

Africa Animal Welfare Conference (AAWC)

Navigating the delicate balance of animal welfare, climate change and development: concerted actions towards a healthy and sustainable environment

The Greatest Impact: Family Reforms to Ensure Human and Nonhuman
Thriving and Equity

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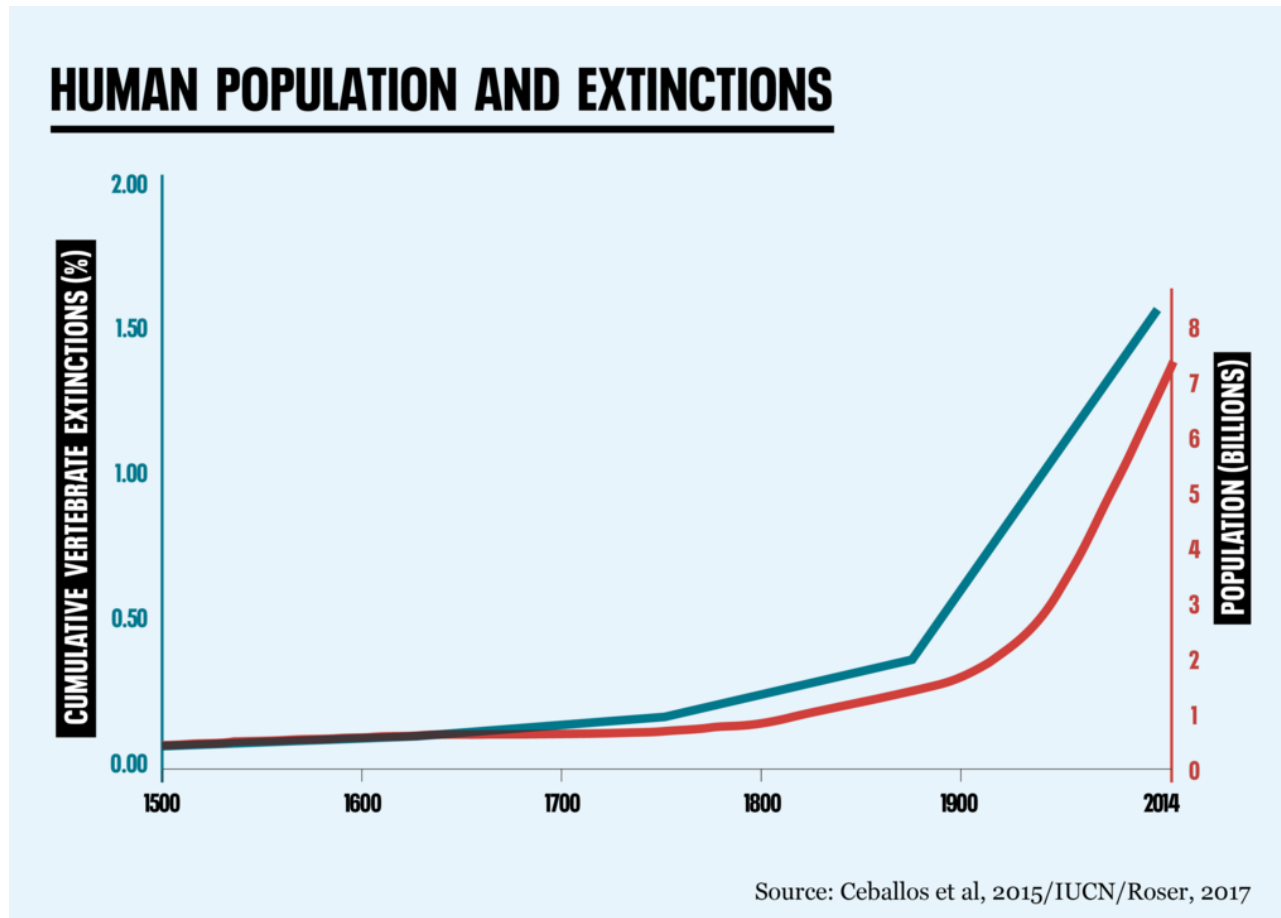
Climate Change and Animal Vulnerability in Africa

- **Extreme Weather Events:** The increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods, have a detrimental impact on animal habitats, food availability, and water sources.
- **Habitat Loss:** Rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns contribute to habitat loss, pushing many species towards extinction or migration to find suitable environments.
- **Food Scarcity:** Climate-induced changes in vegetation and plant life disrupt food chains, leading to food scarcity for herbivores and subsequently impacting carnivores.
- **Water Stress:** Prolonged droughts result in water scarcity for both wildlife and domesticated animals, escalating competition and exacerbating conflicts between human and animal populations.

Start With the Most Fundamental Driver

- ▶ Anthropocentric family policies that do not leave room for nonhumans and ensure the development of empathy for animals in children have proven a failure with the climate crisis they caused set to displace billions, kill at least tens of millions of humans by the end of the century, and kill and drive into extinction countless animals.
- ▶ The hallmark of these policies is the use of population growth and not investing highly in each child, rather than social innovation, to grow economies.
- ▶ Another hallmark is the treatment of animals as property, a paradigm being challenged in cases in the United States where activists are being prosecuted for exercising their right to rescue ill and injured animals from factory farms.
- ▶ These anthropocentric policies resist climate restoration and birth equity, what are instead eco (or nonhuman) centric policies.
- ▶ Because the impact of those in wealthy nations on the environment is generally four times the impact of less wealthy nations, a primary policy focus of delay and smaller families is applied first to countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, as seen here:
<https://fairstartmovement.org/tag/royal-family/>

The Same Correlation Exists for All Negative Human and Nonhuman Interactions



What's the Solution?

- ▶ If we take children's rights, like the Children's Rights Convention, seriously, we will structure family planning incentives and entitlements around those rights so that we do not create and raise children in conditions that violate those rights.
- ▶ Doing that is good for children, but it also has the greatest impact - long run - on nonhumans, greater than diet change, humane education, sanctuaries, etc. We minimize extinction, factory farming, and other negative human-nonhuman interactions by leaving room for other species and ensuring the children we have will treat others well because we actually treated them well.
- ▶ How do we do it? Wealth inverse family planning entitlements, which ensure delay and planning, child equity, and smaller or more ecocentric families: <https://blogs.luc.edu/lawjournal/2020/04/how-subsidizing-delayed-parenthood-will-let-children-lead-the-way-to-a-fairer-world/>
- ▶ Again, Because the impact of those in wealthy nations on the environment is generally four times the impact of less wealthy nations, a primary policy focus of delay and smaller families is applied first to countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, as seen here: <https://fairstartmovement.org/tag/royal-family/>

What Are Areas of Reform to Benefit Animals and Children at the Same Time?

- **Climate Restoration:** We prioritize climate restoration as a foundational element of our campaign. We advocate for climate justice and seek funding through loss and damage reparations to support projects that mitigate climate change.
- **Birth Equity:** Birth equity is at the heart of our mission. We advocate for birth equity as a fundamental human right and seek to empower women and children from underserved communities globally.
- **Humane Education:** What good is teaching children to care for animals if they are not born and raised in conditions likely to foster empathy, or prosocial behavior? Is it odd to teach children to care for animals, against a background of family policies that do nothing to ensure biodiversity and climate/habitat restoration?
- **True Animal Rights:** Animals lived experiences do and will depend on their relations with humans, relations that are first and largely defined as we create and rear humans. We urge a conception of animal rights that starts from this issue, rather than ignoring it.
- **Children's Savings Accounts:** To break the cycle of poverty, we promote the establishment of children's savings accounts, managed by well-identified financial institutions, which empower children and families to secure their future.
- **Agroforestry:** We support agroforestry initiatives to combat food insecurity and contribute to climate restoration by planting a million vegetables and fruits.
- **Food-Security Kitchen Gardens:** Our initiative includes the construction of clean, smart cooking facilities and the promotion of sustainable practices, such as using recycled plastic containers.
- ▶ **Family Planning:** We promote the concept of smaller or more ecocentric family sizes, advocating for informed family planning choices within communities.

Fair Start impacts outweigh other interventions:



20 TIMES

Having a smaller family is **20 times more effective at reducing climate impact** than changing diet or forms of transportation.

ONE MILLION

species face extinction thanks to population growth-driven human activity, the U.N. reports.

BILLIONS

By 2100 world population could vary by billions of people, depending on whether the average woman in the world today has one child more or one child fewer in her lifetime.

600% ROI

in returns when investments are made in young women's education, which overwhelmingly results in delayed parenthood.

13% ROI

New research by Nobel laureate economist James Heckman and his coauthors suggests that the return on investment for early childhood programs is even higher than previously believed.

CHILD-FIRST FAMILY PLANING

provides a clear human rights-based solution and path forward. It's **sustainable and equitable**, and reflected in the worldwide trend towards smaller families that can invest more in each child and ensure a safer future.

Learn more: FairStartMovement.org

Current Family Planning

No minimum levels of welfare for children

No equal opportunities in life

No environmental protection

Fair Start Family Planning

Minimum levels of welfare for all kids

Moves towards equality of opportunity by leveling the playing field for kids

Ensures the most effective environmental protection measures possible

Case Study: Our UNHRC Complaint

- ▶ The complaint and update make a few simple demands:
 - **First**, the United Nations must treat the correct interpretation of universal family policies (which should require climate restoration and biodiversity through birth equity redistribution of wealth in the form of family planning entitlements) as the fundamental and overriding human right.
 - **Second**, to admit that the United Nations failure to do this previously led to the climate and inequity crises we face today, including violations of future generations' right to have children in safe and natural environments, and for that right to be safeguarded in perpetuity.
 - **Third**, to endorse loss and damage payments as overriding property rights, if used for the family planning entitlements described above.

The Impacts on Nonhumans

- ▶ As Esther will explain, these changes will reduce in Africa: Factory farming, the mass killing of donkeys in Africa to produce ejiao, threats to elephants, the loss of Lake Chad fisheries, climate impacts on the Maasai Mara and their animals, the need for cattle ranching, the potential extinction of African penguins, and many other threats to nonhumans.

Case Study: Center for Contemporary Equine Studies challenging the mass slaughter of donkeys

- ▶ In litigation pending in California, the Center (assisted by attorneys from the University of Denver, Sturm College of Law and the firm Evans and Page) took a stand against the mass slaughter of donkeys throughout Africa and elsewhere, driven by sales of the equine product ejaio. The case uses a California law that prohibits trafficking in it and other equine products. The United States Congress has failed to act, and the Center is now moving its advocacy further, and exploring ways to end the slaughter of donkeys in Africa, and to eliminate demand in China.
- ▶ Future work of the Center and its partners will move beyond asking how we should treat animals towards asking who animals - and equines in particular - need humans to become as a species so that nonhumans can become free. That truly ecocentric view involves treating them as more than property by committing to rescuing them from abuse - no matter the cost - and safely rehoming them. And it involves restoring their climates and habitats so that they flourish, as well as building empathy in every child born through family planning so that they will treat equines and other animals well.