



U.S. Immigration AND THE Environment

Reduce Immigration-Driven U.S. Population Growth
to Buy Time in the Race to Save the Environment

A
SPECIAL
REPORT FROM **FAIR**






U.S. Immigration Environment

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to Buy Time in the Race to Save the Environment

SEPTEMBER 2016

A large, moss-covered tree trunk in a forest. The tree trunk is covered in vibrant green moss and has several large, flat, brown mushrooms growing from it. The background shows a dense forest of tall, thin trees with green foliage, slightly out of focus.

Exploding U.S. population levels were a primary concern among environmentalists at the birth of the movement in the 1970s, but those roots have all but withered. Unfortunately, the national environmental movement will no longer talk about U.S. population, let alone immigration's role. Many staff and volunteers for environmental organizations know little of the history and are reluctant to acknowledge the impact of immigration on the nation's carrying capacity.

Contents

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5 DEMOGRAPHIC SCIENCE AND IMMIGRATION

9 U.S. POPULATION GROWTH IS HARMFUL TO THE ENVIRONMENT

12 REDUCING POPULATION GROWTH IS OUR BEST CHANCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

14 FOCUS: SPRAWL

20 FOCUS: CLIMATE CHANGE

25 OBJECTIONS AND REBUTTALS

28 FORGOTTEN HISTORY

Executive Summary

Reducing immigration is essential to achieving environmental sustainability in the United States. Even effective environmental sustainability policies will ultimately fail if U.S. immigration and population continue to grow as projected.

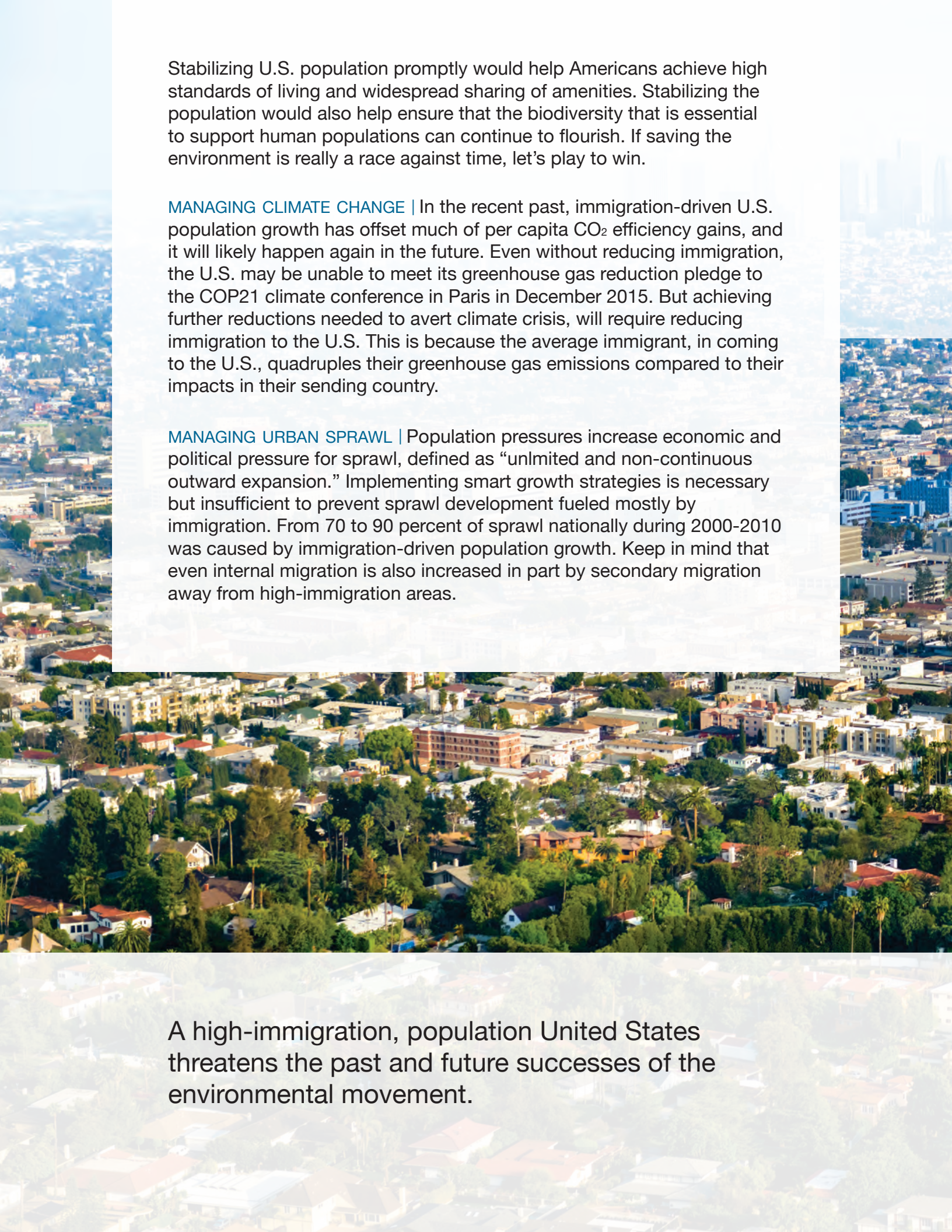


DEMOGRAPHIC SCIENCE AND IMMIGRATION | Immigration is the jet engine that drives U.S. population growth. About **one in five of all immigrants on planet Earth live in the United States**. The current 14 percent share of foreign-born in the U.S. is just shy of the record 15 percent set just after the turn of the 20th Century. Immigration generated a little more than half of U.S. population growth in the last 50 years, and will generate three-quarters of it in the next 50 years.

Accepting all who want to move to the U.S. would immediately raise our population to almost a half-billion people, and perhaps one billion by the end of the century.

INCREASING U.S. POPULATION HARMS THE ENVIRONMENT | The U.S. has the largest Ecological Footprint in the world. A growing number of feet and efforts to manage our footprint have been nullified by immigration-fueled population growth. The Ecological Footprint, invented by William Rees, measures the importance of America's growing population. Past gains in efficiency and protection have been largely canceled out by population growth. Why has the government avoided producing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on immigration?

ACHIEVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY | Reduced immigration offers the best chance for achieving environmental sustainability long term. For environmentalists, the goal of U.S. population policy should be the optimal level, not the highest possible level.

An aerial photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense urban landscape with various buildings, roads, and green spaces. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular box is positioned in the upper half of the image, containing three paragraphs of text. The text discusses the impact of population growth and immigration on environmental goals and urban sprawl.

Stabilizing U.S. population promptly would help Americans achieve high standards of living and widespread sharing of amenities. Stabilizing the population would also help ensure that the biodiversity that is essential to support human populations can continue to flourish. If saving the environment is really a race against time, let's play to win.

MANAGING CLIMATE CHANGE | In the recent past, immigration-driven U.S. population growth has offset much of per capita CO₂ efficiency gains, and it will likely happen again in the future. Even without reducing immigration, the U.S. may be unable to meet its greenhouse gas reduction pledge to the COP21 climate conference in Paris in December 2015. But achieving further reductions needed to avert climate crisis, will require reducing immigration to the U.S. This is because the average immigrant, in coming to the U.S., quadruples their greenhouse gas emissions compared to their impacts in their sending country.

MANAGING URBAN SPRAWL | Population pressures increase economic and political pressure for sprawl, defined as “unlimited and non-continuous outward expansion.” Implementing smart growth strategies is necessary but insufficient to prevent sprawl development fueled mostly by immigration. From 70 to 90 percent of sprawl nationally during 2000-2010 was caused by immigration-driven population growth. Keep in mind that even internal migration is also increased in part by secondary migration away from high-immigration areas.

A high-immigration, population United States threatens the past and future successes of the environmental movement.

Recommendations

Actions to reduce immigration are urgent, and delay will make more difficult the task of achieving political consensus on the goal of population stabilization.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY | No government agency has ever produced an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on U.S. immigration policy. In December 2015, the nonprofit Progressives for Immigration Reform (PFIR) published a final EIS on U.S. immigration policy that could serve as a good starting point.

SET A NATIONAL GOAL OF POPULATION STABILIZATION | As recommended by President Bill Clinton's Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD) in 1996, the U.S. should adopt the goal of population stabilization. Such a policy was also recommended nearly 50 years ago.

END CHAIN MIGRATION | A clear policy that limits admission to the immediate nuclear family (i.e., spouse and unmarried minor children) of U.S. citizens is a reasonable condition of immigration to the United States. Chain migration occurs when extended family members follow a relative to the United States and then petition to bring their own extended families here as well; the process repeats indefinitely. Because chain migration applies to extended families, it now accounts for more than three-quarters of legal immigration to the United States (and probably a substantial portion of illegal settlement). The core objective of extended family reunification is unachievable. Every time one extended family is reunited, another is separated.

SUPPORT MEANINGFUL REDUCTIONS IN IMMIGRATION LEVELS | This report recommends reducing immigration from its present level of about 1.25 million immigrants a year to approximately 300,000 a year, which should be enough to meet "essential" immigration needs. Perhaps 300,000 cannot be reached immediately, but it can be over time.

SUPPORT A DISCIPLINED IMMIGRATION POLICY THAT LIVES WITHIN AN IMMIGRATION "BUDGET" | Whatever immigration target is adopted, it should be adhered to with discipline. The U.S. should live within an immigration "budget" that forces tough choices. For example, occasional temporary programs to admit a particular group of immigrants must be offset by reductions in other areas to keep overall immigration within numeric targets. Living within such limits will help prevent the continuance of special, "temporary" immigration categories long after the end of the crisis that justified them.

U.S. IMMIGRATION IS HISTORICALLY HIGH | Sparked by the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, a wave of immigration has been the driving force increasing U.S. population. About one in five of all immigrants on planet Earth live in the U.S.⁴ In September 2015, the Pew Research Center found that **immigrants and their descendants contributed 55 percent of U.S. population growth from 1965 to 2015.**² In addition, they found that, “Already, today’s 14% foreign-born share is a near historic record for the U.S., just slightly below the 15% levels seen shortly after the turn of the 20th century.”³

Mainstream environmental groups have put party over principle and need to return to common sense population and immigration policies now!

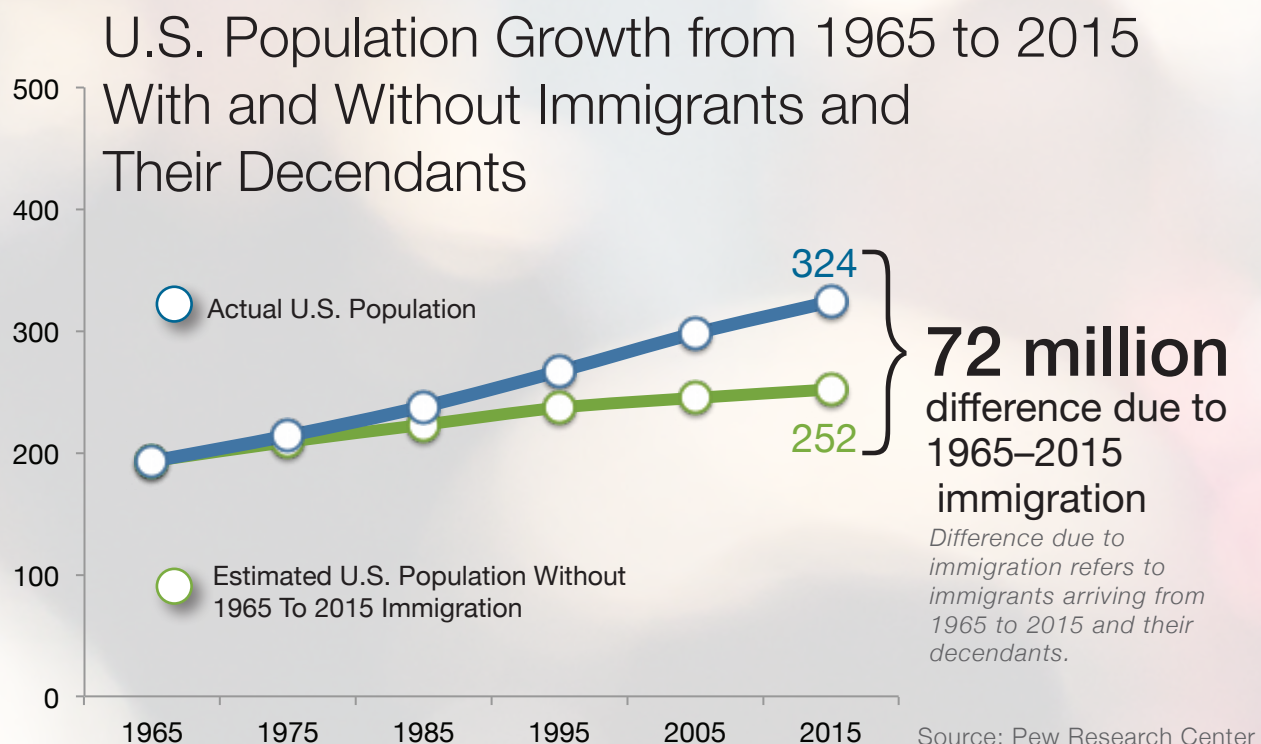


Demographic Science and Immigration

Environmentalists view themselves as pro-science and often criticize others for denying the science on climate change and other environmental issues. Demography, the study of human populations, is a science. Conservationists must face the consequences of the growth of the population of homo sapiens in the United States, or advocate reduced immigration flows.

Census Bureau figures from early 2016 show that “more than three million new legal and illegal immigrants settled in the United States in 2014 and 2015—a 39% increase over the prior two years.

The decrease in immigration from the 2007 recession was short-lived and is now history. Immigration has surged in recent years. Confirming this trend, net immigration—which adjusts for out-migration and deaths—is estimated by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) to be 1.33 million from 2013 to 2014. This is a significant increase over recent years.⁵



IMMIGRATION WILL LIKELY CAUSE THREE-QUARTERS OF FUTURE U.S. POPULATION

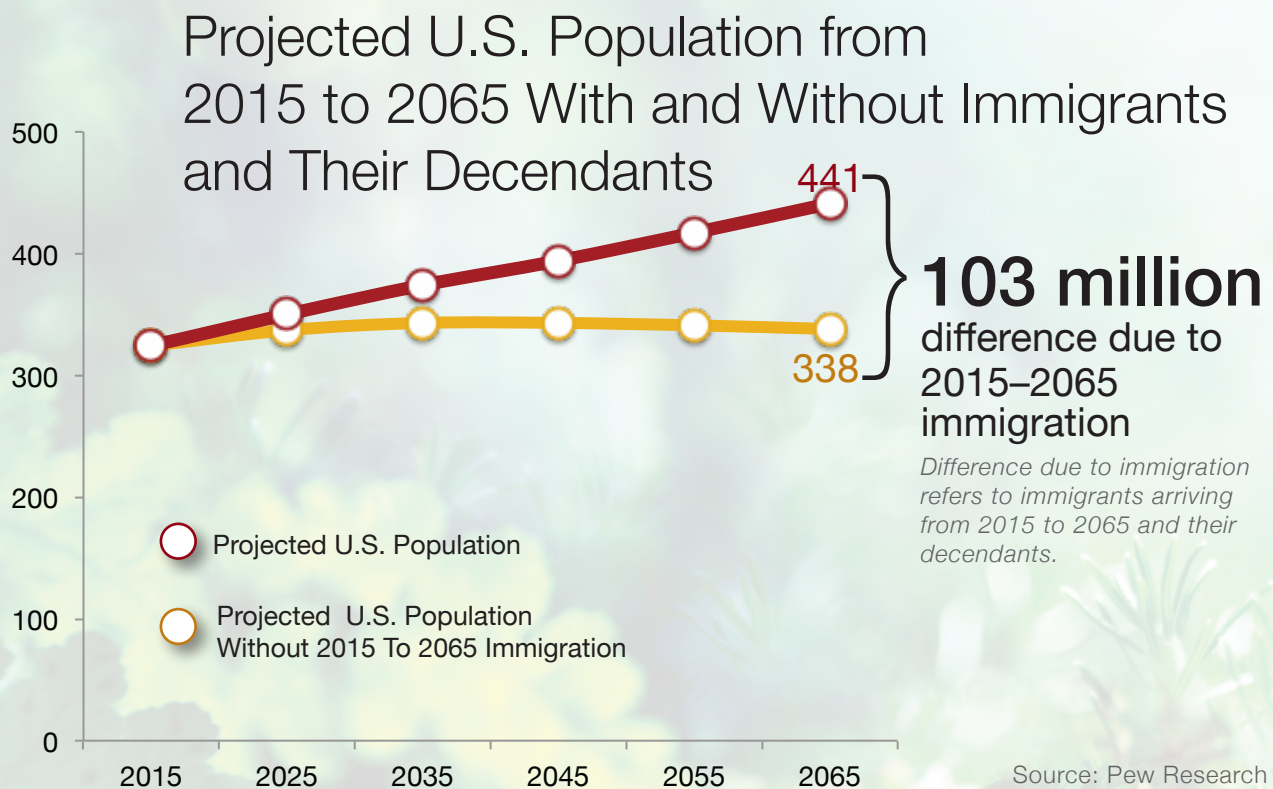
GROWTH | In March 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau updated its population projections through 2060. The Census Bureau projected that U.S. population would grow from 319 million in 2014 to 417 million in 2060, reaching 400 million in 2051. Of the 98 million people projected to be added through 2060, 75.8 million total would be from immigration (36 million new immigrants and 39.8 million births to foreign-born parents). So, 77 percent, or more than three-quarters, of U.S. population growth from 2014 to 2060 will be from immigration.⁶ If one accepts that human population growth per se affects the U.S. environment, then one must accept that mass immigration has a profound environmental impact.

Of course, unforeseen factors may render even the most skilled Census Bureau population predictions too high or too low. Therefore, prudent policy would err on the side of reducing immigration.

Some propose that, instead of reducing immigration, the U.S. should improve domestic family planning services. This would still result in a big increase in U.S. population if current immigration continued. In a hypothetical scenario, Steven Camarota of the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) calculated the effects of a 20 percent fall in native fertility by 2030, along with continued immigration at the Census Bureau's assumed levels. Under that scenario, "U.S. population would **still** grow to 409 million by 2050—a 99 million or a 32 percent increase from 2010."⁷

6

Alternatively, others propose reducing immigration to perhaps one-quarter of its present level. That would still result in large population increases by the end of the



century. Looking further ahead to the year 2100 is somewhat speculative, but is useful for understanding how relevant immigration is to future U.S. population levels. A separate 2012 study by CIS noted that **even with immigration at one-quarter of the Census Bureau assumptions (as of 2012), it would still result in a population of about 395 million in 2100. That is 85 million more people than in 2010.**

Immigration at almost any level will cause the country to be a good deal larger by 2100 than it would be in the absence of immigration.

—Steven Camarota, Center for Immigration Studies

DEMAND FROM POTENTIAL U.S. IMMIGRANTS IS EFFECTIVELY UNLIMITED | The above figures assume level or reduced U.S. immigration levels. But what if the U.S. followed the logic of some immigration advocates and accepted all who want to immigrate? The result would be a short-term increase in the U.S. population of about 50 percent. In 2009, Gallup surveyed adults in 135 countries and found that **about 700 million people would like to migrate to another country, and about 165 million of them to the U.S.**⁹ But even this 165 million immigrants, which would quickly raise total U.S. population to almost half a billion, would be just the beginning.

Gallup found that the U.S. is the preferred destination for people in sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰ This region will experience explosive population growth this century, according to the latest U.N. population projections.



The U.S. must inevitably reduce immigration. Given that reality, it is better to act as soon as possible, before the U.S. environment has suffered massive additional environmental degradation.



WARNING
**POLLUTED
WATER**
**Unsafe for Drinking
or Recreational Use**

As of late 2015, **the U.N. projects that global population will be 2.1 billion higher by 2100 than it previously projected in 2004**, an unprecedented revision:

Also surprising, this upward revision is largely confined to one area of the world — sub-Saharan Africa—where the projection for 2100 increased from 1.9 billion to 3.9 billion inhabitants. Instead of expecting 1 billion more Africans according to the 2004 projection, the U.N. now expects 3 billion more by 2100.¹¹

Even before this spike, sub-Saharan Africans risk crossing the Mediterranean on unseaworthy vessels. Later this century, it is reasonable to assume that hundreds of millions more people from sub-Saharan Africa will want to immigrate to the U.S. Therefore, if the U.S. accepted all who want to immigrate this century, U.S. population could easily reach one billion by 2100. Obviously, such figures are somewhat speculative. But the number of potential immigrants could be even larger if, for example, sea-level rise or other such problems created large numbers of environmental refugees.

U.S. Population Growth Is Harmful to the Environment

There are several possible ways to measure the impact of U.S. population growth on the environment.

WHY NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY? |

This section of the report should not be necessary. If the federal government had simply followed the law, it would have long ago completed an Environmental Impact Statement on U.S. immigration policy. But no government agency has ever performed an EIS on immigration, or population policy more generally. Perhaps government leaders fear that an EIS would find significant environmental impacts from adding more than a hundred million new Americans.

The EIS process was established in the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), which is often called “the Magna Carta of U.S. environmental law.” Signed into law on January 1, 1970, NEPA requires that any federal program or policy change that has significant environmental impacts be subject to an EIS. The chief architect of NEPA was Lynton Caldwell, who worked at that time as a consultant to a Senate committee. His previous work teaching political science and providing technical development assistance overseas had caused him to formulate a new approach.

From the beginning, both Caldwell and NEPA emphasized the crucial connection between population and the environment.

In section 101(a) of NEPA, the Declaration of National Environmental Policy says:

The Congress, recognizing the profound impact of man's activity on the interrelations of all components of the environment, particularly the profound influences of population growth...¹³



DURING THE 1960S, CALDWELL MORE OR LESS INVENTED THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OUT OF WHOLE CLOTH....[HIS 1963] AWARD-WINNING PAPER LAUNCHED THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY.... BY THE LATE 1960S, CALDWELL HAD BECOME... “THE LEADING THINKER IN BIOPOLITICS.”¹²

The U.S. government has failed to do an EIS on immigration. So someone else did it. In December 2015 the nonprofit Progressives for Immigration Reform (PFIR) published a 480-page final Programmatic EIS on U.S. immigration policy (www.immigrationeis.org). This document “assesses six types of potential long-term environmental impacts associated with three alternative immigration scenarios”—current, expanded or reduced. The scenarios project U.S. populations ranging from 379 million in 2100 (reduced) to 669 million in 2100 (expanded).¹⁴

*In general, the No Action Alternative (1.25 million annual immigration) and the Expansion Alternative (2.25 million annual immigration) would result in significant, long-term, widespread adverse environmental impacts on all resource topics analyzed.... The Reduction Alternative would still entail higher environmental impacts than at present, but much less than the other two alternatives.*¹⁵

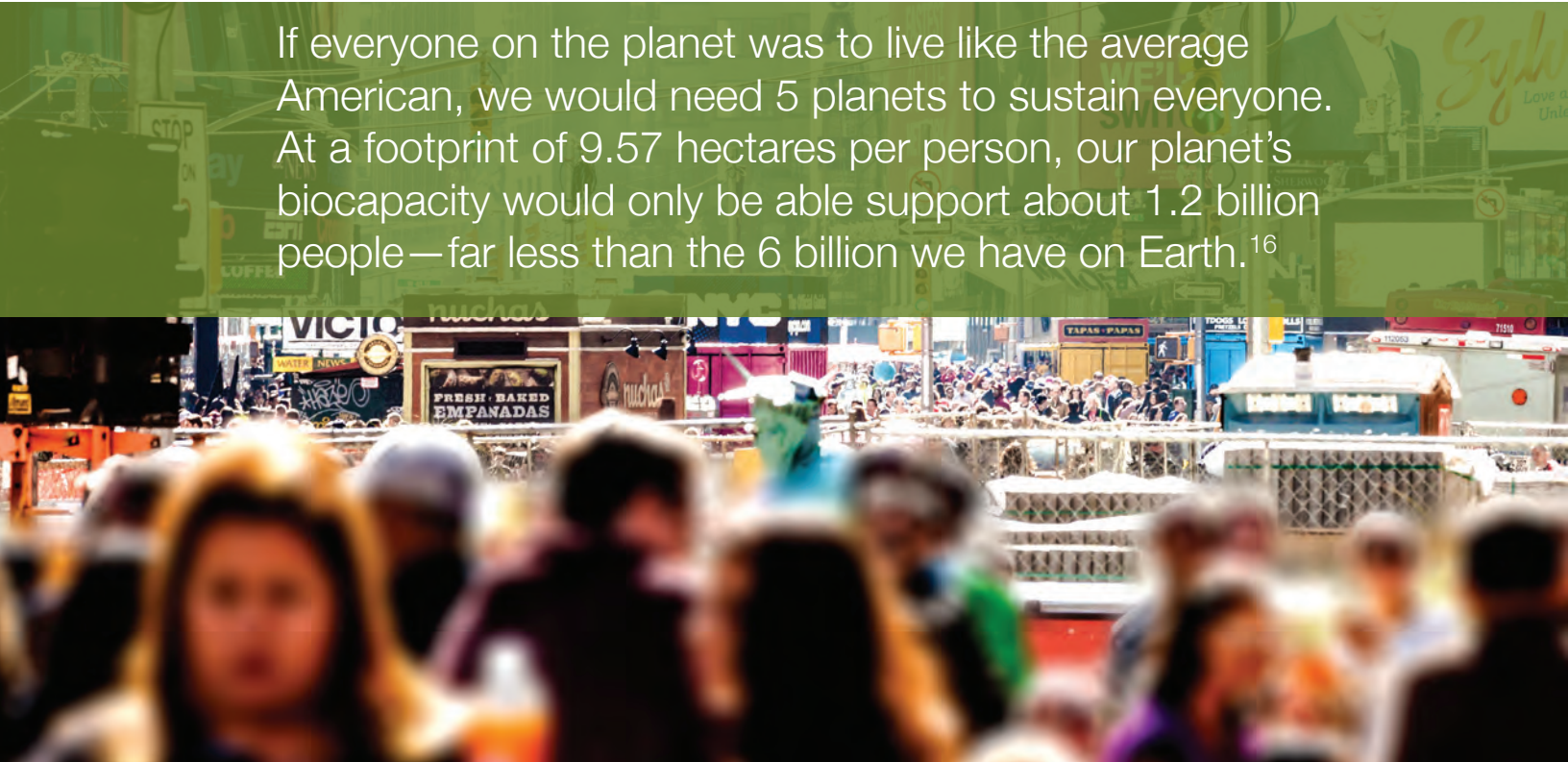
Those who question PFIR’s findings should demand that the federal government perform its own EIS. Meanwhile, other analytical approaches are useful.

THE U.S. HAS A BIG ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT AND GROWING NUMBER OF “FEET”

| Perhaps the most comprehensive attempt to measure human demands on nature is Ecological Footprint analysis. Humans consume resources and produce waste requiring disposal. Ecological Footprint analysis calculates the amount of land needed to provide the renewable resources humans use and to absorb resultant waste.

The U.S. has the largest per capita footprint in the world—9.57 hectares, or more than 17 football fields—and uses more resources than are available within its borders.

If everyone on the planet was to live like the average American, we would need 5 planets to sustain everyone. At a footprint of 9.57 hectares per person, our planet’s biocapacity would only be able support about 1.2 billion people—far less than the 6 billion we have on Earth.¹⁶



High per capita consumption by Americans has implications. Unless, Americans reduce their consumption significantly, the number of Americans matters enormously. The latter point is emphasized by the inventor of the Ecological Footprint measure, William Rees, of the Fisheries Center at the University of British Columbia. The huge U.S. footprint will only increase as population grows, fueled in large part by immigrants. According to Rees, **among highly developed countries, the U.S. has the highest growth rate. So here we have this country with about the largest ecological footprint on the planet, with a very large population growth rate, which then increases the total ecological footprint.**¹⁷

Like every system of abstraction, Ecological Footprint analysis has its limitations. Specifically, certain environmental damages, such as pollution and species extinction, are not included in the calculation, so the footprint understates the impact.

MANY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS ARE OFFSET BY POPULATION GROWTH | The good news is that Americans, individually and collectively, are gradually becoming more efficient, consuming fewer resources and emitting less pollution per capita. Unfortunately, many of these gains have been offset by growing the population unnecessarily.

Water supply is a prime example. Even though the U.S. has reduced the amount of water each person uses, population growth has kept overall water usage almost at the same level. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) estimates that the U.S. used 42 percent more water per person in 1975 than in 2005. However, overall water use decreased by just 2 percent over that period, remaining at the same unsustainable level that made water conservation necessary in the first place.¹⁸

11

Why has conservation failed to effectively reduce water use? The primary answer is simple: population growth. Between 1970 and 2010, the U.S. population increased by over 50 percent, from 203 million to 309 million.¹⁹ As Chris Wood writes in *Dry Spring: The Coming Water Crisis of North America*, “The American Southwest continues to add subdivisions, shopping centers and industries while the Colorado River continues to drop. These two trends are on an apparent collision course...”²⁰ Of course, water usage also remains high due to factors other than population, such as government water subsidies and inefficient agriculture. Until other factors are addressed, and even if they eventually are, it’s crucial to limit immigration-driven population growth.

Another example is climate change. Between 2000 and 2014, annual per capita CO₂ emissions from energy use in the U.S. declined 19.7 percent while population grew by 12.3 percent. As a result, total CO₂ emissions only declined 7.6 percent. (See the Climate Change section for a detailed discussion.)

BEYOND PER CAPITA MEASURES: WHO CONSUMES? | Of course, some Americans consume much more than others. It is important to recognize this reality without letting it be an excuse for inaction on immigration.

Per capita consumption statistics are simply calculations of averages, not actual measurements of the harms caused by each individual (which would be impossible). Therefore, per capita statistics obscure the reality of who is consuming. This truth

becomes more important as economic inequality widens in the U.S. Nonetheless, most immigrants come to the U.S. seeking material prosperity. Tens of millions of immigrants and their descendants will need apartments and houses, drive cars, wash clothes, burn lights and act in a thousand other ways that impact the environment. Some immigrants become rich and consume far more. The environmental impact of immigrants in the U.S. is real.



Reducing Population Growth Is Our Best Chance for Sustainability

The United States is already the third most populous country in the world. Biologist Edward O. Wilson has urged the U.S. to decide an official population policy like dozens of other countries. As Wilson writes, “The United States, where the idea is still virtually taboo, remained a stunning exception.”²¹ It is past time for the U.S. to decide its population future.

PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT ALONG WITH “WIDE SHARING OF LIFE’S AMENITIES”

AMONG HUMANS | First, the goal of U.S. population policy should not be to cram as many people into the country as can survive, and *then* try to protect the environment. Protecting the environment is not like competitive diving. Boosting U.S. population to a half-billion later this century is the high diving equivalent of two and a half back-somersaults with two and a half twists. Why do it the hard way? **The country does not get extra points for degree of difficulty.**

The goal should be to achieve an optimal population level. In substance, this is already law. The National Environmental Protection Act is the Magna Carta of U.S. environmental law. Section 101(b) makes it the responsibility of the Federal Government to “use all practicable means, consistent with other essential considerations of national policy” so the U.S. may “(5) achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life’s amenities....”²²

[It is the responsibility of the Federal Government to] “use all practicable means, consistent with other essential considerations of national policy” [so the U.S. may] “achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life’s amenities....”
—National Environmental Protection Act

NEPA declares that the U.S. should achieve a population level that allows many Americans to live the good life, broadly defined. Indeed, NEPA explicitly says the government should seek to:
*assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings ... [while minimizing] risk to health or safety, or other undesirable and unintended consequences...*²³

SHARE GENEROUSLY WITH WILDLIFE AND NATURE’S ANIMALS | A second goal of U.S. population policy should be to allow generous sharing of nature with other species. As NEPA says so eloquently, the government should “create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony.” One can quibble about the optimal number, but it’s obvious that even current human population levels are not harmonious with a natural balance. **If pollsters could interview the bears that remain, bears would strongly oppose a higher human population in the United States.**

SET A GOAL OF PROMPT POPULATION STABILIZATION | A third goal of U.S. population policy should be to set the goal of stabilization in the near future. In 1996, President Bill Clinton’s Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD) recommended that “the United States must stabilize U.S. population promptly.”

AVOID RECKLESS BETS AGAINST BLACK SWANS AND IRREVERSIBLE TIPPING POINTS

| Finally, U.S. population policy should seek to avoid unpleasant surprises. There is no precise number of Americans that is too many for the environment. Even if such a number existed, it could change with time and circumstances. What is certain is that rapid population growth will bring surprises, many of them unpleasant. It is reckless to bet that the U.S. can add population rapidly and still be wise enough to see disaster looming to apply the brakes in time.



Focus | Sprawl

Environmentalists seeking to reduce sprawl would be wise to pursue a dual approach. First, at the national level, reduce immigration to stabilize population size. Second, at the local level, environmentalists can advocate a broad array of smart growth strategies that focus density, protect nature and use resources better. Neither approach alone will succeed.

*Environmental activists and urban planners usually focus all their efforts on smart growth, new urbanism and LEED building strategies. (LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a valuable rating program of the U.S. Green Building Council.) But population growth drives 70 to 90 percent of sprawl in most of the U.S. Given inexorable population growth, smart growth strategies can only slow sprawl a little. **In coming decades, immigration-fueled population growth will simply overwhelm smart growth with sheer numbers.***

Immigration causes **three-quarters of U.S. population growth**, which in turn causes **70 to 90 percent of all sprawl.**

Introduction

Generally, sprawl is the spreading of human population away from central urban areas into low-density communities that depend on cars. This results in “conversion of open spaces like farmland and natural habitat into developed land holding man-made structures and surfaces on the expanding edges of urban areas or elsewhere.”⁴⁴

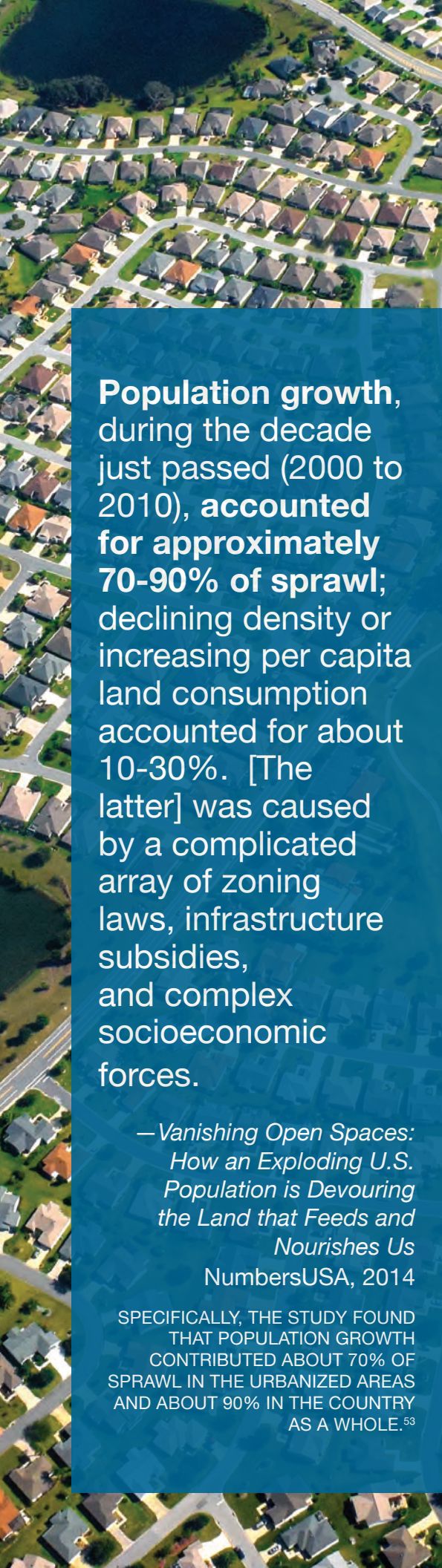
Residential sprawl usually replaces farmland or open space that was all green and had permeable soils with development that is 30 percent or more concrete, asphalt, or structure with unvegetated, impermeable surfaces.⁴⁵

Sprawl Hurts Wildlife And The Environment

Sprawl development destroys or degrades habitat, pollutes runoff into rivers, and wastes energy on less efficient transportation. The National Wildlife Federation warns that sprawl is an important contributing factor to “the first mass extinction since the age of the dinosaurs. In the United States alone, thirty percent of the nation’s plant and animal species are at risk of disappearing For an estimated 85 percent of these imperiled species, the loss or degradation of their habitats is the principal threat to their continued existence.”⁴⁷

Development of the land entombs nature’s pulsations with asphalt, the final cash crop.⁴⁶

—John F. Rohe



Of all environmental challenges, sprawl is perhaps the one most directly and obviously exacerbated by immigration and population growth.

Population growth, during the decade just passed (2000 to 2010), accounted for approximately 70-90% of sprawl; declining density or increasing per capita land consumption accounted for about 10-30%. [The latter] was caused by a complicated array of zoning laws, infrastructure subsidies, and complex socioeconomic forces.

—*Vanishing Open Spaces: How an Exploding U.S. Population is Devouring the Land that Feeds and Nourishes Us*
NumbersUSA, 2014

SPECIFICALLY, THE STUDY FOUND THAT POPULATION GROWTH CONTRIBUTED ABOUT 70% OF SPRAWL IN THE URBANIZED AREAS AND ABOUT 90% IN THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE.⁵³

Even non-sprawl factors that harm wildlife are, on closer examination, closely associated with sprawl. For example, the report *Paving Paradise* by the National Wildlife Federation found that sprawl is not only the biggest threat to federally-listed endangered species,⁴⁸ but it also contributes to other threats to these species, such as road construction and outdoor recreation.

Smart Growth America and NatureServe, a report by NWF, emphasized the damage to wildlife, warning that, “The conversion of natural areas for homes, offices, and shopping centers has become one of the most serious threats to America’s native plant and animal species.”⁴⁹

Due to sprawl, the Chesapeake Bay watershed area is rapidly losing forested land to development. It is estimated that the amount of developed land will increase by more than 60 percent by 2030 and the watershed will lose over two million additional acres of forest and farmland.⁵⁰ This harms aquatic life and human health. Wastewater treatment plants, runoff and air pollution generate excessive nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in the Bay. This causes low-oxygen “dead zones” that kill aquatic animals and stifle underwater grasses.

The Disappearing West: Urban Sprawl the Biggest Factor

A major study titled *The Disappearing West* was released in May 2016 by the Center for American Progress (CAP) and Conservation Science Partners (CSP). The study found that human development in the West is vast and rapidly chewing up nature. “Between 2001 and 2011, natural areas in the West—including forests, wetlands, deserts, and grasslands—were disappearing at the rate of one football field every 2.5 minutes.”⁵¹ According to the study, the number one cause of this loss is urban sprawl, which *The Disappearing West* identifies as top destroyer of natural areas.

Strangely, the main report mentions the word “population” only in relation to the decline in numbers of snakes, lizards, and other reptiles. Human population growth is not mentioned, even though it is the biggest driver of urban sprawl. In fact, CAP is a strong proponent of mass immigration.

Human Population Growth Drives Most Sprawl

Sprawl is caused by two factors: increases in human population and increases in per capita land consumption. The latter includes many sub-factors, such as type of development, available transportation, quality of existing communities and number of people per household.

This report cites many statistics and projections to make the case for reducing population growth to avoid environmental disaster. But it's important to remember that some damaging ecological impacts may be unpredictable or irreversible. Nassim Nicholas Taleb's book *The Black Swan* reminds us that there are rare, outlier events that the computer models will not foresee, such as the 2008 financial crash. Ecologist Leon Kolankiewicz wrote the following about energy but it applies to the impact of population on almost every environmental problem:

Nonlinearities, lag time, feedbacks, thresholds, synergistic and cumulative effects, and other complexities and uncertainties also thwart attempts to precisely quantify the role of population growth-driven energy consumption in environmental degradation.²⁴

In short, the U.S. should not gamble that adding 76 million more immigrants and their descendants by 2060 is manageable. The truth is that there are no compelling interests that would be served by continued massive population growth.

NO TIME TO WASTE

IF IT'S REALLY A RACE AGAINST TIME, LET'S PLAY TO WIN. | Perhaps the most lethal form of waste in the struggle to save the environment is wasted time. U.S. environmentalists need time to overcome inertia and change minds, laws and habits. New regulations take years to spur innovation. Green investments may take decades to fully pay off. In short, there is no time to waste. Reducing immigration to the U.S. would buy precious time by slowing the population growth that exacerbates so many environmental problems.

The U.S. must do its part to steward its portion of the global environment. The vast oceans are filling up with excess carbon. More than half of species on Earth may be extinct by 2100. The imperative of averting climate change, mass extinction, toxic pollution and other environmental catastrophes cannot be put off. That's a staple message of films, books and reports about the environment. Edward O. Wilson says, "The race is on" between destruction and innovation to meet the challenges of "overpopulation and wasteful consumption." He laments the "wreckage of the planet" and warns that "the situation is desperate."²⁵

Others say it's a race against time.



Racing Extinction is a hot new green documentary film. On December 2, 2015, the Discovery Channel aired the film in 220 countries. Director Louie Psihoyos calls his film a “thriller”²⁶ Rolling Stone magazine accompanied its review with an article entitled “Apocalypse Soon ... the world as we know it might be ending.”²⁷

*So, will we win this race? Will Racing Extinction be the call to action it's intended to be... or a requiem for all the beautiful creatures (including maybe us) here? We shall see.*²⁸

—Movie Review



If saving the U.S. environment is truly a race, then the U.S. should play to win by reducing immigration immediately and maximizing the country's chances of winning the race. Unlike many environmental reforms, significant immigration reductions could be implemented quickly and will have immediate benefits environmentally.

REDUCING IMMIGRATION BUYS TIME AND FLEXIBILITY | The Rockefeller Commission on Population Growth and the American Future wisely warned in 1972 that “continued population growth narrows our choices and forces us to choose in haste”:

As a nation, we have always faced choices and always will. What matters is the range of choice we have and the urgency with which the need to choose is thrust upon us. The evidence indicates that continued population growth narrows our choices and forces us to choose in haste.

*From the standpoint of resources and the environment, the United States can cope with rapid population growth for the next 30 to 50 years. But doing so will become an increasingly unpleasant and risky business—unpleasant because “coping” with growth means adopting solutions we don’t like; risky because it means adopting solutions before we understand them.*²⁹

This Commission report reminds us that for a nation that loves freedom, high population narrows our options and future range of independent action.

OVERPOPULATION CHALLENGES THREATEN THE GOALS OF THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

“Overpopulation” is defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as “the condition of having a population so dense as to cause environmental deterioration and impaired quality of life, or a population crash.” If the *de facto* population policy of the United States—historically high immigration leading to rapid U.S. population growth—continued for a few more

decades, and especially if immigration is expanded, the result will likely be persistent overpopulation. Environmentalists need to understand the consequences. It’s really a race against time, let’s play to win.

Democracy cannot survive overpopulation. Human dignity cannot survive it. As you put more and more people into the world, the value of life not only declines, it disappears.³⁰

—Isaac Asimov

UNDER CONDITIONS OF OVERPOPULATION, HUMANS WILL SACRIFICE THE ENVIRONMENT |

The entire edifice of U.S. environmental law and practice will find it much harder to survive if U.S. population explodes in an economic and political system resembling the current one. An overpopulated America will likely sacrifice the niceties of environmental law to the driving force of human needs and demands.

If U.S. population reaches 500 or 700 million later this century, Isaac Asimov predicted the value of human life will decline and the value of non-human life will decline more. As author and activist Tim Palmer writes, “In the end, people will demand to

be accommodated: endangered frogs are no match against human suffering, real or imagined.”³¹

BITTER FUTILITY: RELENTLESS POPULATION GROWTH THREATENS PAST ENVIRONMENTAL VICTORIES |

Legendary environmental leader David Brower once said of the endless struggle to save the environment, “All of our victories are temporary, and all of our defeats are permanent.”³² Population growth makes past environmental victories more temporary and more vulnerable. Population growth saps the precious energy of a movement that must refight past battles against an enemy who is stronger every day. Like a rising ocean, population growth is a relentless foe. Other than human greed, perhaps nothing threatens past environmental victories more than inexorable population growth.

Tim Palmer describes a hard-won battle from his youth to stop a proposed freeway—and how it was ultimately lost due to population growth. “Twenty years later, after the region’s population grew by half again, the pressure to relieve congestion became overpowering. The freeway was built.”³³ He decries the “bitter futility” of fighting

again and again, with no relief, to safeguard natural places and environmental values and concludes, “Little can be accomplished in the long term if the most fundamental pressure behind the problems—overpopulation—continues.”³⁴

Former Maryland Governor Parris Glendening (1995-2003) tells a simple story about how a huge effort by environmentalists brought back his state’s black bear. Then he notes this victory is threatened by population-driven sprawl development, which pushes into rural areas, threatening wildlife that had previously been “saved.”

Any discussion of habitat loss always reminds me of the fate of the Maryland black bear. By the middle of the last century, human activities had brought the bear to the brink of extinction. It took tremendous effort and many years, but by the time I took office in 1995, the bear had been successfully reintroduced to wild parts of the state.

*Today [in 2005], however, those wild parts are giving way to subdivisions and shopping centers. Now that we humans have sprawled our way into bear habitat, many are regarding them as a nuisance and want the bears removed or destroyed.*³⁵

Indeed, endless population growth threatens the environmental movement itself. Philip Cafaro reminds us that “environmental advocacy is grueling and often heartbreaking work. ‘Burnout’ is a perennial problem.”³⁶

By remaining silent on population and immigration, the national environmental movement increases the frequency and difficulty of environmental battles, ultimately wasting money, souls and political capital, falling back to fight the same battles again and again.



Focus | Climate Change

Climate change is a major environmental challenge facing the U.S. and the world.

No environmental problem is a bigger threat to the world and the U.S. than climate change. Its primary cause is the burning of fossil fuels, such as oil and coal, which emits heat-trapping greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere—primarily carbon dioxide. Human activities such as deforestation and agriculture also contribute to climate change.

According to NASA, the global average surface temperature rose 0.6 to 0.9 degrees Celsius (1.1 to 1.6° F) in the last century and is certain to rise further.

Small changes in the average temperature of the planet can change climate and the biosphere in large and dangerous ways. For example, during the last Ice Age, average temperature was only about 2.2 C (4.0 F) lower than today's. The latest study found that a temperature increase 2 C above pre-industrial levels will result in sea-level rise of 5 to 6 feet by 2100, and that is not the worst-case scenario.⁵⁸ Already, global warming has caused many places to experience more frequent and severe floods, droughts and heat waves. Oceans are warming and becoming more acidic, ice caps are melting, and sea levels are rising. In addition, climate change worsens other major environmental problems such as loss of biodiversity.

As these and other trends continue in coming decades, human societies may face costly disruptions such as economic dislocation, the inundation of coastal mega-cities, political instability and millions of climate refugees. Experts warn that other effects of climate change may be unpredictable and/or irreversible.

To spur action to avert catastrophe, one of the largest gatherings of world leaders in history convened in Paris in late 2015 for the COP21 conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Delegates from almost 200 countries agreed on a framework aimed at reducing GHG emissions to levels that would prevent global temperatures from rising by more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with an aspirational limit of 1.5 C.

The core of the Paris agreement is each country's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) that specify actions that must be taken against climate change beyond 2020. These include pledges to limit and reduce each country's annual GHG emissions. Countries committed to monitoring and reporting their progress, ratcheting up their climate change policies in the future, and gathering every five years starting in 2020 to present updated voluntary plans.

The United States has recognized its responsibility to reduce its emission of GHG.

The U.S. has a special responsibility to meet its climate commitments. The U.S. is historically one of the biggest GHG emitters. The U.S. has the second highest overall GHG emissions behind China as well as very high emissions per capita. Finally, with the world's largest economy, the U.S. can afford necessary changes more easily than most other countries. But rapid population growth will make these changes tougher for the U.S.

I've come here personally, as the leader of the world's largest economy and the second largest emitter, to say that the United States of America not only recognizes our role in creating this problem, we embrace our responsibility to do something about it.⁵⁹

—President Barack Obama

U.S. Pledges and Progress

GHG Emission Reductions from 2005 Levels

Previous pre-COP21 commitment

-17% total by 2020

Already achieved

11 percent between 2005 and 2011

New COP21 INDC commitment

-26 to -28% total by 2025

Nobody believes that the U.S. alone can stop global climate change. But if the U.S. fails to lead on climate change, the international process may stagnate and fall short of what is needed.

The COP21 framework is a multi-stage process that will rely on international peer pressure to persuade countries to progress from modest steps to bigger ones. That's why U.S. leadership is crucial. The World Resources Institute blogged, "Strong domestic action can continue to build U.S. international climate leadership. By showing the resolve to cut its own emissions, the United States can accelerate climate action around the world."⁶⁰ Nobody believes that the U.S. alone can stop global climate change. But if the U.S. fails to lead on climate change, the international process may stagnate and fall short of what is needed.

COP21 commitments are not enough

The U.S. formally signed the COP21 agreement in April 2016. Specifically, the U.S. committed to reducing its net greenhouse gas emissions 26–28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025, and to make its best efforts to reduce by 28 percent.

More importantly, the COP21 process so far is not enough to deal with the true threat. Only a few months after Paris, bad climate news was widespread, with reports of a record warm 2015, worsening tidal flooding in Miami and Charleston, and a grimmer outlook for the West Antarctic ice sheet.⁶¹ Averting catastrophe "requires a World War II-scale effort sustained for decades," according to climate expert Joe Romm, who adds, "The bad news is that our level of worry is nowhere near WWII scale ... [and] we are out of time."⁶²

Even without reducing immigration, it's conceivable that the U.S. could meet its initial COP21 commitments, which cover the period through 2025. But as immigration drives U.S. population to 450 or 600 million later this century, it's unlikely the U.S. will be able to reduce its GHG emissions enough to meet its

future commitments and maintain its crucial global leadership. The U.S. can no longer ignore the impact of immigration on climate change.

Large scale immigration to the U.S. increases global emissions and undermines U.S. efforts to meet its committed goals

Each immigrant who moves to the U.S. on average quadruples his or her global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Even this estimated quadrupling is very conservative because it counts only foreign-born immigrants, not their children born in the U.S. Children of U.S. immigrants represent substantial U.S. population growth and such children aspire to have higher incomes than their immigrant parents'.⁶³

Immigrants in their countries of origin emit on average far less CO₂ than the average American. This tends to be especially true if the sending countries have many poor. For example, average Mexicans in Mexico emit about 33 percent as much CO₂ as Americans. Indians in India emit less than 4 percent as much CO₂.⁶⁴ When immigrants come to the U.S., their CO₂ emissions tend to rise compared to their country of origin because they tend to travel more by car, eat more meat, buy products with higher embedded energy content, etc.

As a result, immigration to the U.S. makes it more difficult for the U.S. to meet its GHG reduction goals.

Population growth has undermined past U.S. per capita GHG emission reductions

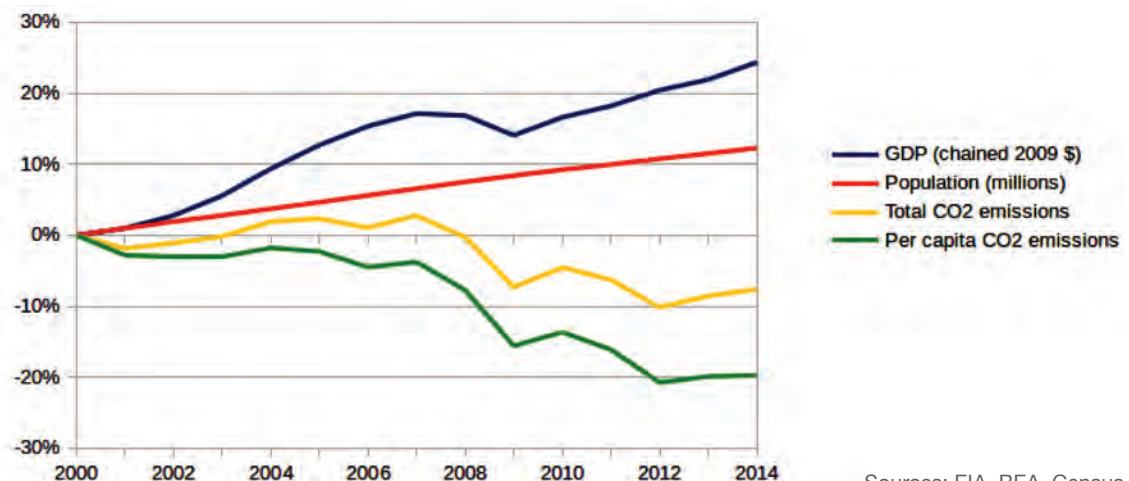
Between 2000 and 2014, annual per capita CO₂ emissions from energy use declined 19.7 percent while population grew by 12.3 percent. As a result, total CO₂ emissions only declined 7.6 percent (see chart). About half of the population growth during this period was from immigration.

U.S. carbon emissions vary hugely by population levels

Looking forward, science clearly shows the link between U.S. population levels and carbon emissions. Brian O'Neill leads the Integrated Assessment Modeling (IAM) group within the Terrestrial Sciences section at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). NCAR is a federally funded research center in Boulder, Colorado.

U.S. Population Growth Offsets Some CO₂ Efficiency Gains

Cumulative Percent Changes Since 2000



O'Neill's 2012 article in *The Lancet* looked at CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel use according to rate of population growth. O'Neill and his six coauthors found two things. First, in the past, more people meant more carbon emissions. "First, empirical analyses of historical trends tend to show that CO₂ emissions from energy use respond almost proportionately to changes in population size."⁶⁵

Second, their future scenario analyses show population size makes a huge difference to carbon emissions globally and in the U.S. In 2000, the U.S. emitted a total of about 1.5 gigatonnes of carbon (GtC). Under a low population growth scenario, they found that U.S. total emissions would decline to about 1.1 GtC in 2100. Under a high population growth scenario, U.S. emissions would rise to about 2.5 GtC in 2100. The differences in 2050 would be smaller, but still substantial. They concluded:

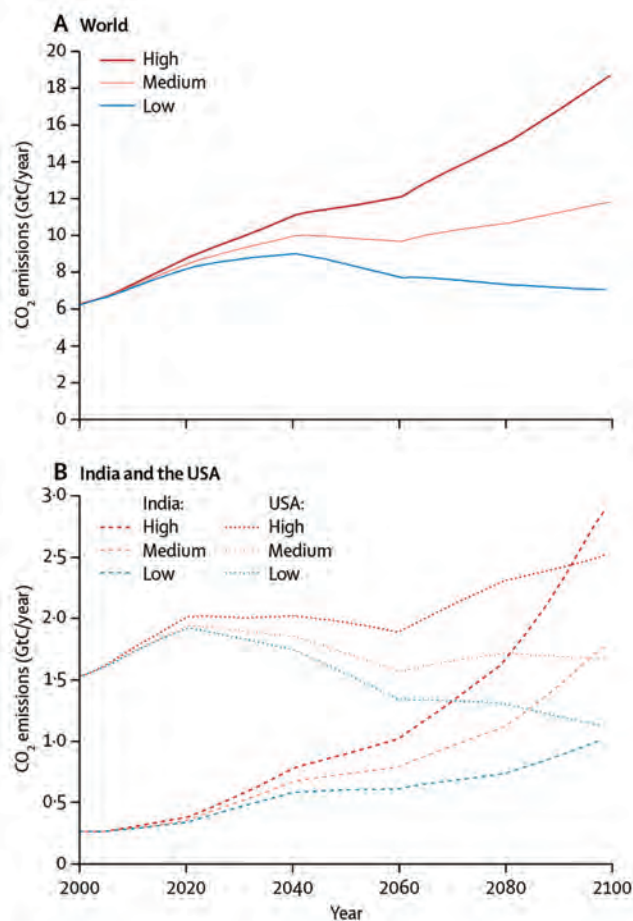
U.S. population growth has a pronounced effect on emissions, despite its small contribution to global differences in population outcomes, because of the high emissions per person implied in this scenario.⁶⁶

To be clear, the only policies the article suggested were better access to family planning assistance and development, especially in developing countries. But, given that 77 percent of future U.S. population growth will come from immigration, the study clearly shows that reduced U.S. immigration could save more than a gigatonne of U.S. carbon emissions by 2100.

CO₂ Emissions From Fossil Fuel Use According To Rate Of Population Growth

Projections of CO₂ emissions for 2000–2100 for (A) the world and (B) India and the USA based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change B2 scenario. The shape of each curve over time is driven by assumptions specific to the B2 scenario that affect changes in energy demand and the mix of fuel types in the energy system. Long-term population projections from the UN were used to calculate emissions based on high, medium, and low population growth projections.

CO₂=CARBON DIOXIDE.
GTC=GIGATONNES OF CARBON



Source: O'Neill et al., *The Lancet*. Used with permission.

Massive immigration-driven population growth is a public policy choice

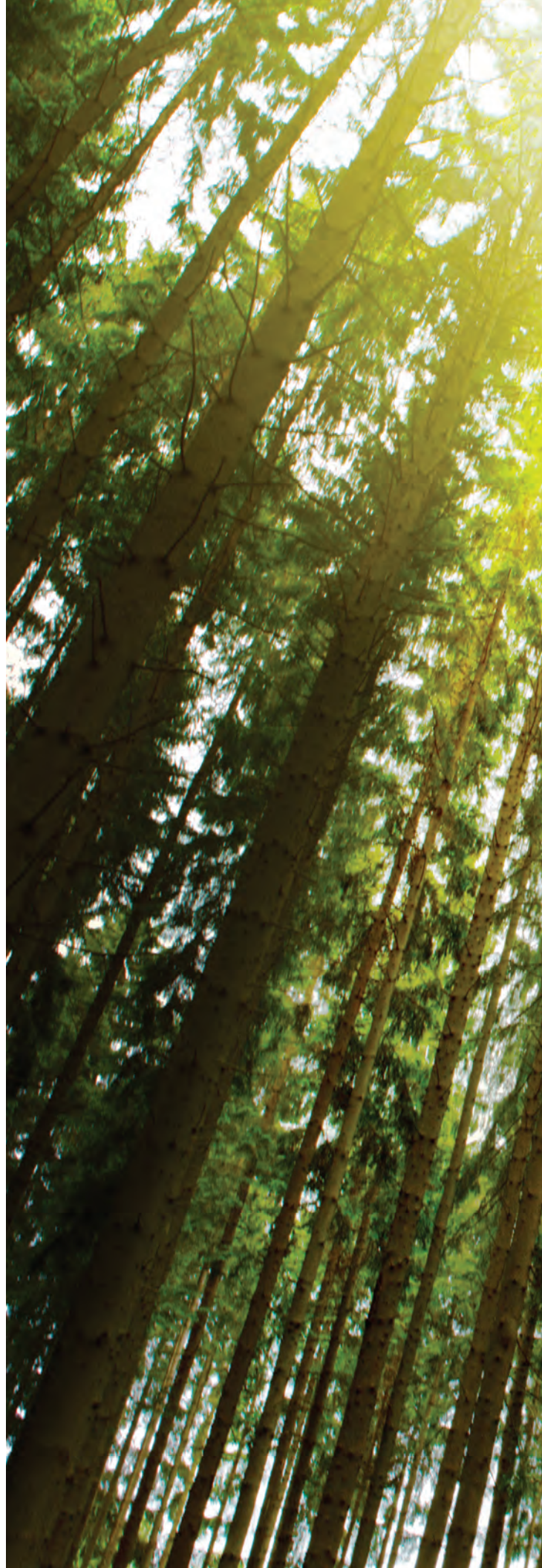
Climate activists warn that the hour is late and catastrophe is likely without urgent, major action. If they are correct that U.S. and global efforts to reduce GHG emissions are insufficient, it makes sense to buy insurance by taking every possible step — including reducing immigration.

Mass immigration is a policy choice, driven by political and economic interests. Confronting climate change forces Americans to make a public policy choice between business-as-usual and wise changes. Business-as-usual includes mass immigration, runaway population growth, shameful waste by individuals, and an economic and political status quo. Business-as-usual will lead to flooded coastal cities, trillions of dollars in damages, devastation of important ecosystems and unpleasant surprises.

24

Alternatively, Americans can make better public policy choices that can slow or prevent some climate impacts, and make others easier to handle. Smarter policies include reduced immigration, much slower population growth and improvements in individual consumption efficiency that would ultimately enhance our economy and our quality of life.

If the climate crisis is real, the choice should be clear. Among other steps, Americans must make the public policy decision to eliminate the driving force behind rapid U.S. population growth, i.e., the U.S. must significantly reduce immigration.



Objections and Rebuttals

The most frequent excuse for doing nothing about U.S. population—“it’s a global problem” says, in effect, “Think globally, but don’t act locally.” This is profoundly wrong.

First, if we accept this logic on population, then polluters can use the same excuse on every other environmental problem. Using the same logic, the fossil fuels industry could oppose the EPA’s Clean Power Plan because “climate change is a global problem.” If such arguments are flawed from big polluters, the same ineffective approach should be unacceptable from those who truly care.

Second, “think globally, act locally” is usually the most effective approach. People act at the local level (from their neighborhoods to their nation) because they know local conditions and have some influence with their neighbors, local government and local business. Moreover, busy activists operating on shoestring budgets are often most effective close to home. That’s why **most environmental progress consists of many separate actions that are eventually coordinated and accumulate as broader change.**

Besides, “global” efforts to halt deforestation and species loss are largely a summing up of local and national efforts focused on particular forests and species. This is how environmentalism works, when it works.³⁷

—Philip Cafaro

Third, Americans consume a disproportionate share of natural resources. **If Americans sensibly choose, in conjunction with conservation, to reduce the growth of their population through enforceable immigration limits, it will make a huge difference in global consumption.**

Fourth, the U.S. is a rich, technologically advanced country that other nations look to for leadership. If the U.S. successfully stabilizes its population, that creates a model for others. **If the U.S. preaches population targets and slowing growth rates, and then fails to “walk the walk,” other countries may dismiss population concerns as mere American hypocrisy.**

Finally, the “it’s a global problem” excuse implies the U.S. should wait to reduce its population growth until people, wealth and opportunity are all spread evenly around the world, so all people want to remain in their own countries. This fantasy will never happen. It is a dangerous delusion that threatens the planet. The U.S. and other developed nations can assist in efforts to moderate rapid population growth projections around the globe, but ultimately the success or failure of these efforts is out of our hands. The only place we can be truly effective in limiting population growth is at home, where it is largely the consequence of immigration policy choices.

OTHER COMMON OBJECTIONS

THE U.S. SHOULD NOT LIMIT IMMIGRATION OR POPULATION GROWTH BECAUSE NEITHER WILL IN ITSELF ACHIEVE NATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY | Immigration advocates often argue that merely reducing immigration would not make the U.S. sustainable, so the U.S. should not reduce immigration. To be clear, limiting immigration is necessary but not sufficient; but we cannot be successful without it.

National sustainability has three essential components; stabilizing the population size, reducing consumption at the individual and local levels, and developing efficient technologies to conserve resources protected by laws. All three parts of the equation are important in order to ensure that future Americans enjoy a quality of life on par with today’s. Unless we limit our immigration intake, our efforts in the areas of reducing consumption and enhanced technology will amount to the societal equivalent of running on a treadmill.

REDUCING CONSUMPTION ALONE CAN FIX IT | Couldn’t we avoid having to deal with immigration policy if we just corrected our wasteful consumption habits? No. Even if half of Americans would agree to significant lifestyle changes, those gains would eventually be offset by population growth. In our political system it is unlikely that people will choose leaders who promise austerity, even in furtherance of environmental sustainability. Persuading many more Americans to reduce their individual and collective consumption will take decades. Thus, consumption reductions alone are not a realistic solution.

IMMIGRANTS CONSUME LESS IN THE U.S. THAN THE NATIVE-BORN | Some advocates of higher immigration argue that, primarily because of lower average income, recent

26

A 2014 study on sprawl noted: The majority of immigrants now live in suburbs where the sprawl occurs. And the adult children of immigrants were found to be just as likely to shun living in core cities as the adult children of natives. In fact, the lower incomes were causing immigrants to move to the edges of cities and even to rural housing beyond the cities to find cheaper housing.⁴²

immigrants in the U.S. “tend to lead ‘greener’ lifestyles than the native-born.”³⁸ It is true that immigrants tend to have lower incomes than the native-born, and therefore tend to consume less. But such differences fade the longer immigrants remain, and may be offset by other factors in the short term.

First, even if immigrants consume less for a while, that difference is outweighed by sheer numbers. Tens of millions of new immigrants pursuing the American Dream of material prosperity will have a significant environmental impact in the U.S.

Second, even if immigrants might consume a bit less than the native-born in the U.S., immigrants would consume even less if they remained in their sending countries. One study found that, on average, immigrants to the U.S. tend to be poorer, so they emit 18 percent less CO₂ per capita than do average native-born Americans.³⁹ But the same study found that immigrants who move to the U.S. on average quadruple their greenhouse gas emissions compared to the average in sending countries.⁴⁰

Immigrants who move to the U.S. on average quadruple their greenhouse gas emissions compared to the average in sending countries.

Third, even on specific environmental choices such as transit and housing, immigrant tendencies are mixed and sometimes surprising. One study found that “immigrants are more likely to ride public transportation ... regardless of their income,” probably because they have lower incomes and live, at least initially, in denser areas. But, the longer that immigrants stay in the U.S., the more they drive.⁴¹

Indeed, some immigrants have cultural preferences that are less green than native-born Americans. Real Estate Directions, Inc., a market research firm in San Diego, found that nearly a quarter of Asian immigrant home buyers will only consider buying brand new homes, compared with only 8 percent of the general public.⁴³

IMMIGRATION CAUSES SOME INTERNAL SECONDARY MIGRATION | Proponents of immigration have previously argued that some sprawl that threatens ecologically sensitive or agriculturally vital lands is a result of internal migration of Americans, not the influx of new immigrants. Of course, some internal migration would happen even if no immigrants arrived. But immigration still plays a big role in internal migration. First, immigration patterns have changed significantly. In recent years, 40 percent of immigrants have moved directly from their native country to U.S. suburbs.⁵⁴

Second, some internal migration is secondary migration driven by people leaving high-immigration areas. University of Michigan demographer William H. Frey explained that, in California, “an immigration-induced ‘flight’ that exports lower income and less-educated Californians, primarily, to the nearby states of Washington, Oregon, Nevada and Arizona.” He notes that this is probably “a response to competition from immigrants competing for low-skilled service and manufacturing jobs [and] to the housing cost squeeze on middle income households....”⁵⁵ School quality may also be a factor in school districts struggling to absorb large numbers of immigrants with

limited English proficiency. Finally, some members of earlier immigrant waves may move out as they prosper.

Census Bureau data support Frey's assertion of a direct cause-and-effect relationship between immigration and internal migration among the established U.S. population. A 1998 article in the *New York Times* reported:

*"The Census Bureau today offered fresh evidence of the impact of immigration on the country's population in this decade, reporting that several metropolitan areas—notably New York, Los Angeles and Chicago—grew strongly even as many longer-term residents left for other parts of the country ... Growth in those regions was also aided by high numbers of births, another side effect of immigration because immigrant families are more likely to be of child-bearing age, and immigrant women tend to have higher birth rates than their American-born counterparts."*⁵⁶

These facts have been cited by some big city mayors, like New York's Michael Bloomberg, as evidence that large-scale foreign immigration is necessary for their cities' survival.⁵⁷ In reality, what they show is that as immigrants stream into a particular area, the native-born population is more likely to head for the exits. In the case of New York, the metropolitan area lost an average of more than 151,000 residents to net domestic migration annually between 2000 and 2008 while gaining a net addition of nearly 90,000 immigrants.

Forgotten History

U.S. population was a key theme at the beginning of the modern environmental movement. On Earth Day 1970, 20 million Americans joined a national teach-in on the environment inspired by Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.), the father of Earth Day.

Even before that, environmentalists saw population as a key component of any serious ecological initiative. The legendary David Brower, while executive director of the Sierra Club in 1965, said, “We feel you don’t have a conservation policy unless you have a population policy.”⁶⁸

In January 1970, President Nixon signed into law the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the “Magna Carta” of U.S. environmental law. NEPA prominently mentioned achieving “a balance between population and resource use.”⁶⁹

Then, in 1972, total U.S. fertility declined to 2.1—the replacement rate. The announcement of this confused many people into thinking that the population problem had been solved. Also, there began a political backlash from a variety of political, economic, religious and ethnic interest groups.⁷⁰ Gradually, most American environmentalists found it easier simply to avoid the population issue altogether, except overseas and far away.

The New York Times

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NEW YORK, THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 1970

Millions Join Earth Day Observances Across the Nation



Central to the theme of the first Earth Day in 1970 was the understanding that U.S. population growth was a joint partner in the degradation of our nation's environmental resources. Most of us involved in the creation of the modern national environmental movement understood clearly that we could not reach the environmental goals being set at the time if the United States did not quickly start stabilizing its population.⁶⁷

—Gaylord Nelson, Founder of Earth Day

Nevertheless, during the 1990s, two separate presidential commissions recommended stabilizing U.S. population and reducing immigration, respectively.

In 1988, the Sierra Club had adopted a policy opposing mass immigration that would make it impossible to stabilize U.S. population. In 1998, a significant minority of Club members voted to support reductions in immigration, but the Board of Directors finally banished the issue as divisive. This was the last big public debate on the issue within the environmental movement.

30

As of 2016, almost all U.S. environmental organizations strongly prefer to avoid discussing U.S. population levels, let alone immigration. Many young and middle-aged staff and volunteers of environmental organizations know little of the movement's forgotten history on these topics. For the greens, immigration has literally become a forgotten, or forbidden topic of discussion.

Meanwhile, a few maverick individual environmentalists author occasional pieces advocating reduced immigration and population growth. Immigration reduction organizations such as FAIR, the Center for Immigration Studies and NumbersUSA continue to publish high quality reports on the subject. In 2012, Philip Cafaro edited the excellent compilation *Life on the Brink: Environmentalists Confront Overpopulation*. In December 2015, Progressives for Immigration Reform published its final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on U.S. Immigration Policy.

The next few decades will reveal the answers to two questions. First, will the U.S. environmental movement rediscover the wisdom that national sustainability requires stabilizing U.S. population growth (which requires significantly reducing immigration)? Second, if the movement does awaken to this reality, will it be in time?

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