The Problem Of Population Growth

Population growth - intro

Right now there are 7.7 billion people in the world. This is increasingly bigger than anything we have ever seen before. With a massive spike of growth between 1960 and 2020 with 4.7 billion people increase, now, the population is growing fast it is steady and there is predicted to be 10 billion people in 2050. This will be an increase of 35% The more people on earth means more energy usage, more fuel, and more carbon emissions. With a greater need for these resources, we run into the problem of having not enough usable space for all our needs. Not to mention the growing population will need bigger cities, impacting our already high carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. So, we need to plant more trees to sequence the carbon, but because our population is growing so fast, we need more housing which means larger cities, more farms for food, and more energy plants, so the question is where does everything go?

Expanding Cities

The growing population means there will need to be more housing and cities. These expanding cities take land from the natural world. This leaves ecosystems and resources destroyed. As there are more people they will need housing and this only leads to land clearing. We will need to take space away from agricultural land (which we need for farming and rainforests which provide us with clean air) to house the growing population. Having less agriculture and more/bigger cities creates a larger carbon footprint and a faster route to climate change. A child's carbon legacy is the estimated amount of carbon dioxide produced by an individual. Because the carbon legacy of just one child can produce 20 times more greenhouse gas than a person will save by driving a high-mileage car, recycling, using energy-efficient appliances and light bulbs, etc. overpopulation is becoming one of the leading causes of climate change.

Right now 95% of the human population lives in 10% of the Earth’s land surface. This means technically, there is enough space to expand cities, but the more area we take up the less natural habitats there will be. This not only harms other animals ecosystems but destroys our planet altogether by removing its natural resources. As Dr. Kim Johnson says, “We need to use our space as effectively as possible, and as sustainably as possible...we can’t just keep expanding”. This cannot be more true. If we are to have any hope of overcoming population growth, we need to think smarter and not larger.

Urbanization is increasing rapidly with more than 54% of humans living in cities and still increasing 2% a year. This is because people move from rural areas to cities to find jobs and an easier life. Urbanization really started in the 1800s’ at the beginning of the industrial revolution. There will need to be more jobs to sustain the number of people, but as of now, we don’t know if there will be. Because of new technology advancements, some people say that they will create more jobs while others say it will reduce them because technology can do our jobs for us. This can already be seen with machine-run farms and factories. On the other hand, we already know as our world changes more jobs become irrelevant and others are created. For example, a video creator wasn't a job in the 2000s but now YouTubers are a very large job industry. We can only predict that our society will evolve with the population changes to suit our needs.

Graph

According to the United Nations DESA / Population Division, it is estimated that over half of the world's total population lives in just seven countries with a combined population of 3.97 billion people. Expectedly, the most populated country is China with approx. 1.42 billion people followed by India with 1.35 billion. When added together the other five countries; United States, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, and Nigeria, while still having very large populations, have fewer people than India alone. To put it in perspective there are 195 countries in the world, that's 188 countries that when combined, have less than these seven countries with a total population of 3.66 billion people. So, what is it about these seven countries that make them so much larger than the rest?

Talk a little bout the amazon

CHINA

Population planning is internationally planning the growth rate of a human population.

1979 China introduced a one-child policy after a decade-long two-child policy.

This limited families to only having one child to help reduce population growth (with exceptions such as if you lived in a rural area and the firstborn was a girl).

More than 500 million births were prevented and if the law had continued, by 2060 it would have prevented as many as 1 billion births.

This law was eliminated in 2015 but in 2016 they brought back the two-child policy.

Cons

As population growth becomes more and more of a reality, more disadvantages are becoming evident. We can see how population growth puts a strain on resources, especially food, space, clean water, and health care. The shortage of these resources creates a larger gap between the upper and lower classes in society. This is because as necessities become rarer or harder to obtain, their value goes up as does the price. This means only the rich can afford things we consider a human right and leads to poor further into poverty. The more buildings needed to house the growing population results in damage to these resources by cutting down rainforests to make space for them and polluting the atmosphere, thus creating a greater carbon footprint and a faster route to climate change.

Pros

Even though population growth is seen as a bad thing we cannot overlook what might be good about it. As the population grows there will be a greater genetic diversity, giving us a better chance of surviving a particular disease or disaster.

Introduction

As the world changes, so do the challenges we are facing in the future. We believe that in 2050, our main issues are going to be climate change, population growth, food security, diseases, and money. If we want to survive as a species, we have to find solutions to these ever-growing problems. In this blog, we provide information on these issues so you can stay aware of what is happening to our plant; after all, it is our home. We also have solutions, what we need to do as a collective to prevent these problems, and ways you can help combat them.

Dr. Kim Johnson Photo Description

We were lucky enough to speak with Dr. Kim Johnson and learn from her expertise in food security. We had an initial lecture which is what sparked our interest in learning about food security. After some individual research, we had the opportunity to speak with her again in smaller groups, allowing us to get more in-depth in our questions. She provided answers to some tricky questions we had. Throughout this blog, you will see quotes said by Dr. Kim Johnson with her opinions and knowledge about Food Security

Solutions Introduction:

After researching what we believe will be the top issues of 2050, we have compiled a selection of solutions that can help us either fix that particular issue or reduce its impact on our world. We focus these solutions on Food Security, Population Growth, and Climate Change as we believe they will be the three most important issues we will have to face before 2050. In the solutions, there are ways you can help at home and things we have to do as a society. For all of these issues, the main changes will be the government and big corporations but there are things you can do to help out. Providing awareness and taking responsibility for your actions is something you can do to help all of these issues. We recommend reading more about our issues in the ‘our issues’ tab up top before reading these solutions so you can better understand the issues we are facing for our future.

Solutions:

There isn’t going to be one simple answer to population growth that we can write here, but there are things that we as a society need to do and things you can do yourself that can help us in the race to beat population growth by 2050 and eliminate it from our issues list. Whilst finding a way to slow down population growth is of course important, we also need to find ways we can survive as the population does grow like using more efficient methods of farming and gathering resources, and building more sustainable, eco-friendly cities. These are our solutions to population growth.

As a society, we have a human responsibility to do what we can to protect and save our planet. We need everyone to get on board, especially governments, and large companies if we have any hope of changing our future. To prevent the rapidly growing population from becoming too large for our planet to handle there are a few things we need to do. A key problem contributing to population growth is unwanted pregnancies, especially in third-world countries. We can reduce the number of accidental births by providing sex education to everyone around the world. It was recorded that two in five pregnancies are reported as accidental or never wanted. If we spread awareness about the importance of safe sex we can reduce this number evenly, thus reducing the speed of population growth. Again with education, uneducated children are

more likely to focus more on the family as they cannot get a job or have many other goals in life. It is proven that women who have completed at least some schooling have children later in life than those who do not attend school. Guaranteeing education at least through secondary school to everyone especially girls is extremely important when it comes to population growth. Women who have the same rights as men are more likely to postpone childbearing and have fewer children as they focus on their jobs and careers. Creating equal rights for men and women will be a huge step towards slower population growth. Whilst we are moving forward to a more equal society, there are still things we need to improve on. Having equal pay, equal job opportunities, and equal rights are all things that men are still dominant in which cannot be the case.

No matter how much we slow it down, population growth is inevitable and we have to prepare for it. Finding better, more sustainable ways of farming and using agricultural land is very important when it comes to population growth. With a greater population, we will need more space, more resources, basically more of everything. We need to use our space efficiently to combat the need for more things. Dr. Kim Johnson puts it perfectly stating how we need to “Increase the yield and productivity on that land so that we’re not using more land”. This means we will not need much more land for farming and can use it for forests and natural habitats. This leads to our next point, increasing forests and wetlands to combat our carbon footprint. The growing population leaves a greater carbon footprint with larger cities, more people, and bigger factories. We need to combat this with plants and agriculture and cutting down forests to make more space for farming land is only going to make it worse.

With the battle of finding space for all of our resources and human needs, there are a few things you can do yourself. Growing your own food and buying locally grown crops will help by reducing the amount of product big corporations make, if we don’t buy it, they won’t make it. If there is less demand for a specific product, they won’t need as much space to produce it, thus reducing farming land. To save resources it is proven that a largely plant-based diet is best with less meat, especially red meat. Red meats like beef, lamb, and pork use a lot of resources to produce. They need feeding, drinking water, looking after, and land space. By simply adjusting our diets we can make a HUGE difference in not only saving space and many other world problems like climate change. We can’t just leave it up to others to fix the problems of our planet, we all need to play our part and contribute if we are to have any hope of overcoming population growth and the problems it brings.