



NEWSLETTER

Sustainable Population Australia Inc

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Patrons
Professor Ian Lowe
Dr Mary White

The Hon Bob Carr
Professor Tim Flannery
Dr Paul Collins

Australia grows by over 400,000 annually

Australia grew by 407,000 in the year ending June 2013, according to the December figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Population growth rate was 1.8 per cent, the same as the previous quarter. Population at the end of June was 23,130,900 but by 28 January 2014 had grown to 23,366,227, according to the ABS's own clock.

Natural increase (births minus deaths) recorded for the year was 162,700 people, having risen by 3,800 over the previous year, despite a below-replacement fertility rate of 1.9 (babies per woman). This illustrates the lag time between fertility falling below replacement and natural increase declining.

Net overseas migration for the year was 244,400, or immigration minus emigration, which was 19,300 more than the previous year. These figures came before the federal election in September and are an outcome of Labor federal policy. SPA awaits with interest the ABS report in July this year which may reflect policies of the Abbott Government. There has been little indication so far from Immigration Minister Scott Morrison that net migration will change significantly, for all the focus on 'stopping the boats'. The humanitarian component of the overall migration program, even when increased to the Houston committee's recommended 20,000, is still only around seven per cent of total immigration.

Western Australia had the highest percentage increase (an unsustainable 3.3 per cent) though Victorian had the highest numerical increase (106,000, also unsustainable). Lucky Tasmania enjoyed a growth rate of 0.2 per cent, or 800 people.

At 1.8 per cent, Australia's population growth rate is equal highest – with Israel – amongst OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) nations. Australia's growth rate is over three times the OECD average of 0.5 per cent and considerably more than the world average of 1.1 per cent.

Australia's population growth rate is a matter of great concern. At a time when it is critical that Australia set

and achieve ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets, any increase in population will make the necessary *per capita* reductions all the greater. A paper from the University of NSW, published in *Nature* at the beginning of January, predicted temperatures are on course to rise at least 4°C by the end of the century with potentially catastrophic results for agriculture. This came as Australia ended its hottest year in a century of temperature records. We currently feed around 60 million people. Should our growth rate be maintained and the population double to 46 million soon after mid-century, we may find ourselves unable to feed even our domestic population, let alone be a food bowl for the rest of the world.

Bindi Irwin – SPA's new Youth Ambassador!



Bindi Irwin

Sustainable Population Australia is delighted to announce that Bindi Irwin, 15, daughter of the late 'crocodile hunter' Steve Irwin and a wildlife conservationist in her own right, has agreed to be its inaugural Youth Ambassador. Bindi has a strong record on population, even standing up to the US State Department early last year when they wanted to edit

her essay that included the following: *I believe that most problems in the world today, such as climate change, stem from one immense problem which seems to be the 'elephant in the room' that no-one wants to talk about. This problem is our ever expanding population.* Since then, Bindi has co-created a range of books called *Bindi Wildlife Adventures* and in 2013 starred in her first cinema release film *Return to Nim's Island*.

Election

SA PARTY POLICIES ON POPULATION

South Australia goes to the polls on 15 March. Here are the policies of five political parties, compiled by Peter Martin.

SPGN



www.stoppopulationgrowthnow.com

The objectives of the Stop Population Growth Now Party of Australia are to:

1. Reduce Australia's rate of population growth to zero as rapidly as possible.
2. If the resulting stable population is still environmentally unsustainable, then to work to reduce the size of the population until we achieve environmental sustainability.
3. To give Australian voters the opportunity to vote on this most important of all issues.

SPGN will seek to implement its zero population growth policy by:

1. Reducing immigration.
2. Strongly discouraging families of more than 2 children, whilst continuing to welcome one or two child families.

SPGN's two candidates for the Legislative Council in the forthcoming SA election (Bob Couch and Alex Hodges) have agreed on some general principles to guide their approach to legislation brought before the Council. These include careful attention to sustainability, both environmental and financial, and support for the competitive free market system, within the context of a respectful partnership between government, business, unions, citizens groups, and individuals.

The Greens

The thinking of the Greens on population matters in SA can be found at

<http://greens.org.au/sa/policies/sustainable-population>.

Major points of difference with the major parties include reference to the global context, the principle of ecological footprint, and the goal 'to stabilise South Australia's population within a generation'.

The policy states:

South Australia, even with its relatively small population, has a disproportionately large ecological footprint. In fact, if everyone in the world were to live like us, we would need more than three planet Earths to provide us with



the all the resources we consume and deal with all the waste we produce.

In the short term, South Australia's population is still growing and must be accommodated and planned for, with the biggest pressure on Greater Adelaide...

We need a new approach to prosperity that challenges the underlying assumptions of growth and consumption.

Part of reducing our ecological footprint requires reducing the rate of population growth. Unlike the old parties, which are still wedded to population growth as the mainstay of their economic policies, the Greens know we can be better without being bigger.

Liberal Party

The Liberal Party sets out its population agenda clearly at:<http://www.stevenmarshall.com.au/MyPlanforSA/Politics.aspx>

It has a 'Growth Action Agenda' with seven key points to 'stimulate our economy, stop the exodus of people from South Australia and grow our State'.



The policy states:

'A Marshall Liberal Government will:

1. Within the first 100 days work with the Federal Government to deliver an increase in migration opportunities for SA;
2. Seek, attract and support new skilled workers to South Australia;
3. Reduce waiting times for people wishing to settle in our State;
4. Hold a Population Growth Summit to examine new ideas to stimulate growth;
5. Take new steps to encourage high net-worth investment migrant visas in South Australia; and
6. Work with the mining and energy sector to switch fly-in-fly-out jobs to locally based migrant positions where local skills are unavailable;
7. Work with the business sector to identify skills shortages for employer sponsored visas.'

In explaining the rationale for this policy the Liberal Party draws on the writings of journalist Bernard Salt and SA academic Graham Hugo.

ALP

The SA ALP makes no mention of population in its



election policies as set out on its policy web site at <http://www.sa.alp.org.au/policies/policies>. It is not clear whether this is simply an oversight or some signal that

Election

the ALP is quietly rethinking the paradigm of endless growth, including population growth. It was noted that only in January how Premier Weatherill publicly used the metric of per capita GDP. However, the ALP's intentions remain clear in the latest version of the SA State Strategic Plan (at <http://saplan.org.au/>), which states:

'Population growth is important to our economic prosperity; it ensures we have the labour resources in place to provide essential services like nursing and policing. More workers means greater productivity and economic prosperity, meaning everyone can enjoy a good standard of living.'

Target 45: Increase South Australia's population to 2 million by 2027.

Target 46: Increase regional populations, outside of Greater Adelaide, by 20 000 to 320 000 or more by 2020.

It is worth noting the ALP Government has in place a plan to develop and report on a wellbeing index.

Australian Democrats



There are no SA-specific population policies on the Democrat web site.

Rather, the Democrats have a national policy on population which applies to SA.

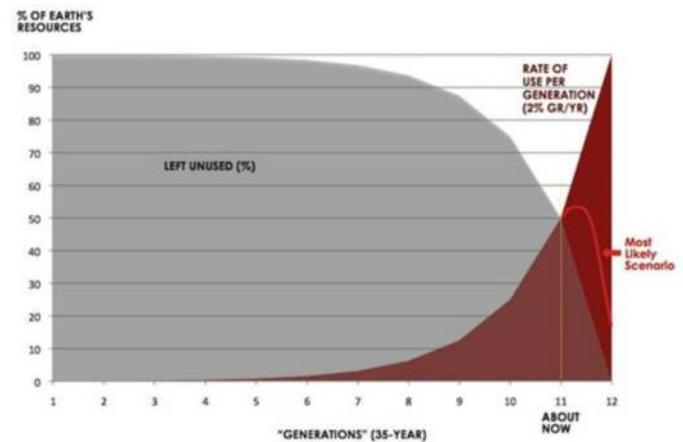
Using the party's 'member ballot' method for developing policy, the Democrats main goal is 'to ensure our continent's long-term sustainability'. The policies to achieve this are:

- stabilise then reduce Australia's population to an ecologically sustainable level
- restrain population growth in a way that is equitable to all, in keeping with the environment's capacity to sustain human numbers, and that acknowledges Australia's international human rights obligations
- support families in making decisions about family size so that additional stresses are not placed on our unique environment, long-term agricultural productivity or infrastructure
- limit baby bonus/family leave provisions and diverting the resources to education, family planning and foreign aid
- ensure that all areas of Australia's immigration law meet our international obligations
- ensure that all people accepted into Australia as refugees are granted permanent visas, and
- do not automatically subject non-authorized arrivals to detention unless there are compelling security or public health reasons for doing so.

Opinion

Depletion Model – State of the Earth in 1630

by Peter Strachan



This graph illustrates how two per cent per annum growth in consumption looks as resources deplete. This paradigm gives a doubling time for consumption of 35 years. Starting with a full tank and doubling consumption every 35 years, means that after 385 years, 50 per cent of everything initially in place will have been consumed. The grey area of the graph shows the amount of resources remaining over time while the red area shows the rate of use each generation, so that after 385 years, you will be consuming 50 per cent of the available resources in just one, 35 year period.

In what shape was the planet in 1630? Back in the year 1630, when the world's population was about 500 million, very little of the earth's non-renewable resources had been consumed. The volumes used amounted to specs of sand compared with today's usage. For example, current usage of copper is 57,530 tonnes per day. In 1630, global copper consumption would have been in the order of tens, at most hundreds of tonnes annually to make brass and bronze implements. There was virtually no use of fossil fuels in 1630. Most energy was derived from burning wood, dung or charcoal and from domestic animals or the use of other humans as slaves. London was a city of 200,000 people and the *Mayflower* had set sail to America 10 years earlier.

At that time Africa was virtually untouched by human intervention, except perhaps along the Nile. The rainforests of South America and Asia were verdant, natural lungs for a planet, full of life and the vast swathes of forest covering North America and Russia stood proud with little impact from human activity. Only in Western Europe and parts of Asia had forests been felled and fields cleared over significant areas, but in Ireland native animals like deer and even native people still roamed the forests.

continued on page 12

Book Review

Countdown – our last, best hope for a future on Earth?

by *Alan Weisman*

Little, Brown and Company,
New York, September 2013
513pp

Reviewed by *Jenny Goldie*

This has to be the most significant book on population in decades. Why? Because Alan Weisman, author of bestseller *The World Without Us*, travelled the world over a three year period to 21

countries and interviewed not only demographers, park rangers, health workers, ornithologists, doctors, resource managers, agricultural scientists, reproductive rights advocates, journalists, farmers, theologians, politicians, geographers, hydrologists, environmental activists, bio-geochemists and conservation biologists, but young mothers from the huts of Niger to an apartment tower in Tokyo.

It's worth considering the countries he visited because it illustrates how extensive were his travels. They were Israel, Palestine, Jordan, United Kingdom, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Uganda, China, Philippines, Mexico, the Vatican, Italy, Niger, Libya, Pakistan, Nepal, India, Japan, Thailand, Iran and his own country, the United States.

This book about population goes far beyond simple demographics. It addresses how many people various countries can sustain without destroying the environment, and in light of looming problems such as climate change, peak oil, water shortages and general resource scarcity. He has concluded well before the end of the book: 'The Earth can't sustain our current numbers – and inevitably, one way or another, those numbers must come down.' The truly classic photo on the title page *A little bit crowded transport* by Roberto Neumiller is worth more than a thousand words; it is the quintessential metaphor for an overloaded planet.

Thanks to translators, Weisman was able to interview many people who do not normally appear on the world stage. At times I was shaken by what they had to say. In Niger, for instance, the country with the highest fertility rate in the world (7.0), the 70 year old village chief of Bargaja has to count his beads before he can remember how many children he has. 'Seventeen,' he says eventually. 'Seventeen who are still alive. I've lost at least that many.' He doesn't have a sure count of wives either. The youngest he took when she was 12, when 'she was fresh'. In 2010, the staple cereal crop millet

failed, as did groundnuts, and the cattle lacked grass. The World Food Programme airlifted food for five million people, but even so, this young wife alone lost all her three children to malnutrition. But 'fortunately' she is pregnant again though she had been so upset at the loss of her children that the chief offered to divorce her. Weisman asked did she not regret taking the opportunity to find a younger husband, rather than bearing the child of a 70 year old man. 'But he is the chief,' she replies, puzzled by the question.

Many Nigeriens do not see population growth as a problem, after all, there are 'only' 16.6 million people spread across 1,267,000 square kilometres, and one study showed people wanted even more children. If current growth is maintained, however, the number of people will exceed 50 million well before mid-century. But the climate is changing in Niger. Now the drought never seems to end. 'Forty years ago, it rained here five months a year,' said the sultan of the Tahoua region. 'But since 2000 the climate caused by Western countries has dried our rains. Children, cattle, even goats have died.' Nevertheless, hydrologist David Dejawh insists the western Sahel is on top of an ocean of water. Is there enough water to feed Niger's population of 16.6 million? 'Absolutely' is the reply. Will there be enough to feed 50 million Nigeriens in 30 years time? Dejawh's smile fades. 'Even with this ocean of water, 50 million people will have serious problems.'

At the other end of the spectrum, in Japan, whose fertility rate of 1.4 is sixteenth lowest in the world, Weisman interviewed mothers in their thirties with only one child each. One of them, who lives in a two room apartment, cites shortage of space as a reason for deciding to only have one child. 'It's hard enough for the three of us. The size of a house pretty much limits the number of children.' When asked what form of birth control they used to ensure they wouldn't have a second child, she replied: 'Not having sex'. It's not that radical apparently. 'Frankly, Japanese people don't have much sex anymore'. When they do, abortion is a favoured



Roberto Neumiller

Book Review

means of birth control. Japan's population has already begun to fall – by a record 244,000 in 2013 – with the inevitable warnings about an ageing population and who will look after the elderly. The Japanese notoriously reject immigration as a solution to potential shortage of workers and instead are developing such measures as robots to lift the elderly out of bed and into chairs. Indeed, the Japanese are quite unfazed by population decline. As Weisman says, in a Japan with far fewer Japanese, there is a chance for natural capital to replenish, and for people to enjoy healthier, even happier lives.

Iran, perhaps, was the most frustrating country. Huge gains had been made in reducing fertility only to be reversed decades later. Although a million Iranian fighters died in the war with Iraq in the early 1980s, by 1986 the population had doubled in 20 years to nearly 50 million. The population growth rate was 4.2 per cent, the highest the world had seen. It was explained to Ayatollah Khomeini that, should such growth continue, to feed, educate, house and employ everyone would far outstrip the country's capacity. Iran was already exhausted by the war. Khomeini thus gave the go-ahead for what became the most stunning reversal of population growth in human history, and all of it voluntary, though there were a few incentives and disincentives. Doctors and surgeons carried birth control on horseback to every little village in the country, performing vasectomies and tubal ligations on request. Although women were 'allowed' three children – they lost subsidies for food and other subsidies for any child after the first three - most women chose two. This widespread availability of contraception was accompanied by massive female education. But then in 2011, another Ayatollah, this one named Khamenei, declared that the family planning policy was now wrong. Funding was removed from the national budget and applied to encouraging larger families. Legal age for marriage dropped to nine. No more premarital classes or surgeons flying into the hinterland to perform contraceptive surgery to poor Iranians. No more contraceptive devices, pills or injections. Only history will reveal whether a generation of educated women will comply with the 'theocratic-industrial' powers that are attempting to undo so much good.

The Philippines is a country also influenced heavily by religion, this time the Catholic Church, which has denounced any form of birth control. The consequent high birth rates and impoverishment of the people have put undue stresses on their natural resources, not least along their abundant coast-line. Dr Joan Castro - a speaker at SPA's 2008 conference in Canberra - together with Leona d'Agnes from the US, developed a program

that combined coastal resource management with family planning. By helping fishermen to create marine reserves to preserve their livelihoods, they were able to persuade them to produce fewer children which will, in turn, preserve the resource on which they depend.

This book is a travelogue of sorts but much more than that. Weisman explores how we might achieve true sustainability. He interviews Herman Daly, the dean of steady-state economics who has to remind people constantly that 'neither the surface nor the mass of the Earth is growing'. We have to keep our economy the size of the planet. There's no more room to expand. Wringing oil from sand and shale and newly ice-free Arctic deposits are only buying us time and may cost more than they give. We have to live within the earth's limits.

Weisman argues that to do that we have to not only stabilise but reduce population numbers. A one-child policy – hopefully voluntary - for the rest of the century would get us back to a more sustainable 1.6 billion people. That on its own would not stave off civilisation collapse, but if we could achieve ecological balance between us and other species, we might just do it.

Public meeting organised by the Canberra branch

Dr Robert Costanza "Creating a sustainable and desirable future"

2pm Saturday 22 February 2014

at Havelock House

85 Northbourne Avenue, Turner ACT 2612

followed by afternoon tea

Dr Robert Costanza is a Chair in Public Policy at Crawford School of Public Policy. Prior to this, he was Distinguished University Professor of Sustainability, in the Institute for Sustainable Solutions at Portland State University (PSU). Dr Costanza's transdisciplinary research integrates the study of humans and the rest of nature to address research, policy and management issues at multiple



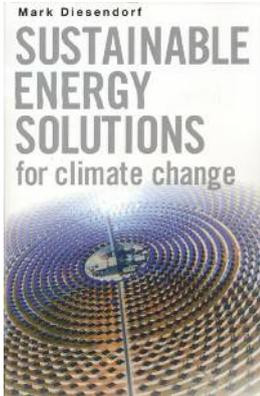
time and space scales, from small watersheds to the global system. He was lead author of chapter 11 - *Building a Sustainable and Desirable Economy-in-Society-in-Nature* – in the 2013 State of the World Report called 'Is Sustainability Still Possible?'

Book Review

Sustainable Energy Solutions for climate change

by Mark Diesendorf

UNSW Press 2014, pp 365



Reviewed John Coulter

I first met Mark Diesendorf in the late 1970s when he worked for CSIRO and was modelling the WA and SA electricity grid, exploring how wind-generated electricity would fit. In 2014, Mark comes with a lifetime of work within the field of environmental sustainability with particular reference to renewable energy and this book

is highly recommended.

In Part A Mark begins by explaining energy fundamentals. Without energy flow, nothing, absolutely nothing happens. Energy is the most basic of all resources; it makes all other resources available. Mark's introduction to the basics of energy is excellent and will be a good primer for all those who have not had a few years of high-school physics to guide them through life – and the rest of the book.

In the second half of the 20th century it has become increasingly obvious that energy use has become hedged by serious threats. For a century and a half humanity's use of energy has been dominated by exploitation of fossil fuels: coal, oil and gas, which has had and will continue to have increasingly adverse effects on global climate indicating that the use of fossil fuels must be rapidly curtailed.

Fossil fuels are non-renewable resources and will run out well within this century if exponential expansion of their use were to continue. Most transport depends on petroleum, a resource, the conventional sources of which peaked in about 2006. A change in transport technology is urgent.

For both these reasons radical restructuring of our sources and uses of energy is imperative.

Part B of the book sets out the technologies which are sustainable, dividing them into those that are already in widespread commercial use such as wind and photovoltaic electricity; those that sit between proof of concept or pilot stage and full commercialisation; and those that may, in future, prove useful and commercially viable. Mark applies the same division to the technologies that seek to continue the use of non-renewable resources, showing that coal burning with carbon capture and storage is a commercially unproven

technology. He quotes the International Energy Agency which projects that nuclear may only reach one third of the renewable energy supply by 2050 – far too late to be useful.

Mark shows that significant savings in energy can be made through technical improvements and changes in social and work arrangements and practices. Solar photovoltaics and wind generated electricity are already commercially competitive, especially if the full externalised cost of fossil fuels is internalised. South Australia derived 28 per cent of its electricity from wind in 2013 and photovoltaics (PVs) have shaved a significant bit off the air conditioning-caused demand peak on hot summer days. Mark believes that a dispersed mix of renewable technologies can meet demand but not if population and per capita demand are allowed or encouraged to continue. He sees a necessary shift from car travel to electric public transport both within and between cities.

Part C deals with strategies, politics and action.

An array of factors touching on many areas is covered here: recognising the serious defects in GDP as a useful measure, other measures of progress, removing subsidies for fossil and nuclear, carbon taxes and emission trading, curbing population growth by non-coercive means, tighter controls on advertising to discourage consumption growth, a Tobin Tax, resource-based taxes and many more.

As I read through this section I was struck by the widening gap between what needs to be done and could be done on the one hand and what our governments are doing on the other. An example of this came to my attention in the last few days: the Federal Government's Issues Paper, which is a prelude to the development of, first a Green Paper and then a final White Paper, on Energy Policy.

The Issues Paper does not mention climate change at all and the promised 5 per cent emission reduction by 2020 is dealt with as an impediment to a Business as Usual energy policy.

This book is filled with information, explanation and ideas for innovative and practical change. There are many useful tables and graphs. One thing which I would have liked to have seen included would have been a worked example based on actual grid data over a significant period showing how each technology/social/behavioural change would have bridged the energy demand.

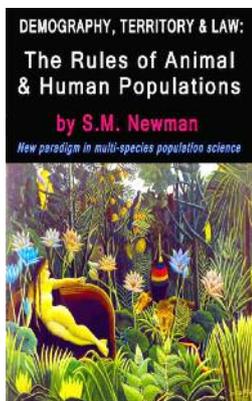
Whether we like it or not, energy policy will dominate all other considerations in the decades ahead. This book should be made compulsory reading for all, starting first with our politicians and journalists.

Book Review

Demography, Territory and Law: Rules of Animal and Human Populations,

by S. M. Newman

Countershock Press, Australia, 2013.



Reviewed by Jill Quirk

This new book about population has elicited rave reviews from serious researchers and writers in the field who have come across it. I am pleased to write this review for SPA Newsletter in order to bring it to the attention of more people who will be able to see its importance and originality and, hopefully, carry its several messages.

Long time SPA member and evolutionary sociologist, specialising in population, energy and land-use planning, Sheila Newman, has written a book that begins by attacking fundamental beliefs associated with economic progress and big populations, including life expectancy. She asserts that what is seen as mismanagement leading to overpopulation in the 'third world' is actually the same process that is happening in Australia. Noting that the 'demographic transition theory' makes no mention of immigration, she supplies a whole chapter of well-established alternative population theories, old and new, most of which few SPA members (let alone politicians or the general public) will have heard. She then puts forward her own multi-species population theory citing work by Pimentel and other population scientists which shows that (a) all species, including humans, normally live in small populations and (b) how these populations normally self-regulate. The examples she gives are not limited to hunter-gatherers, but include examples of long-time stable agriculturally based populations. She shows that inheritance, marriage/mating and land-tenure laws actually formalise instinctive social organisation present in many other species. She then shows that certain factors can deregulate these inherent stabilities. These include, as well as invasion and too high immigration, forms of transport that can move people ever further and faster from where they were born.

It is, of course, obvious, that Australia and much of the world already has huge burgeoning populations as a result of this. But is there an answer? Yes, but it's not just about contraception (because high immigration, as we know, can defeat that). Sheila Newman demonstrates what features in a legal system enhance a community's ability to self-regulate their population

and what features disable their ability to self-govern. She gives examples from anthropology and then contrasts the European system, which supplies brakes to stop population growth, with our British-originated one, which has no brakes. The reader can then see what kinds of powers in self-government citizens need to call for from their governments.

Her last chapter examines, using her new theory, the facts of the collapse of Easter Island and comes up with a new answer to this modern puzzle.

Dr Joseph Wayne Smith, (Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, School of Paediatrics and Reproductive Health, University of Adelaide) calls Sheila Newman's "Rules of Animal and Human Populations" a contribution to sociology of Weberian dimensions, combining innovative hypotheses, critical thinking of the highest calibre and a firm commitment to seek facts rather than be bound by politically correct dogmas." He writes, "It is scholarship at its best which is now being frequently done outside the intellectually stifling confines of the modern university."

Dr Peter Pirie, Professor Retired at University of Hawaii at Manoa wrote that "The examination of incest avoidance and the Westermarck Effect [on population sizes and stability] is the major contribution of Newman's book. In the future, demographers, sociologists, population geographers and particularly, anthropologists, will be unable to ignore these two, and need to be grateful to Sheila Newman for bringing them to our attention."

Copies available from Amazon.com or write to PO Box 1173, Frankston, VIC or astridnova@gmail.com.

Sustainable Population Australia and
Rod Quantock
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provoking, side splitting show...

PEAK-A-BOO!

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One night only
7pm Friday 21 February

Mitchell Theatre
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280 Pitt St, Sydney

Tickets \$26 plus booking fee
Ticketmaster 136100 ticketmaster.com.au

News and Views

“World of 7 Billion” high school video contest



Teachers and high school students please note. But hurry!

Students are invited to create a short video that illustrates the connection between population growth and one of these global challenges: climate change, global poverty, or water sustainability.

-- Length: 60 seconds or less.

-- Prizes: In each of the three categories, \$US1,000 for first place, \$US500 for second place, and \$US250 for two honorable mentions.

-- Free curriculum resources: If you have 10 or more students participate, you will receive a complimentary set of Population Education resources.
<http://www.populationeducation.org/>

All information is available at
http://www.worldof7billion.org/student_video_contest.
Videos will be accepted through Friday, February 21, 2014.

Kelvin Thomson



Kelvin Thomson

This is the conclusion to his address-in-reply to the Governor-General's speech, House of Representatives, 14 November, 2013.

“In this we do not get any help from quite a few people who think of themselves as progressives, and who would look you in the eye and swear black and blue that they want to save the environment, they want to protect workers and that they care about the future. But whether it is from fear of being called racist or xenophobic, or a form of moral conceit or vanity, they will not touch the issue of population. That is, of course, their right. But let me make this point to such people, as bluntly as I can: for as long as Australia's rapid population growth, high migration path endures, it will destroy the things you claim to hold dear. It creates a surplus pool of labour, which is used as a battering ram against job security and against workers' pay and conditions. It prevents us attaining full employment, and the quest for jobs, jobs, jobs for our increasing workforce leads us to sacrifice our environmental standards, destroy wildlife habitat and compromise our

quality and way of life.”

Japan's population logs record drop in 2013

The Indian Republic
1 January 2014



Japan's population fell by a record 244,000 in 2013, according to health ministry estimates released today, highlighting concerns over an ever-dwindling workforce supporting a growing number of pensioners.

An estimated 1,031,000 babies were born in 2013, down about 6,000 from a year earlier, the ministry said. On the other hand, around 1,275,000 people died - up about 19,000 from the previous year, the highest annual rise since World War II.

As a result, the natural population decline came to a record 244,000, the ministry said, beating the previous highest fall of 212,000 in 2012.

Japan's population totaled 126,393,679 as of March 31, down 0.21 per cent from a year earlier, according to a government figure. It has continually declined since 2007 by natural attrition - deaths minus births.

<http://www.theindianrepublic.com/world/japans-population-logs-record-drop-2013-100019378.html>

IPCC cites population growth as driver of emissions



According to a report in the Australian newspaper, the leaked report, due out in April, of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which warns against delaying action on

climate change, says the two main drivers for the increasing emissions are economic growth, which has risen sharply, and population growth, which has remained roughly steady. The largest contributor to global emissions results from the burning of oil and coal - and the draft report said its contribution is expected to rise.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/policy/dont-delay-warns-final-draft-of-ipcc-climate-report/story-e6frg6xf-1226804080335>

Feeding the world's population getting tougher...

Sydney Morning Herald, 20 January 2014

Efforts to rid the world of hunger face “immense challenges” as farmers deal with resource scarcity, climate change and loss of soil fertility, agriculture

News and Views

ministers from 65 countries said.

Economic and financial crisis and "excessive" price swings create uncertainty that endangers investment in agriculture, the policy makers gathered in Berlin wrote in a joint statement published by the German agriculture ministry and dated Saturday.



Food production will have to rise 60 per cent between now and 2050 as the world population expands to 9 billion, the United Nations' Food & Agriculture Organisation estimates. The FAO estimates about 870 million people were undernourished in 2010-12. International food prices in the past three years have been higher than ever before, FAO data show.

<http://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/feeding-the-worlds-population-getting-tougher-as-climate-changes-other-threats-mount-20140120-313ay.html>

UN agency warns of unemployment rising

Channel 9 News, Finance. 21 January 2014



Global unemployment climbed by five million people in 2013 to 202 million... the International Labour Organisation says.

Business activity is picking up but the misery of unemployment continues to pile up.

"We continue to be on an upward trajectory in terms of unemployment in the world," Guy Ryder, the UN labour agency's director general...

"What is perhaps equally concerning is that, on current trends, and notwithstanding the modest recovery in growth that we are seeing, unemployment will continue to increase in coming years," Ryder said as he released the ILO's annual employment report.

By 2018, about 215 million people worldwide are expected to be unemployed.

"At current rates of growth, we're simply not able to produce any improvement in these figures. Indeed, they're going to get worse," Ryder said.

<http://finance.ninensn.com.au/newsbusiness/aap/8786752/un-agency-warns-global-unemployment-rising>

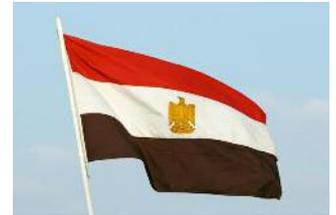
Rapid population growth imperils Egypt

Magued Osman, 16 December 2013

Egyptian census data shows that in 1948, Egypt's population reached nearly twenty million, added another twenty million by 1975, twenty million more by 1994, with the populace reaching sixty million. Another

twenty million over the next seventeen years means eighty million Egyptians by 2011...

The United Nations' population department issues periodical projections for the world's nations based on different scenarios, according to those nations' potential fertility and mortality rates in the coming years. The latest study indicates that even if Egypt follows a low fertility scenario, the population will continue to grow reaching 100 million by 2036, then hitting 105 million by 2050 and settling at that level.



If, however, fertility rates are high, Egypt will break 100 million by 2025, and reach 140 million by the year 2050 - a scenario that can be described as the "national suicide"...

<http://www.aucegypt.edu/gapp/cairoreview/pages/articleDetails.aspx>

Hundreds of Millions of Hectares, Nearly the Size of Brazil, Face Degradation Threat

UNEP News Centre

Davos / Switzerland, 24 January 2014 - Up to 849 million hectares of natural land - nearly the size of Brazil - may be degraded by 2050 should current trends of unsustainable land use continue, warns a report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The need to feed a growing number of people globally has led to more land being converted to cropland at the expense of the world's savannah, grassland and forests.

This has resulted in widespread environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity, affecting an estimated 23 per cent of global soil.

Agriculture currently consumes more than 30 per cent of the world's land area, and cropland covers around 10 per cent of global land. Between 1961 and 2007, cropland expanded by 11 per cent, a trend that continues to grow.

The report was produced by the International Resource Panel

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2758&ArticleID=10697&l=en>

BRANCH REPORTS



SPA News

NSW: The NSW Branch is pleased to announce the return of Australia's favourite comedian with a conscience, Rod Quantock. Rod's new show is called Peak-a-boo and takes a 'peak' at all the things we will be running short of in the future and how we are going to cope. Those who have been to Rod's previous shows for SPA will know to expect an evening of outrageous humour that will have people rolling in the aisles. The show is for one night only on Friday, February 21, 7pm at the Mitchell Theatre, Level 1, 280 Pitt St. Tickets are available from Ticketmaster 136100. See notice page 7.

The branch is also involved in presenting a screening of the DVD *Hooked on Growth* which will be followed by expert speakers and Q&A. The venue is the same as above but the date for this event is Saturday March 22, 1-5pm. Details of both events can be found on the SPA website.

Kris Spike

VIC/TAS: Members of the branch continue to have a good run with published letters in the mainstream newspapers, *The Age*, *Herald Sun*, *Canberra Times* and *Financial Review*, especially over the Christmas /New Year period.

The branch will hold a three-day stall at the Sustainable Living Festival big weekend (Feb 14 -16), Federation Square. Mark O'Connor, visiting from Canberra, will speak on Saturday 15 February at 'Under the Gum' on the topic 'Conservation demands population policy' (free event). Mark will also take part in 'The Great Debate - Is environmentalism in denial?' \$20/\$25 (See website and program Sustainable Living Festival).

The 2013 *State of the Environment Report* came out in November 2013 showing environmental deterioration in

SPA AGM

All financial members of SPA are invited to attend the 2014 AGM in Canberra. Come at 10.30am for morning tea and meet other members before the meeting begins at 11am.

Date: 11am, Saturday 5 April 2014

Venue: Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, 15 Blackall Street, Barton ACT 2600

The venue is close to national institutions such as the National Art Gallery, Portrait Gallery, Law Courts, Science Museum and National Library where members may buy lunch in one of the cafes.

In the afternoon, there will be a symposium from 1.30 to 5pm on *The Ethics of Migration* with a splendid line-up of speakers including Dr John Coulter, Dr Paul Collins, Prof Tony McMichael, Prof Bob Douglas and Assoc. Prof William Grey of the University of Queensland.

SPA National Elections

Nominations for positions on the SPA national committee have closed and most positions have gained the required number of nominations. Those nominated are:

President: Jenny Goldie

Vice President: Sandra Kanck

Meeting Secretary: Nola Stewart

Committee: Nicholas Car, John Coulter, Michael Lardelli, Peter Schlesinger, Paddy Weaver

No nominations were received for the position of Treasurer or Correspondence Secretary. The elections will be held at the AGM in Canberra on 5 April and it is hoped that these two positions will also be filled that day. Please talk to Jenny Goldie or let me know (rossandsue@gmail.com or (02) 6281 2813) if you are interested in standing for either of these two vital positions.

Ross Kingsland, Returning Officer

terms of energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, condition of fresh water aquatic ecosystems, threatened species, extent and condition of native vegetation.

A new state-based environmental/population group has been started by Kelvin Thomson MP with its first meeting in December.

Peter Schlesinger addressed the Bacchus Marsh Rotary club on population and will try to get them involved in the issue.

Paul Prentice has managed within his local environmental group, Friends of Merri Creek (Merri Creek's precious remnant native grasslands on the northern fringes of Melbourne are progressively being destroyed by suburban sprawl) to gain sufficient votes on the committee for it to join SPA.

Jill Quirk, made a submission on behalf of the branch to 'Plan Melbourne', the state government's strategy to accommodate on-going population growth.

Jill Quirk

QLD: After a quiet holiday season, population campaigners in Brisbane are gearing up for the Griffith by-election on 8 February. The Stable Population Party is running a candidate, Timothy Lawrence. While the vote count is unlikely to be large, it's a great opportunity to promote awareness of the issues around population growth in Brisbane. SPA-Qld Branch is also looking at how to engage with the G20 Summit, which will be held in Brisbane later this year. There will be a lot of civil society campaigning targeting the summit. While we may not have much influence on the world

SPA News

leaders, we hope to increase awareness among the civil society groups of the importance of population stabilisation in creating a sustainable, just and peaceful world.

Jane O'Sullivan

WA: There is a growing anger in the WA committee and a belief we need to show this. WA's population growth rate is still over 3.3 per cent and the quality of life declining visibly as each day goes by. We need to respond accordingly in 2014.

If businesses here need truck drivers, it is time we train our own large numbers of under- and unemployed. Other skills can be provided by 45 year olds now overlooked. It is time to cap 457 visa entrants to cases of exceptional need, where a productive training program is operating and every attempt is made to employ an Australian resident. Companies should support and endorse the training they require and be responsible for their employment practices. All strategic migration agreements granted in the past should be cancelled forthwith and an employ Australians first approach instituted.

Visitors to this country should not be granted automatic rights to employment. Financial support for Australians should only apply when the applicants cannot be employed even if the work is not in the immediate vicinity.

Australia survived the global financial crisis that hit most developed nations very hard. No one should be surprised that huge numbers of people will go to great lengths to come to this country. We have been both fortunate and lucky. And plan to stay that way.

Paddy Weaver

SA: While we have not had any meetings over the summer, there have been a remarkable number of letters - many from SPA members - in the *Adelaide Advertiser* and *InDaily* expressing concern about continued population growth. Our minds are now focussed on the March state elections, however, with members of the committee helping various parties. Please see page 2 and 3 for policies of the five that matter. Interestingly, the Greens have improved their policies a great deal, calling for stabilisation of population (albeit within a generation - it could be quicker!) and, borrowing from Stable(now Sustainable) Population Party, including the

Is there a journalist in the house?!

The current editor of the newsletter and e-news (me) would like a little help in preparing e-news and is seeking an assistant, preferably a journalist. At this stage it is not a paid position but if interested, please contact me on editor@population.org.au

Jenny Goldie, Editor, SPA Newsletter and e-news

SPA Working Groups: Members Wanted

Members might recall that in 2011 the Executive met over a weekend to draft a Strategic Plan for SPA. The plan included the setting up a number of specific working groups. While some of the groups "met" a few times, the idea mostly fell by the wayside because no-one was driving it. I have now taken on the responsibility of ensuring that these groups are re-established, as I believe they are crucial for SPA's crucial role in getting our message out to the wider public.

The groups we agreed to form back in 2011 were:

- Communication/Media Liaison
- Newsletter & E-News
- Web & IT
- Membership & Marketing
- Constitution, Governance & Compliance
- International Projects
- Strategic Plan & Strategy
- Finance & Donations
- Young People

Following the Strategic Planning Weekend, suggestions of other groups were made such as a Religious Engagement Group, and a Political Engagement Group.

SPA is now seeking expressions of interest from members who have direct experience in a particular field and might be interested in being a part of one (or more) of these groups. If you are interested, need more information or have further ideas please e-mail me vp@population.org.au or phone me on 08 - 8336 4114.

Sandra Kanck, Vice-President

words 'better without being bigger'. We are keen to see Stop Population Growth Now Party do well enough to put Bob Couch into the Legislative Council. We are planning an election meeting in early March at which we hope to get the five parties to present their positions on population growth. We will advertise via email, SPA website, CCSA and other means.

John Coulter

ACT: The branch is gearing up for two important events. World-renowned environmental economist Robert Costanza, now with the Crawford School at ANU, will address our meeting on 22 February at Havelock House. See notice page 5. The other is the SPA National AGM on Saturday 5 April at 11am followed by a symposium on *The Ethics of Migration* in the afternoon with a fine line-up of speakers.

Christopher Dorman

(continued from page 3)

The world's river systems all ran into the sea, largely unhindered by human intervention. The Ganges, the Missouri-Mississippi, The Nile and our Murray-Darling system were all untapped.

Today after 11 generations of growth at two per cent per annum, accelerating post-1800, about 50 per cent of all resources have been consumed, so at that rate all will have been used in one more generation! We have used more than 50 per cent of commercial, conventional oil and probably about 45 per cent of conventional natural gas. Almost 100 per cent of the fresh water has been trapped and 70 per cent of the ocean's fisheries are massively depleted. In other areas such as iron ore, perhaps we have only consumed 10 per cent of what is available.

In the 1940s, Japan fought a war for access to resources to feed its booming population and economy. In the 1990s the world began to see the beginnings of other resource wars focused on oil and water in the Middle East and northern Africa. Whether humanity is now at the 10th or 11th generation is immaterial. The point is that we are beginning to tip over the cliff and signs of scarcity are everywhere we look, especially in the rising real price for most raw materials, including food.

Of course the scenario depicted above will not occur. Before the crunch is reached, nature will have a major role to play. My guess is that 99.5 per cent of the 7.2 billion people on earth today are blithely unaware of the fate that waits.

Oh yes, I hear the clarion call that technology will save us! Well, over the past 35 generations, humanity has been applying the very best technology available to the game, yet we have arrived at the current predicament. There have been few roadblocks that might prevent application of the best of the best of any technology at any point in history, yet we are still behind the eight-ball. How is the future going to be any different from the past in this respect? So the question remains, what will change in the future to deliver an alteration of the present trajectory?



Peter Strachan

DISCLAIMER

While every effort has been taken to ensure the reliability of the information contained in this newsletter, the opinions expressed are those of the various authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of either SPA or the editor.

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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