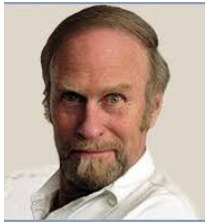


Earth Day: Let's Take Stock of How Much Damage We're Doing To This Planet



By Frosty Wooldridge

April 28, 2025

Chief Seattle said, "The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."

Fifty-five years ago, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson watched with dismay how horribly humans were damaging our planet home. He created Earth Day, April 22, 1970. At the time, I participated at Michigan State University, but didn't really "see" the damage being done to Planet Earth.

Plastics began their onslaught of our oceans in 1965. But, not enough impact to be noticed. Air pollution caused acid rain that killed our soils, but we didn't do much to change that. At the time, we had created over 40,000 chemicals, but no one noticed. The "Sixth Extinction Session" had begun in full-swing, but who notices a couple thousands species vanishing from the planet when their disappearance didn't make headlines. Gridlock traffic plagued NYC, Chicago, LA, Houston, and San Francisco—but no one cared. By 1970, humans slaughtered 20 to 30 million sharks annually for "shark fin soup", but no one thought about sharks. The Amazon rainforest was being cut down and burned at 1.0 acre per minute...but

again, if it's out of sight, it's out of mind. In 1970, a mere 1.4 million people starved to death annually around the world, mostly in third world countries--but again what could you do about it? The Peace Corps tried, but failed!

In 1963, my brother Rex and I began scuba diving all over the Gulf of America. From there, we dove into every ocean on this planet. We explored rivers and lakes. Nothing beats seeing the magic of the world beneath the waves: whales, sharks, eels, dolphins, penguins, turtles, diving birds, Great Barrier Reef, Hawaii, and marine life in the Galapagos Islands. Just incredible to witness the Natural World underwater!

At the time, China neared 1.0 billion people along with India making its bid for 1.0 billion humans. But, no one noticed. America stood at 200 million by 1970, so what's the big deal?

Paul Ehrlich wrote the **Population Bomb** in 1968, but again, if it didn't affect any of us, so what? At the time, the human population on the planet in 1970 stood at 3.5 billion people.

Human overpopulation stood as THE MAIN topic for that first Earth Day. Everyone talked about TOO MANY humans at 3.5 billion of us--and all the damage we were doing to the planet.

WHAT DID WE DO AFTER EARTH DAY 1970 TO IMPROVE OUR HARM TO THE PLANET?

Answer: we accelerated our abuse beyond imagination.

What did we do about human overpopulation and our impact on the planet after 1970? Answer: we jumped from 3.5 billion to 8.2 billion, currently. We added 4.7 billion humans. And within another 12-14 years, we'll see 9.0 billion. From there, humans will "try" for 10 billion. Guess what? There are intellectual morons out there supporting humans to reach 10 billion. In fact, there is one writer in America, Joel Kotkin who wrote a book supporting 100 million more people in America by 2050. He's THAT stupid, THAT arrogant, THAT absurd!

If you notice—whether 60 Minutes, Terry Gross or Scott Simon at NPR, or PBS, or NBC, CBS, ABC, FOX or any other network—you won't hear a peep out of any of them about America's accelerating population growth—all of it brought about by exponential immigration growth. Those networks suppress any consequences of population overshoot, and they aim to keep Americans uneducated and clueless.

It wasn't until 1983-84 when I took a bicycle trip around the world where I touched down on four continents. That adventurous journey to see overpopulation firsthand knocked me upside the head. China just about hit 1.0 billion along with India. I witnessed people stacked up on people beyond anyone's comprehension in Europe, Canada and America. Who could imagine expressways with 50 lanes in one direction, which is their reality in 2025?

While scuba diving the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, I noticed plastic containers littering the reef and ocean floor. In the Galapagos Islands, I saw more plastic crap washed up on the beaches. In the Mediterranean, plastic bags looked like a new form of sea weed.

Did we solve air pollution over our big cities? Have you breathed the air in Chicago, Denver, LA, Houston, Atlanta and most other enormous cities? You would be breathing over 100 chemicals and particulate 24/7 from factories, Dow Chemicals, Monsanto, coal fired electrical plants, millions of cars and trucks exhaust, and millions of homes burning fuel.

How about those 40,000 chemicals in 1970? Today, try 84,000 chemicals and few of them are tested for long term consequences. Monsanto and Dow Chemical poison the world with impunity. Notice "Bee Colony Collapse" everywhere you spread Roundup, Weed-b-Gone, and hundreds of other horrific insecticides. Worse, all of that poison ends up in our oceans.

Also, 40 years ago, 1 child in 10,000 births suffered Autism.

Today, it's 1 child in 36 births faces a life of Autism. Do you think Monsanto or Dow Chemical care that Roundup and their other poisons are killing the Natural World and humans? Answer: they could give a damned! That's why our food chain provokes cancers, messed up biomes in our stomachs, and dozens of other skin and bodily disorders.

What about the oceans and sharks? Today, as documented by Julia Whitty in OnEarth Magazine, we have been killing 100,000,000 sharks annually since 1990 with no end in sight. We're destroying the ecology of the oceans. We're bleaching the reefs with our carbon footprint.

What about that "Sixth Extinction Session"? Most people don't notice that we're causing the extinction of 100 creatures 24/7. The eminent Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson said that at our current rate of encroachment and poisoning of the Natural World, we will kill off 1/4 of plant/animal life by 2050 and as much as 2/3 of plant/animal life by the end of the century. And, every year that we add 83 million more humans, net gain, that extinction session impact accelerates.

What about human starvation rates since Earth Day 1970?

"An average of 733 million people (1 in 11) go hungry every day. Half of all child deaths are linked to malnutrition. Nine (9) **million** people die from hunger-related causes every year."

Can you imagine what those numbers will show in 2050 with another 1.0 billion added to Earth? We're talking starvation numbers beyond comprehension.

What about gridlocked traffic in our overpopulated cities? Answer: it's only going to get worse as our 35 most populated cities will double in size by 2050 as we add 100,000,000 more people to the USA, net gain, within 25 years. Back in 1960, we burned 40 million barrels of oil worldwide, daily. Today, it's over 100 million barrels of oil, 24/7. It's been reported that China will burn 90 to 100 million barrels daily by

2030-40. (Source: The Long Emergency by William Howard Kunstler)

As we've tossed 170 trillion pieces of plastic into our oceans in the past 60 years, and another 8 million pieces of plastic daily into our oceans—do any of the leaders of the 190 countries around the world give a hoot? Are they starting recycling programs in their countries? Answer: that would be a resounding, NO! (Source: "Plastic in our oceans" NPR News, Scott Simon)

Here in the USA, a mere 32 percent of Americans recycle anything. Only six states mandate a 10 cent deposit/return law for bottles, cans and plastic containers. Americans generate 268 million tons of trash annually.

"In the U.S., an estimated 140 billion drink containers (including bottles, cans, and plastic containers) are wasted annually. This includes approximately 74 billion plastic bottles (commonly used for water and soft drinks), over 50 billion cans, and nearly 15 billion glass bottles, all tossed into landfills or along highways."

Obviously, this report covers a mere fraction of the damage humans are perpetrating onto this planet. We could speak to catastrophic climate destabilization that accelerates with each new figure of 83 million new babies added to the planet annually. Each of them burns fuel to create more carbon footprint. We could cover the nightmare of fresh water being used and polluted. We could report on the ground water pollution. We could talk about how our freedoms suffer more restrictions as we add the numbers. This report would terrify you for your children if more subjects were covered. (I've written a book about what we face: America's Overpopulation Predicament: Blindsiding Future Generations by Frosty Wooldridge)

As to the quote by Chief Seattle, if we keep doing to this

planet what we've been doing to it for the past 60 years since plastics and chemicals arrived, and we keep adding millions/billions more of our species—America and the human race face a sobering if not deadly future.

© 2025 Frosty Wooldridge – All Rights Reserved

E-Mail Frosty: frostyw@juno.com