

Petition to Urge Political Leaders to Address Fundamental Issues

Canadians for Limits to Growth

The environmental crises of our times reflect the ongoing exploitation of Earth by a burgeoning human population with insatiable demands. To meet today's challenges requires visionary leadership. But our leaders are locked into antiquated modes of thought that view population and economic growth as solutions to the crises they are causing. They see only the short-term need to meet the wants of people and the demands of corporations. Economic growth as the key determinant of overall policy promotes the destruction that threatens much of life on Earth.

Humanity's encounter with the limits of the planet is manifest in increasingly painful ways. Yet the reality that there cannot be infinite growth on a finite planet remains obscured by the prevailing ideologies of growth and by the power of corporations over economies and governments. **Canadians are rendered complacent by national myths of virtually infinite resources and endless space.** Their delusions are encouraged by government and corporations and the media that serve them.

Each of us must strive to conserve the riches of Earth for future generations, but without re-

sponsible leadership individual efforts to reduce our impact will be marginal. We call upon our

fellow Canadians to join us in petitioning our political leaders to implement policies that will change our ecocidal course, restore the Earth, and allow for a flourishing human civilization within an ecosystem of maximum biodiversity. Specifically, we ask them to create policies to:

- **Stabilize and reduce Canada's population.** Human well-being depends on the ratio of

natural resources to people, which is becoming less favourable, even in Canada. Driving population growth with high levels of immigration has provided no economic benefit to Canadians and is destructive to the environment at home and globally.

- **Protect the biodiversity of Canadian lands and territorial waters.** Biodiversity strengthens ecosystems and makes human life more secure. Incessant human population growth amounts to an assault on nature.

- **Reduce greenhouse gas emission.** Most scientists, including leading climatologists, assert that human activities are producing greenhouse gases that drive climate change. It will be

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easier to reduce our carbon footprint if there are fewer feet.

- **Protect agricultural land and topsoil.**

Only 7% of Canada's land area is suitable for growing crops. Much farmland is rapidly being lost to population growth and urban sprawl. The cost of importing food will rise with the price of oil, and Canadians will need to feed a much larger population from a smaller area of agricultural land.

- **Reduce the depletion and pollution of water.** Despite Canada's endowment of fresh water, many sources, especially in the densely populated south, are under pressure. Excessive demands are made on the Great Lakes and by the growing tar sands. Climate change is melting the Rocky Mountain glaciers which supply the Prairies.

- **Increase support for family planning in development aid.** Rapid population growth persists in many of the poorest countries and undermines efforts to provide an adequate quality of life to their people and to protect their environment and biodiversity.

*Signed in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
November 17, 2011, by:*

Henry Beissel, Distinguished Emeritus Professor (Concordia University, Montreal), award-winning author of over 30 books.

Robert Bériault, technologist

Andy Clarke, former Sec. General, World Federalist Movement, former manager of the Prof. Institute.

J. Anthony Cassils, retired, lawyer by training, former Executive in Public and Corporate Policy Development, Govt. of Ontario

Jon Legg, (B. Eng.) retired diplomat; recent chair: Canadian Assoc. for the Club of Rome.

Ted Mosquin, (PhD. Botany, UCLA), ecologist, naturalist, co-author of *A Manifesto for Earth*.

Madeline Weld, toxicologist, Health Canada; President, Population Institute of Canada.

Ian Whyte, manager & owner of small family business; ecocentrist, naturalist, Green Party.

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