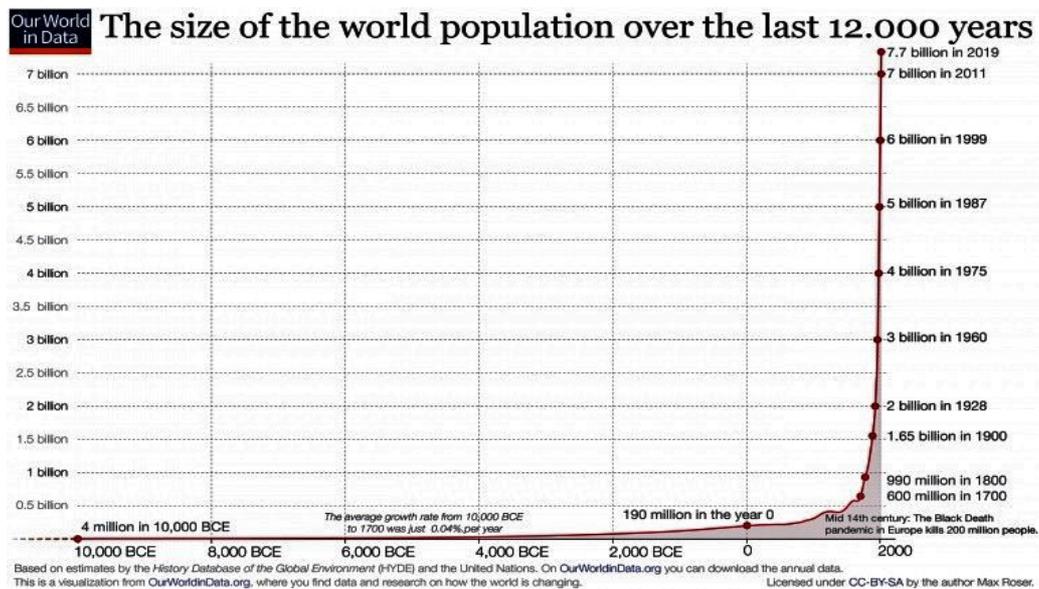


Overpopulation and a Sick Culture: Shattering the Renewable Energy Illusion

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Belief in so called “renewable energy” such as solar and wind as being a solution to climate change and ecological collapse is based on ecological and historical ignorance.

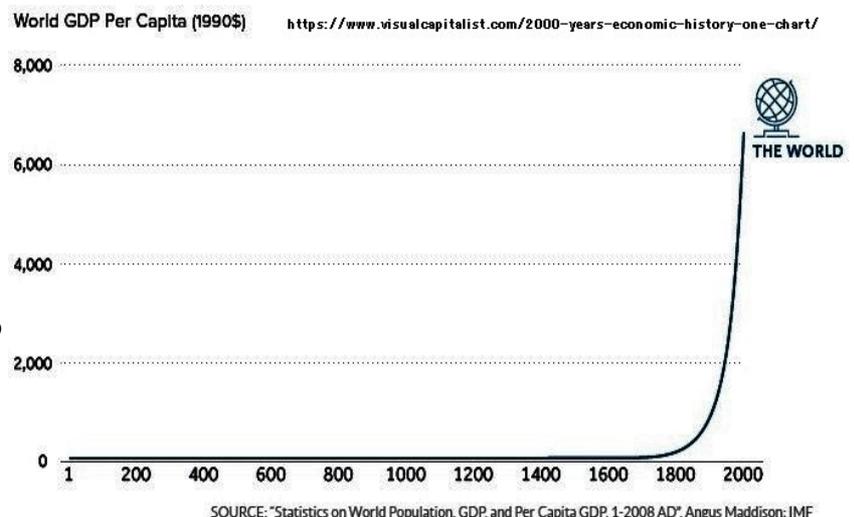
First, consider human population. It is growing almost exponentially, first as a result of the rise of agriculture and civilizations 6000 years ago, and then especially with the industrial age and the reliance on fossil fuels, which led to the “Green Revolution” and plenty of cheap grains.



(Photo from: <https://ourworldindata.org/world-population-growth>)

Each person alive consumes – they need land, shelter, clothing and food. It actually doesn't even matter how much they consume. Every additional human represents land that will be needed to support them. Every additional human represents biomass that would otherwise be other life forms. More humans means less trees. More humans means less elephants. And so on. From a humanist and anthropocentric mindset, this does not matter – only humans count. But from the perspective of a healthy planet, biodiversity and basic ecological principles, it matters a great deal.

The important point is that everyone alive consumes. Let's say that everyone alive consumes as little as the average impoverished Indian, Bangladeshi or Haitian. That still means that as population continues to rise exponentially, that consumption will also rise exponentially, *no matter how much we consume*. Which is why historical GDP (consumption) mirrors population growth and looks like this to the right:



The fact that many people – that is, those in the richer countries - consume pathological amounts, only makes this worse. A higher “ecological footprint” changes the overall rate of ecological destruction, but the destruction remains – due to population growth (which itself is a result of the social arrangement known as “civilization”). The fact is, even if everyone reduced their consumption to the level of an impoverished Third Worlder, humans would still bring ecological collapse *due to their numbers*. Remember, all past civilizations, even without fossil fuels and with much smaller populations, destroyed the land around them. (Ponting 2007; Diamond 1987, 2005; Redman 1999; Tainter 2017)

By denying overpopulation as a problem and only focusing on the biggest consumers, we ignore the fact that consumption will continue to increase exponentially *no matter how much people consume*, simply because of population growth. And let's not forget that the rest of the world also wants to become big consumers, just like their Hollywood heroes, and are trying their hardest to catch up.

We would do well to remember that humans lived as hunters and gatherers for two million years – that is, 99% of our time on Earth – and our numbers never exceeded 10 million. Hunter-gatherers knew how to live within the limits of the land and were extremely successful at it. (Diamond 1987, 2012; Ingold; Sahlins 2009; Suzman 2017; Woodburn 1982) Civilizations, on the other hand, are all based on expansion, growth, unsustainable population increases and ecological destruction – as well as slavery, patriarchy, exploitation and domination. (Jensen 2006; Zerzan 2018)

Now that we've considered the role of population, let's get to renewables. On top of this overpopulation-consumption problem, the renewable energy cult wants to replace all the energy we currently use with solar and wind and their other gadgets. So *in addition to of all the energy we're already using*, and the exponentially rising energy we're using because of population growth, they want to attempt to replace the entire energy infrastructure with solar, wind, hydro and whatever else they believe in – even though all their other fantasy energy sources still rely on mining, on rare earth metals, on concrete and steel, *which all depend on huge amount of fossil fuels!* (After all, mining, concrete and steel cannot be made with renewables.) As Vaclav Smil points out, any transition will be based on fossil fuels:

Every transition to a new form of energy supply has to be powered by the intensive deployment of existing energies and prime movers: the transition from wood to coal had to be energized by human muscles, coal combustion powered the development of oil, and ... today's solar photovoltaic cells and wind turbines are embodiments of fossil energies required to smelt the requisite metals, synthesize the needed plastics, and process other materials requiring high energy inputs. (Smil 2017)

Which means that in addition to exponentially rising energy consumption to keep up with an exponentially rising population, *even more energy* (from fossil fuels) will be needed to create a new energy system. This is insane and incredibly stupid.

Of course, all this energy that everyone “needs” is to run all the pathological behaviours of civilization such as cars, computers, toasters, airplanes, lawyers, doctors, movie theaters, wars, bureaucracies, police, prisons, corporations – all institutions that humans lived perfectly well without for 99.9% of our time on Earth. This is crucial to consider, since many people only

look at figures such as EROI (Energy Returned on Energy Invested) and fail to take into account *what is being done* with that energy, and the many other costs involved. For example, dams may provide hydroelectric power, but *they kill rivers and watersheds*. Any healthy culture would refuse such energy. Regarding nuclear power, didn't Chernobyl, Fukushima and all the other accidents and near-meltdowns teach us anything? Are we that desperate for energy to accept toxic waste and irradiating the planet for millions of years? Any healthy culture would refuse such energy. And again – it's all for energy to do *what*, exactly? Humans never needed that extra energy for two million years – and that was two million years of sustainable living.

The simple fact is, continuing to ignore the Earth's limits will cause ecological collapse even sooner.

It's time to stop repeating over and over again what governments and industry want us to regard as solutions, what the mass media brainwash us to say, and what mainstream schools indoctrinate us with. Those institutions exist for growth, exploitation and slavery. No matter how much energy we use, we will destroy life on the planet unless we control population and live using a fraction of the energy – as in, only the energy we get from our own hands and legs. That means reducing consumption. It also means the end of the civilized, modern way of life - but that's what “living sustainably” actually means.

Finally, consider that the elite and the entire capitalist system requires increasing consumption. Remember, what's called GDP and “economic growth” are euphemisms for increased consumption and the foundation of not just capitalist economies, but *all economies within any civilization*.

Would those in power ever allow for a decrease in consumption? Never. They scream if growth isn't growing fast enough. Stalled growth or a shrinking economy is called a “depression”. The Global Financial Crisis of 2008-2009 was a mere 1-2.5% contraction of the economy and it ruined millions of lives and caused mass panic. The Great Depression of 1929-1932 caused a global economic contraction of 15%. To keep climate change and ecological destruction from getting worse, and to live within the Earth's limits, we need a 95% contraction.

Unfortunately, the inescapable fact is, the elite would sooner lock people up in concentration camps and poison them and start a world war. Wars are great for growth, because it gives a boost to the industrial sector (to produce all those weapons and military infrastructure) and after all that destruction, there's lots of “re-building” to do! Just look at World War II or Iraq and Afghanistan more recently for proof.

The bottom line is, the human population must be stabilised and reduced, which can be done simply by women having no more than 1 child. Then we must understand that “renewable energy” is an industrial scam that will only speed up ecological collapse. What must be done – a 95% reduction in consumption – will never be allowed by those in power. Yet that is what we must do to live within the Earth's limits. What we would gain is healthy, meaningful lives. If that is what we want, then we must organise among ourselves and do what needs to be done, no matter what it takes. (Churchill 2007; Jensen 2011; Gelderloos 2007, 2015)

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