

Why Environmentalists must address Population as well as Technology and Consumption

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The 3 Drivers of Environmental Impact

(Ehrlich & Holdren)

$$I = PAT$$

$$\text{Impact} = \text{Population} \times \text{Affluence} \times \text{Technology}$$

where *Affluence* = Consumption \$ /person

and *Technology* = Impact/Consumption

$$I = \frac{I}{GDP} \times \frac{GDP}{P} \times P$$

So, the formula is identically true, by definition.

$$I = PAT$$

- The 3 driving forces of environmental impact are P , A and T .
- If we double any one of these, we double the impact I .
- Therefore, the 3 drivers are equally important.
- Even if A and T are kept constant, a larger population P means larger uses of energy, materials and land.
- In other words, more greenhouse gases, deforestation, pollution, land degradation and loss of biodiversity
- The remaining question is: "Is $I = PAT$ meaningful and useful?"

Apply $I = PAT$ to Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Energy Generation E

$$\text{Emissions} = P \times (\text{GDP}/P) \times (\text{Emissions}/\text{GDP})$$

Or, by focusing on energy, we can measure Affluence/Consumption per person by E/P :

$$\text{Emissions} = P \times (E/P) \times (\text{Emissions}/E)$$

Both versions of $I = PAT$ are meaningful and useful. We can measure each factor separately and devise separate policies to address each factor:

- Population policy for P .
- Energy efficiency (EE) policy to reduce E/P , which targets the problem better than reducing all GDP/P .
- EE & renewable energy policies to reduce Emissions/ E & Emissions/ GDP .

Fallacies and Obfuscations used to Squash Discussion of Population

- “A population policy is racist”
The issue is numbers, not race.
- “Discouraging births is interfering in human rights.”
Terminating the birth bounty and avoiding pro-birth propaganda is entirely compatible with human rights.
- “A population policy to stop encouraging births would alienate some Roman Catholic voters.”
The Greens must not pander to special interest groups.

- “It doesn't matter if population increases occur in Australia rather than in another country.” OR “We should focus our action on reducing population growth in developing countries.”
Australia' is world's biggest per capita emitter of GHG. So every additional Australian has a bigger impact than anywhere else.
- “The real driver of environmental impact is poverty.”
Actually, poverty is only a minor driver compared with actions of large corporations. Furthermore, population is a big cause of poverty. We must address both poverty and population.
- “Reduced immigration would limit Australia's refugee intake.”
Actually we could double our small refugee intake and still reduce total immigration (by reducing the large business & professional component).

Who are the Main Pushers of Population Growth?

- Property and housing industry
- Employers who want cheap labour for unskilled and dangerous jobs
- Employers who want a large pool of labour so that wages and other working conditions can be diminished
- Those who control the Roman Catholic Church
- Governments seeking revenue from wealthy immigrants

The Key Features of a Genuine Greens Population Policy

- Reduce total immigration by reducing the large business/professional component
- Remove birth incentives and support strongly birth control programs within Australia and overseas.
- Increase substantially the small humanitarian component of immigration.
- Of course, maintain a multicultural Australia.
- Expand overseas aid, especially for education of women.

Australian Greens' policy is inadequate on the first two.