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Introduction

DAVID SAMWAYS – EDITOR

Welcome to the first issue of *The Journal of Population and Sustainability*, an interdisciplinary journal with papers from the social sciences, humanities, environmental and natural sciences including those concerned with family planning and reproductive health. *The Journal of Population and Sustainability* aims to bring together research on all aspects of the relationship between human numbers and environmental issues. It is intended that the journal act as an interdisciplinary hub facilitating collaboration and furthering the development of the field.

In this issue we start with papers from Steven W Sinding and Aubrey Manning considering the state of the population movement in general. Sinding's paper reflects on his long career in the population field and considers the changing nature of the alliance between those concerned with the environmental dimension of population growth and the "family planning" movement. Manning's paper reflects on a lifelong concern with the environment and human numbers and forwards a robust position on the relationship between economic growth, population and inequality.

Manning also touches on the issue of reproductive freedom, an issue which is examined by the moral philosopher Sarah Conly in her paper *One Child: Do We Have a Right to More?*. Conly summarises the argument in her book of the same title, making the case for the moral relevance of family size in the context of the environmental limits of a finite planet.

Colin Kelley's paper, *On Sustainability, Vulnerability, Climate and Conflict*, examines the complex factors of carrying capacity and the part played by population growth and climate change in the vulnerability of some societies

to abrupt changes in climate. Drawing on his recent research on changes in contemporary rainfall patterns in the Fertile Crescent of the Middle East, Kelley argues that population pressure, drought and agricultural collapse have played an important part in the civil conflict and mass migration in the region.

In *Population Projections: Recipes for Action, or Inaction?*, Jane O'Sullivan examines the basis for upward revisions of population projections. She argues that the UN's projections of future population growth display a fatalism which treats population projections as immutable facts rather than estimates that can be changed by action. O'Sullivan argues that this has undermined concerns about population growth and contributed to a decline in international support for family planning programmes. The resultant slowing or stalling of the decline in the rate of fertility has led to this upward revision of the expected peak population.

Finally, David Newton summarises research projects sponsored by Population Matters and carried out by students studying the MSc in Management Science at The London School of Economics and Political Science. The full projects will be available on the Population Matters website.

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