

NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH

Press Release

For immediate release

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New NPG Forum Paper Links Climate Change, Migration, and National Security to Population Growth and Sustainability

What Global Warming & Past Migration Patterns Tell Us About National Security and Population Growth

Alexandria, VA, (August 11, 2020): As record breaking heatwaves continue to scorch the nation, Negative Population Growth, Inc. has published a new Forum Paper, titled [*Climate Change, Migration and National Security*](#). Authored by Edwin S. Rubenstein, the paper discusses global warming as it relates to migration and how, in turn, that migration could be a threat to national security. Rubenstein begins his work establishing that climate change affects at least 30% of the world's population, saying: "As climate change accelerates, as much as one-third of world population could live in places that most humans consider too hot for habitation." He also zeroes in on Sub-Saharan Africa, the hottest region in the world, to highlight their experience, noting that it is "home to some of the poorest and most rapidly growing populations on the planet. More impoverished people fighting for less water and arable land leaves modern technology and conveniences out of reach for all but the privileged few."

Climate change expedites migration away from lands that are no longer able to produce and sustain livelihoods. Examples of this type of migration can be seen in Central America where the temperature has risen 0.5C since 1950 and there is a significant increase in young adults moving from farm-to-city in search of jobs. Times of internal migration in the U.S. are also prevalent throughout history. Rubenstein recalls the Dust Bowl exodus of the 1930s in the Great Plains as a large scale example of a migration of people forced to leave decades and generations of hard work to start fresh somewhere new, stating: "Between 1930 and 1940, approximately 3.5 million people moved out of the plains states, most of them to California."

Bringing readers back to present day, Rubenstein explains why, after the U.S. and Central America have experienced droughts worse than those of the 1930s, U.S. residents have not migrated to new locations like so many Central Americans have, stating: "Climate change has already produced droughts equal to or worse than those of the 1930s – but mass migration is nowhere to be seen. Intense irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides, and genetically modified crops enable immense crops year after year whether it rains or not. Machines and science have replaced much of the role of labor in U.S. agriculture. Central American farmers operate on such a small scale they cannot afford the technological advancements available to their American counterparts."

National security is a necessary part of the global-warming-and-its-effects conversation because of its ties to other national concerns. Rubenstein highlights these issues, saying: "Climate is not the only factor at work. Some researchers say long-standing racial and ethnic tensions, corruption, economics, and governmental incompetence, are even more important. At most, they say, climate change is a 'threat multiplier' for countries

that were fragile long before global warming was evident. Still other scholars find that drought can push long-simmering tensions to a breaking point, leading to violent conflict.”

Rubenstein holds that as temperatures continue to shift “some populations may adapt...embracing new agriculture and technologies or population controls. But for many poor nations, migration may be the only feasible option.” In conclusion, Rubenstein maintains a cautious outlook, stating: “With global population expected to rise to about 10 billion by 2070, this implies that as many as 3.5 billion people could migrate to cooler climates. Migration of this magnitude, even if contained within national borders, presents a threat to U.S. national security.”

NPG’s Executive Vice President Craig Lewis commented on Rubenstein’s work, saying: “Every corner of the Earth is affected by climate change, and population growth, especially in regions known for droughts and farm-to-city migration, is not sustainable. In order to protect our natural resources and maintain our national security we must work together to slow, halt, and eventually reverse population growth.”

Founded in 1972, NPG is a national nonprofit membership organization dedicated to educating the American public and political leaders regarding the damaging effects of population growth. We believe that our nation is already vastly overpopulated in terms of the long-range carrying capacity of its resources and environment. NPG advocates the adoption of its [Proposed National Population Policy](#), with the goal of eventually stabilizing U.S. population at a sustainable level – far lower than today’s. We do not simply identify the problems – we propose solutions. For more information, visit our website at NPG.org, follow us on Facebook @[NegativePopulationGrowth](#) or follow us on Twitter @[npg_org](#).