

The environmental footprint of population growth

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, Drammensveien 78, Oslo.

Thursday September 27th

18:00 – 20:15

Program

- 18:00 **Welcome and background for todays subject**
Nils Chr. Stenseth, Chair of the Academy Committee on Climate, Environment and Resource use
- 18:10 **Brian O'Neill**
Population and climate change revisited
In 2001, O'Neill, Mackellar, and Lutz published a book assessing the evidence available at that time on the relationship between population and climate change. They concluded that on balance, it was likely that slower population growth could substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the long term; that slower growth would also probably ease climate stresses on society, although would not be a key strategy; and that fertility-related policies could be considered "win-win" with respect to climate change. Since then, a substantial amount of new analysis of these relationships has been carried out, and new aspects of population-environment relationships have been investigated. These include the role of spatial patterns of population distribution in exposure to climate hazards, the mediating role of education in these relationships, and the influence of alternative ethical frameworks on evaluations of population's role. I review highlights of this more recent work, and revisit the conclusions reached in 2001 in light of these analyses, including implications for climate and population-related policies.
- 18:45 **John Broome**
Climate change and the ethics of population
Climate change is a matter of life and death. It is already killing many people every year. Moreover, it is affecting the future size of the world's population. In the extreme, which is unlikely, climate change may cause a collapse of the human population and even our extinction. We cannot make good judgements about how to respond to climate change without taking these effects into account. We need to judge how bad the killing is, and how bad, or good, are the effects on population. To make the latter judgement, we need demographers to predict the size of the effect, and we also need a theory of value that takes the world's population into account. This is a task for moral philosophy and specifically for the field of population ethics.
- 19:20 Break/Refreshments
- 19:35 **Panel debate**
Brian O'Neill
John Broome
Dan Banik
- 20:15 End of seminar

Brian O'Neill is a Professor at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver. He also serves as Director of Research at the Korbel School's Pardee Center for International Futures. Brian holds a Ph.D. in Earth Systems Science and an M.S. in Applied Science, both from New York University. His research interests are in human-environment interactions, in particular the relationship between future societal development, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change impacts. He has led research groups on Integrated Assessment Modeling and on Climate and Human Systems at the US National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), and on Population and Climate Change at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA). Brian is a Convening Lead Author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's ongoing Sixth Assessment Report. He is also the lead author of *Population and Climate Change*, published by Cambridge University Press.

John Broome is Emeritus White's Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Oxford. He works on rationality and reasoning as well as on the ethics of climate change. He was a Lead Author for the Fifth Assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. His most recent books are *Rationality Through Reasoning* (2013) and *Climate Matters: Ethics in a Warming World* (2012). He is a Fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Science.

Dan Banik is professor of political science and director of the Oslo SDG Initiative at the Centre for Development and the Environment, University of Oslo. His research interests include poverty, food security, famine, legal empowerment, aid and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. He has in recent years, conducted extensive research on Chinese aid and investments in Africa. Prof. Banik has previously served as the head of the Norwegian-Finnish Trust Fund in the World Bank for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (TFESSD) and on the Board of the Norwegian Crown Prince and Crown Princess's Foundation. His books include 'Political Transition, Poverty and Inclusive Development in Malawi: The Democratic Dividend (with Blessings Chinsinga, Routledge, 2016), 'The Legal Empowerment Agenda: Poverty, Labour and the Informal Economy in Africa' (2011, Ashgate), 'Poverty and Elusive Development' (2010, Scandinavian University Press) and 'Starvation and India's Democracy' (2009, Routledge).