

NEGATIVE POPULATION GROWTH



Press Release

For immediate release

Contact: Craig Lewis
2861 Duke Street, Suite 36
Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone: 703.370.9510 / Fax: 703.370.9514
media@npg.org / www.NPG.org

New NPG Forum Paper Highlights Attenborough's Call to Protect the Planet

Karen I. Shragg Honors Attenborough's 100th Birthday by Exploring His Lifelong Commitment to the Natural World

Alexandria, VA, (October 7, 2026): Negative Population Growth, Inc. (NPG) has released a new Forum paper which examines the environmental legacy of Sir David Attenborough and his decades-long warnings about population growth, consumption, biodiversity loss, and humanity's growing pressure on the natural world. [*Calling Nature's Bluff: The Responsibility of Affluence*](#), authored by naturalist and lecturer Dr. Karen I. Shragg, reflects on Attenborough's extraordinary career documenting nature and the evolution of his message as he witnessed increasing environmental degradation.

Attenborough celebrated his 100th birthday this past May and Shragg points to his lifetime as a measuring stick of humanity's expanding ecological footprint: The global population has grown from roughly two billion people at the time of his birth to more than eight billion today.

Placing emphasis on the environmental responsibility of affluent nations, where high levels of consumption magnify the impact of population growth, Shragg writes: "It is easy to argue that some people with more disposable income take more than others, but no one is exempt from using about 82 gallons of water per day," before pointing to the additional resources required for housing, transportation, energy, and other necessities of modern life.

Drawing on Attenborough's advocacy and scientific research, Shragg zooms out from individual impact to consider the cumulative consequences of a growing population overall. Increasing human numbers place greater demands on finite resources while contributing to the pollution and the loss of natural habitats, pushing more species toward extinction. For Shragg, those consequences are particularly significant when population growth occurs in highly developed countries with comparatively high rates of consumption, like the US.

This paper also examines immigration as part of the population-growth equation in developed nations. Shragg discusses Attenborough's warnings about future climate-driven displacement as well as the role migration can play in population growth where birth rates have declined. In the US context, she connects that discussion to NPG's longstanding call for lower immigration levels as part of achieving a sustainable population. Shragg emphasizes that addressing population growth and treating migrants humanely are not opposing goals, writing: "Once we finally grasp the unsustainable impact of each additional person on a developed country, we can start

to embrace humane and reasonable policies which reflect sustainable choices rather than allow the tide to be turned against newcomers in unacceptably cruel ways.”

Despite the scale of the environmental challenges described in her work, Shragg emphasizes that Attenborough’s message is not solely one of despair. Attenborough himself offers a hopeful path forward: “I may not be here to see it, but if we make the right decisions at this critical moment, we can safeguard our planet’s ecosystems, its extraordinary biodiversity and all its inhabitants.” Echoing Attenborough’s hope for what remains possible, Shragg calls for a fundamental shift in priorities that recognizes the limits of a finite planet. Ultimately, *Calling Nature’s Bluff* presents Attenborough’s 100th birthday as an opportunity not only to celebrate one of the world’s best-known naturalists, but also to take seriously the warnings that increasingly came to define his work. For Shragg, the most meaningful tribute is to value Attenborough’s extraordinary legacy by acting on his message and working to preserve the natural world he spent a century helping audiences discover.

Since 1972, NPG has worked to educate both the public and policy leaders about the impacts of overpopulation. With a steadfast commitment to reducing population growth to achieve a sustainable balance with our environmental resources, NPG continues to be a leading voice of reason in a world often driven by the pursuit of perpetual growth. NPG advocates for 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](https://www.npg.org), follow us on Facebook [@NegativePopulationGrowth](#), or follow us on X [@npg_org](#).