



Thank you for volunteering to distribute Endangered Species condoms for the Center for Biological Diversity.

Supporters like you are distributing 350,000 condoms in every state across the country. Here are a few talking points about the impact of unsustainable human population growth on endangered species.

If you have any questions, contact Randy Serraglio at (520) 623-5252, x 321.

Talking Points: Endangered Species Condoms

- These condoms are designed to draw attention to the well-documented correlation between unsustainable human population growth and the decline and extinction of many other species.
- The message of the condoms is straightforward: By choosing to take more care and responsibility for our reproductive behaviors, we humans can ensure a future in which the Earth is able to provide a living for all species, including our own.
- Most biologists agree that we have entered the sixth mass extinction event in the planet's history, and this time the cause is not a geologic or cosmic event, but human overpopulation. The Earth's extinction rate is now around 1,000 times the normal background rate.
- All of the key factors that pose the gravest threats to threatened and endangered species — land-use change due to urban and industrial development, competition for water and other resources, environmental contamination, climate change, and so on — are driven by the pressure of 6.8 billion humans on the planet.
- Global population is projected to reach 9 billion by 2050, but absent efforts to make birth control widely available, it could reach as high as 15 billion — far beyond the Earth's carrying capacity.
- Another 250,000 people are added to the planet each day, 85 million per year.
- The United States has by far the highest fertility rate of any developed nation, with a population that has already surpassed 300 million and could reach 450 million by 2050.
- The combination of rapid population growth and extremely high levels of consumption makes the United States a key factor in the overpopulation equation.
- In studying the interrelation between climate change and overpopulation, Oregon State University researchers recently developed a measure of environmental impact they call a "carbon legacy," the amount of carbon emissions that would be produced by a child over the course of its lifetime, as well as by the descendants of that child over succeeding generations. The carbon legacy of a child born in the United States is 168 times that of a child born in Bangladesh.
- The London School of Economics recently concluded that investing in making birth control available to all the people of the world who want it is nearly five times as cost effective as controlling greenhouse gas emissions through technology.
- Nearly 40 percent of all pregnancies in the world — and nearly 50 percent of all pregnancies in the United States — are unintended, meaning that universal access to birth control would provide a crucial means of reducing unsustainable fertility rates.
- Other key factors in stabilizing population growth involve the education and empowerment of women to choose when to bear children and how many to bear.
- Many studies have shown that women with improved educational and economic opportunity tend to postpone childbearing and have fewer children overall.
- Overpopulation is an issue that must be addressed globally, without regard for national borders. The fundamental issue is the biological carrying capacity of Earth; in other words, how many people can the planet really support?

Visit www.EndangeredSpeciesCondoms.com for more information.

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Earth Day 2010 – 40th Anniversary **Center for Biological Diversity Talking Points**

- Global population has nearly doubled since the original Earth Day in 1970, from 3.5 billion to 6.8 billion. United States population has increased by more than 50 percent, from about 200 million to more than 300 million.
- On Earth Day 1970, unsustainable human population growth was *the* primary issue, widely recognized as the driving force behind all environmental problems, including chemical contamination, air and water pollution, extinction, etc.
- The publication of *The Population Bomb* by Paul Ehrlich in 1968, the best-selling ecology book of the 1960s, was a major catalyst for the original Earth Day and the subsequent birth of the modern environmental movement.
- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), signed into law just a few months before Earth Day 1970, recognized in its Preamble the “profound impact of man’s activity on the interrelations of all components of the natural environment, particularly the profound influences of population growth.”
- Also in 1970, President Nixon created the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, which concluded in 1972 that “gradual stabilization of our population through voluntary means would contribute significantly to the nation’s ability to solve its problems.”
- Many prominent conservation groups at the time signed onto a resolution stating that “population growth is directly involved in the pollution and degradation of our environment” and that “the well-being of individuals, the stability of society and our very survival are threatened.” These groups committed to promoting attitudes and policies that would stabilize population growth as soon as possible.
- Unfortunately, in the past few decades, the problem of human overpopulation has largely disappeared from public discourse. The “official” Earth Day Web site for 2010 does not list human overpopulation among the core environmental issues that must be addressed.
- Since 1970, great strides have been made to reduce fertility rates around the world, largely through education and increased access to birth control. But even though birth rates have declined significantly in the last few decades, death rates have also been declining, so that the population growth rate continues to increase.
- The original Earth Day was a grassroots effort by conscious choice of its founder, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson. More than 20 million people—10 percent of the U.S. population at the time—participated in more than 10,000 schools, 2,000 colleges, and 1,000 communities around the country. As Sen. Nelson put it, “Earth Day worked because of the spontaneous response at the grassroots level. It organized itself.”
- The Center for Biological Diversity is invoking this same spirit with its campaign to distribute 250,000 free Endangered Species Condoms for the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day in 2010, on top of the 100,000 it distributed for Valentine’s Day 2010. Five thousand-plus volunteers will be distributing condoms in all 50 states across the United States, and in several other countries.
- The 250,000 condoms that will be distributed barely cover the number of people that are added to the global population *each day*, and are far short of the 350,000-plus births that occur daily around the world. Educational campaigns that promote universal access to free birth control must be expanded in order to stabilize global population at a level that allows a quality life for all species.

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