Sept. 22, 2014 meeting. It will mark the 20th anniversary of the U.N. population conference in Cairo when some 180 nations adopted a plan that focused on birth control, economic development and giving women more power over their lives.

Since the Cairo conference in 1994, the world's population has grown from 5.7 billion to about 7 billion. Last month, the U.N.'s top population official, Babatunde Osotimehin, said the world will add a billion people within a decade, further straining the planet's resources.

Kenya's deputy U.N. ambassador Koki Muli, whose country spearheaded approval of the resolution, said the "forward-looking" action plan adopted in Cairo in 1994 set the stage for the U.N. women's conference in Beijing in 1995 and remains relevant today. She said there will be no final document from the 2014 session, a move that will avoid contentious negotiations on issues such as reproductive rights for women, sex education, abortion and family planning.

[Editor's note: This is unfortunate because a new action plan on population is exactly what the world needs.]

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/huffwires/20130221/un-un-world-population/>



India not only beats us at Test cricket but manages to fit more people on their trains!

March 2013 Worldwide Threat Assessment

of the US Intelligence Community to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

(the following is a small excerpt)

Climate Change and Demographics

Food security has been aggravated partly because the



world's land masses are being affected by weather conditions outside of historical

norms, including more frequent and extreme floods, droughts, wildfires, tornadoes, coastal high water, and heat waves. Rising temperature, for example, although enhanced in the Arctic, is not solely a high-latitude phenomenon. Recent scientific work shows that temperature anomalies during growing seasons and persistent droughts have hampered agricultural productivity and extended wildfire seasons. Persistent droughts during the past decade have also diminished flows in the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, Niger, Amazon, and Mekong river basins.

Demographic trends will also aggravate the medium- to long-term outlooks for resources and energy. Through roughly 2030, the global population is expected to rise from 7.1 billion to about 8.3 billion; the size of the world's population in the middle class will expand from the current 1 billion to more than 2 billion; and the proportion of the world's population in urban areas will grow from 50 percent to about 60 percent—all putting intense pressure on food, water, minerals, and energy.

<http://intelligence.senate.gov/130312/clapper.pdf>



Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Joe Ludwig
photo ABC

National Food Plan Green Paper

NSW SPA member Ian Brothers is keen for members to be aware of the National Food Plan Green Paper. He himself made a 48-page submission to the White Paper which can be found here:

http://www.daff.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/2205263/brothers-ian-george.pdf

Dialogue on a Crowded Planet: Population Policy and Dwindling Resources

Public Forum

Saturday 13 April 2013 – 11:00 am to 4:30 pm

Abel Smith Theatre, University of Queensland
(Blg 23, St Lucia Campus - located at the end of Campbell Rd.)

Speakers:

- Murray Lane** Population carrying capacity - past and present
- Michael Lardelli** Australia's fuel and food insecurity and the ongoing propaganda war over Peak Oil
- Simon Michaux** Peak mining and the implications of current corporate culture management of natural resources
- Ian Lowe** Population and Public Policy



Cartoon by Keith Nesbitt



Presented by Sustainable Population Australia
www.population.org.au

Entry \$5 – morning and afternoon tea provided
(Lunch available from campus outlets)
RSPV_qld@population.org.au

For those who would like to correspond with Ian on the issue his address is "Bridgewater", 213 Barkers Road, Grenfell NSW 2810.

http://www.daff.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2175156/national-food-plan-green-paper-072012.pdf

Daughterless effect

SA SPA member, Dr Paul Blythe, notes that the government has pulled funds from a research project which had yielded positive results to eradication of European Carp in Murray River and the Cane toads up north. It is a genetics project called the "daughterless effect" which only produces male offspring and therefore no egg-laying offspring to continue the population explosion. (*We can but contemplate as to whether the government pulled funds because of its possible application to humans. Ed.*)

BRANCH NEWS

WA: Just occasionally the media do (unconsciously) support SPA activities. Headlines in the Sunday Times for the WA Branch AGM on 17 March were "Potty Perth" and "Let's drink Sewage". Our speaker for that day's AGM was Nick Cox from the Department of Water on the topic "Water in Western Australia: Availability and Use of our Water Resources". And thanks to member Sally Hincks, the meeting has already been written up for Thursday's edition of the Countryman. Just over 40 people attended.

In an interesting and comprehensive account Nick Cox from the Department of Water explained that nobody actually purchased water; they purchased the supply services. Water use tended to be distributed on a 'first come, first served basis'. Dams were now useless in providing water. With the focus on underground aquifers such as the Gnamptara Mound, depletion of these underground reserves was now a concern. Recycling and desalination were becoming increasingly important for future supplies of Perth's drinking water.

He pointed out that impact of drier and hotter weather conditions had a greater effect on water run-off than the decreasing rainfall itself. Much of the initial rainfall was simply absorbed by the drier soil. This effect was particularly important to farmers in rural areas, a major user of WA's rainfall.

Elections saw both old and new faces on the 2013 Committee: President Harry Cohen; Vice President Paddy Weaver; Correspondence Secretary Angela Smith; Meeting Secretary Otto Mueller; Treasurer John Weaver; and Committee members Greg Brennan, Robin Collin, Andre Day, Clive Huxtable and Judith Odgaard.

Paddy Weaver

NSW: On April 4 the NSW branch will be presenting visiting sustainability advocate Nicole Foss in a public forum at the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts. Nicole is being teamed with some local speakers; Mark Diesendorf from UNSW will be looking at alternatives to the growth-based economic system that is driving humanity towards an ecological precipice and Haydn Washington will be talking about human dependence on nature and the folly of thinking we are separate from the natural world. Haydn is replacing Greens MP, Cate Faehrmann who had to withdraw her offer to speak due to a regional tour of the state with Greens leader, Christine Milne.

Special thanks go to our committee members, Rod and Dawn Linklater who have kindly offered to host Nicole Foss during her visit to Sydney. Kris Spike

QLD: Brisbane City Council has launched the public

consultation period for the new Draft City Plan, available at www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/newcityplan. Brisbane members are encouraged to make submissions. The plan anticipates a 40 per cent increase in households within the city boundary between 2006 and 2031. Eleven per cent of them may be on the scarce remaining 'greenfield' sites, some of which are flood-prone. The remainder will be in already built-up areas, although it claims that "less than seven per cent of Brisbane will experience significant change over the next 20 years". This means that the seven per cent must receive new dwellings at five times the existing average density of Brisbane, on top of the considerable development already existing at those hubs. Either that or we should take the term "significant" with a large pinch of salt. Statements like "open spaces in the city must evolve into multi-purpose areas" make one wonder whether we must brace ourselves for more commercial development within parks, offering recreation for customers only. The "Priority Infrastructure Plan" appears to have no costing, and includes only roads and paths, water (supply, sewage, stormwater) and parks. No mention of impacts of our growth on the need for schools and hospitals or on the rail system. While Council is not responsible for these facilities, one might think a responsible plan would consider accommodating them. It certainly speaks of "providing for" industrial, commercial and retail floor space, specifying the square meters, but not of providing for classrooms and wards.

The Queensland Branch has begun monthly film-and-discussion evenings at Toowong Library, on the third Monday each month. The February and March events have been very successful and stimulating. Jane O'Sullivan spoke to a large and engaged audience of electricity industry trainees at Nambour TAFE on 27 February. The committee is busy preparing for the National AGM and public forum on 13 April.

Jane O'Sullivan

SA: Branch president Peter Martin has been busy organising the Adelaide part of the Australian tour by Nicole Foss on 27 April 2013 at the University of South Australia, Allan Scott auditorium from 9am to 5pm (see poster).

John Coulter

VIC/TAS: The branch took part in the annual Sustainable Living Festival at Federation square in Melbourne manning a stall for 3 days from 15-17 February with the following volunteers: Gloria O'Connor, Vivienne Ortega, Jill Quirk, Jenny Warfe, Peter Schlesinger, Rod Binnington, Jennie Epstein, Linda Baird, Jonathan Page, Margit Alm, Gordon Cheyne, Kit James, Sue James, Steven Armstrong, Mem Alexander, Paul Harder and Peter Liston. It was

SPA News

an extremely hot weekend which may have reduced the crowd volume at the festival, however volunteers on the whole reported a favorable experience and mostly positive exchanges.

Members have had a spate of letters published in metropolitan, suburban and regional media in recent weeks. On 13 February, Jill Quirk did an interview with the ABC central Victoria radio station. The approach was made by the station following Dick Smith's mention of population on the breakfast show the day before.

A committee meeting was held on 26 February.

We have been shocked out of any possible complacency about population in Tasmania after reports in The Mercury of the push for a higher population of 650,000 by 2050 by Opposition Leader, Will Hodgman followed by Tasmanian Housing Industry Association executive director Stuart Clues upping the ante with a call for a population of 1 million.

Victorian government has put out its discussion paper on the Metropolitan Strategy about coping with continuing population growth. Branch members who attended a public consultation on March 2nd report that they had some success in raising the population issue at the event.

The committee had a letter writing campaign re the Government's tightening up on 457 visas writing to encourage the Minister for Immigration on this move.

The Urban Development Institute of Australia ("Australia's peak representative body for all segments of the urban development industry") Held a population conference early in March at which Kevin Rudd was a keynote speaker. The branch issued a media release pointing out that this was somewhat of a "growth fest".

Jill Quirk

ACT: SPA Canberra held its AGM on Saturday 9th March. The committee for the coming year is: Christopher Dorman – President, Colin Lyons – Vice President, Julia Richards – Secretary, David Hennessy – Treasurer, Greg Delaney – Membership Officer (not "official", but that is what he does), and Committee Members Michael Thompson and Vince Patulny. Adrian Gibbs and Shirley Kral retired from the Committee and we give them our thanks and best wishes. Thanks also to Michael Banyard who maintained the functions of Treasurer for us while continuing as National Treasurer.

SPA will again this year sponsor a U3A course. The title is "Population and limits to growth". We thank Nick Ware for organising this course. The course last year was over-subscribed. Congratulations to those

SPA AGM AND PUBLIC FORUM

The SPA AGM will be held in Brisbane on Saturday 13 April 2013.

The meeting will be followed by a public forum and a dinner. All members are encouraged to attend. The forum is a great way to introduce friends and colleagues to SPA, so please spread the word. Anyone from out of Brisbane who needs advice on accommodation or transport, please feel free to contact qld@population.org.au or ph (07)33798090.

Venue: Abel Smith Theatre, University of Queensland (Bldg 23, St Lucia Campus)

9:00 for 9:30 am: Annual General Meeting

If unable to attend, proxies and apologies may be sent to the returning officer David Robertson deltakilo@iprimus.com.au

11:00 am to 4.30 pm: Public Forum

(see flyer on page 9)

6:00 pm: Dinner

JK Restaurant Tandoori and Curry House

<http://www.jkrestaurant.com.au>

CNR Station Road & Riverview Terrace, Indooroopilly

Bus route 428 from university campus.

RSPV by 5 April to qld@population.org.au

Brisbane public transport trip planner is at

<http://translink.com.au/>

UQ-St Lucia Campus Map is at

<http://www.uq.edu.au/maps/>



Abel Smith theatre

involved for that success.

Nicole Foss is making an extensive tour of Australia. On 10 April, Sustainable Population Australia is co-hosting a dinner at the Brassey Hotel with ACT Peak Oil and Nature and Society Forum, where Nicole will answer questions for half an hour.

The Stable Population Party of Australia has announced that SPA Life Member Mark O'Connor, joint author of "Overloading Australia", will be a candidate for the Senate in the ACT at the next elections. Mark and helpers set up on a cold morning at a Canberra Sunday market where many hundreds pass through each week. A great outreach opportunity. *Christopher Dorman*

FENNER CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT 2013



Sustainable Population Australia is honoured to be given the rights by the Australian Academy of Science to organise this conference.

10, 11 October 2013

Shine Dome, Acton, Canberra

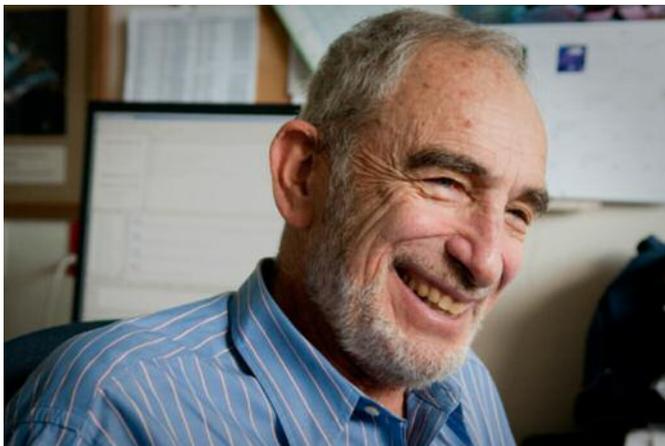
Registrations open 3 June 2013

Register your interest here now

<http://www.population.org.au/articles/2013-03-19/fenner-conference-2013>

and we will remind you to register!

Keynote address by Professor Paul Ehrlich



Other speakers include:

Suzanne Cory, Hugh Possingham, David Lindenmayer, Chris Dickman, Bob Birrell, Mark O'Connor, Yusuf Hamied, Michael Lardelli, Ian Dunlop, Sharyn Munro, Rhondda Dickson, Michael Jeffrey, Gary Jones, Ian Lowe, Michael Raupach, Tony McMichael, Paul Collins, Haydn Washington, Kelvin Thomson, Julian Cribb, Jane O'Sullivan and Roger Short. Richard Denniss is after-dinner speaker.

Early bird rates in June and July: \$200 (\$150 concession)

Standard rates in August and September: \$220 (\$170 concession)

Scholarships available for graduate students - further information when registrations open.



**Population, Resources
& Climate Change**
implications for Australia's near future.

ABOUT SPA

Formerly Australians for an Ecologically Sustainable Population.

The SPA Newsletter is mailed bi-monthly to members of Sustainable Population Australia Inc. For further information, please contact the SPA Office or your nearest branch. All membership applications and renewals should be sent to the National Office. Newsletter contributions should be sent there or directly to the editor.

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