
HOUSTON★CHRONICLE

Use a condom, save the planet? New campaign shatters the taboo of overpopulation

★**chron.com**

November 1, 2011

- AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press Writer

Heretofore when discussing climate change the subject of overpopulation — more people, more energy, more fossil fuel usage — has been taboo. Noted conservationist Jane Goodall has said of overpopulation, “It’s been politically incorrect for a very long time” to talk about it.

But no more, apparently. The Center for Biological Diversity, which seeks to promote the healthy co-existence of humans and nature, has launched an eye-catching new campaign that directly links overpopulation to climate change.

Dubbed 7 Billion and Counting, the campaign explicitly states that overpopulation and over-consumption are the root causes of environmental destruction.

The most striking feature of the campaign is its distribution of free packets of Endangered Species Condoms depicting six separate species: the polar bear, snail darter, spotted owl, American burying beetle, jaguar, and coquí guajón rock frog.

It is true there is a finite limit to the human population the planet can support and maintain a health biological diversity.

At some point the balance between people and the environment is going to get tipped against forests, animals and nature. Thomas Malthus was famously wrong two centuries ago when he said it was happening. Paul Ehrlich was also wrong last century.

Is 7 billion the magic number? Tough to say. But many scientists do believe that a slow-down in the global growth of population could play a significant role in reigning in climate change and protecting the natural world.

Here’s three of them:

