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REPRODUCTIVE ETHICS: BIOETHICISTS NEED TO PROMOTE SMALL FAMILIES WORLDWIDE

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OVERPOPULATION

HUMAN OVERPOPULATION:

- THE CONDITION OF BEING POPULATED WITH EXCESSIVELY LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE, OR
- A SITUATION WHICH OCCURS WHEN THE NUMBER OF HUMAN OCCUPANTS OF AN AREA EXCEEDS THE ABILITY OF THAT AREA TO PROVIDE FOR THOSE OCCUPANTS, OR
- *“WHEN IS AN AREA OVERPOPULATED? WHEN ITS POPULATION CANNOT BE MAINTAINED WITHOUT RAPIDLY DEPLETING NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES, AND WITHOUT DEGRADING THE CAPACITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT THE POPULATION. IN SHORT, IF THE LONG-TERM CARRYING CAPACITY OF AN AREA IS CLEARLY DEGRADED BY ITS CURRENT HUMAN OCCUPANTS, THAT AREA IS OVERPOPULATED” (EHRlich 1990)*

ENVIRONMENTALLY DEFINED

OVERPOPULATION

HUMAN OVERPOPULATION:

- EXACERBATES ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS
- IT IS THE UPSTREAM DRIVER OF NUMEROUS EXISTENTIAL THREATS, FROM CLIMATE CHANGE, BIODIVERSITY LOSS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION TO WATER SCARCITY, MASS STARVATION, PANDEMIC EMERGENCE, POVERTY, EXTREMISM, AND WIDESPREAD CONFLICT
- AND ALSO, IT IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE FOR ACHIEVING *SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS*

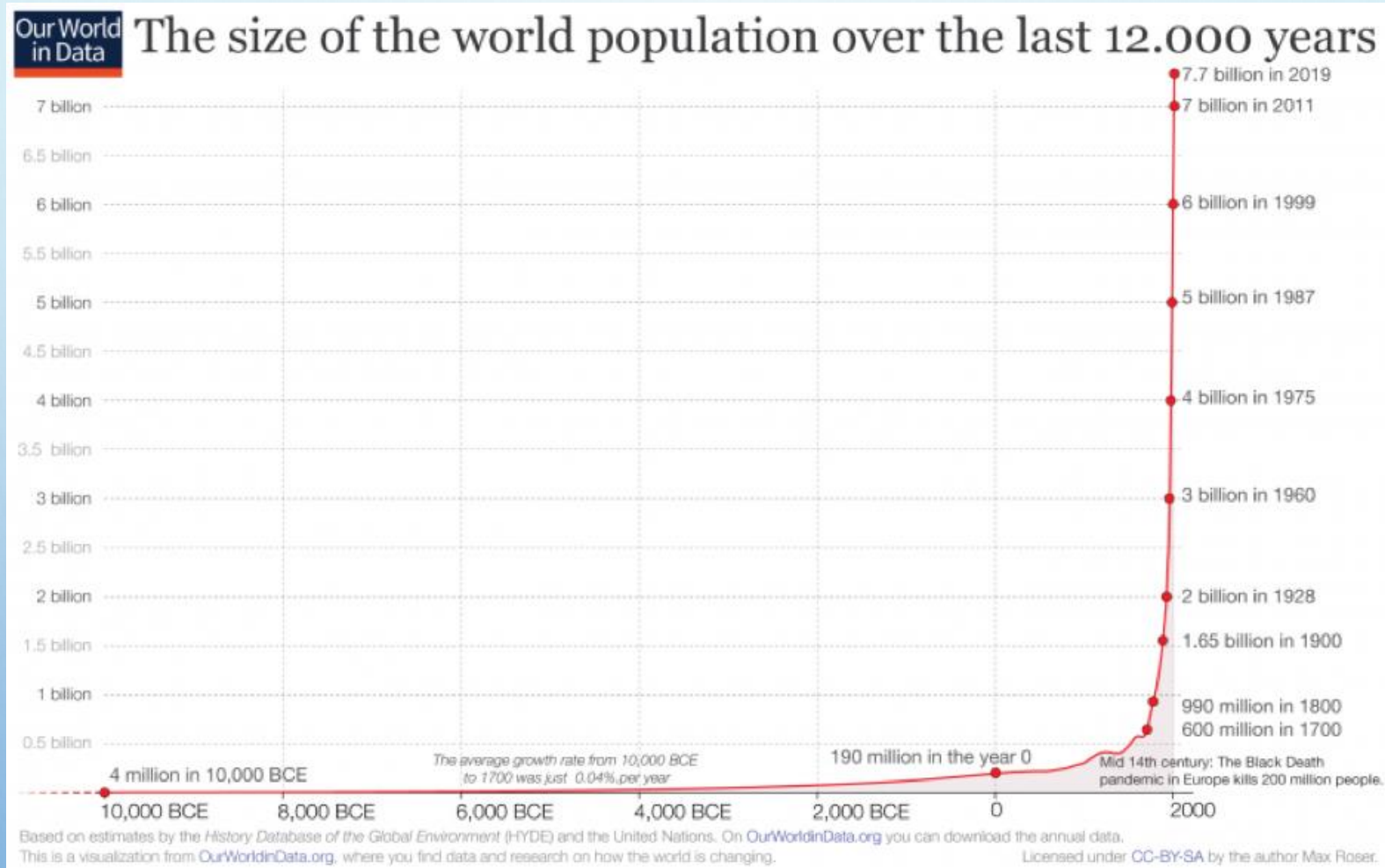
OVERPOPULATION

HUMAN OVERPOPULATION:

- **SINCE 1950, HUMANITY HAS WITNESSED RAPID POPULATION GROWTH; FURTHER PREDICTED**
- 2.5 BILLION (1950) ... 5 BILLION (1987) ... 6 BILLION (1999) ... 7 BILLION (2011)
- **CURRENTLY, THE HUMAN POPULATION INCREASES BY OVER 80 MILLION A YEAR**
- 8 BILLION (11/2022) ... 8.5 BILLION (2030) ... 9.7 BILLION (2050) ... 10.4 BILLION (2100) (UN 2022)

THIS GROWTH MUST BE REDUCED, STOPPED AND ULTIMATELY REVERSED AND HUMANITY MUST BE BROUGHT BACK TO LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE NUMBERS – SOMEWHERE AROUND 3 BILLION

PICTURES SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS



ROOTS OF OVERPOPULATION

- **FIVE ROOTS OF HUMANITY'S GROWTH:**

- MORTALITY DECLINE
- COERCED FERTILITY
- UNWANTED FERTILITY
- WANTED FERTILITY
- POPULATION MOMENTUM (A BULK OF YOUNG PEOPLE ENTERING INTO THE REPRODUCTIVE POOL)

OBVIOUSLY, ROOT (1) IS DESIRABLE AND CURBING IT WOULD BE UNETHICAL AND UNACCEPTABLE

ROOTS OF OVERPOPULATION

- **REMAINING FOUR ROOTS OF HUMANITY'S GROWTH**
- CAN BE ADDRESSED ETHICALLY AND HUMANELY BY **SUPPORTIVE MEASURES:**
 - (1) VOLUNTARY FAMILY PLANNING
 - (2) EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT
 - (3) ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
 - (4) SMALL-FAMILY REPRODUCTIVE ETHICS

RESTRICTIVE MEASURES (SUCH WERE FORCED STERILIZATIONS, ONE-CHILD POLICY) **ARE UNETHICAL AND SHOULD BE AVOIDED;** THUS, THEY ARE NOT DISCUSSED HERE

(1) VOLUNTARY FAMILY PLANNING

- **VOLUNTARY FAMILY PLANNING METHODS AND SERVICES:**
- CONTRACEPTIVE PREVALENCE IS THE GREATEST FACTOR FOR A COUNTRY'S FERTILITY RATE (ARULKUMARAN 2020)
- **ITS AVAILABILITY IS ETHICAL** – IT IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS FOR WOMEN TO SPACE THEIR CHILDREN AND USE THE TIME TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF CHILDREN THEY ALREADY HAVE
- **HOWEVER, GREATER INVESTMENTS WORLDWIDE ARE NECESSARY, CURRENTLY 0.31% OF DEVELOPMENT AID** (MARTIN AND WU 2015)
- *“FAMILY PLANNING IS A SCIENCE'S GIFT TO THE WORLD (JUST AS VACCINATION). TO NOT HAVE IT UNIVERSALLY AVAILABLE, IS, IN THE 21ST CENTURY, A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY AND THE PLANET” (GUILLEBAUD 2019)*

(2) EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT

- **EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF GIRLS AND WOMEN:**
- EDUCATION IS AN IMPORTANT WAY TO EMPOWER WOMEN AND FOR THEM TO GAIN CONTROL OF THEIR FERTILITY
- GIRLS' EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT ARE AMONG THE MOST POWERFUL FORCES ON THE PLANET
- EDUCATED GIRLS ARE HEALTHIER AND WEALTHIER; IT BENEFITS WHOLE COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMICS

VOLUNTARY FAMILY PLANNING AND EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT ARE IMPORTANT IN THEMSELVES (HELPING INDIVIDUALS) AND ALSO CRUCIAL FOR CURBING POPULATION GROWTH (HELPING THE PLANET)

(3) ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

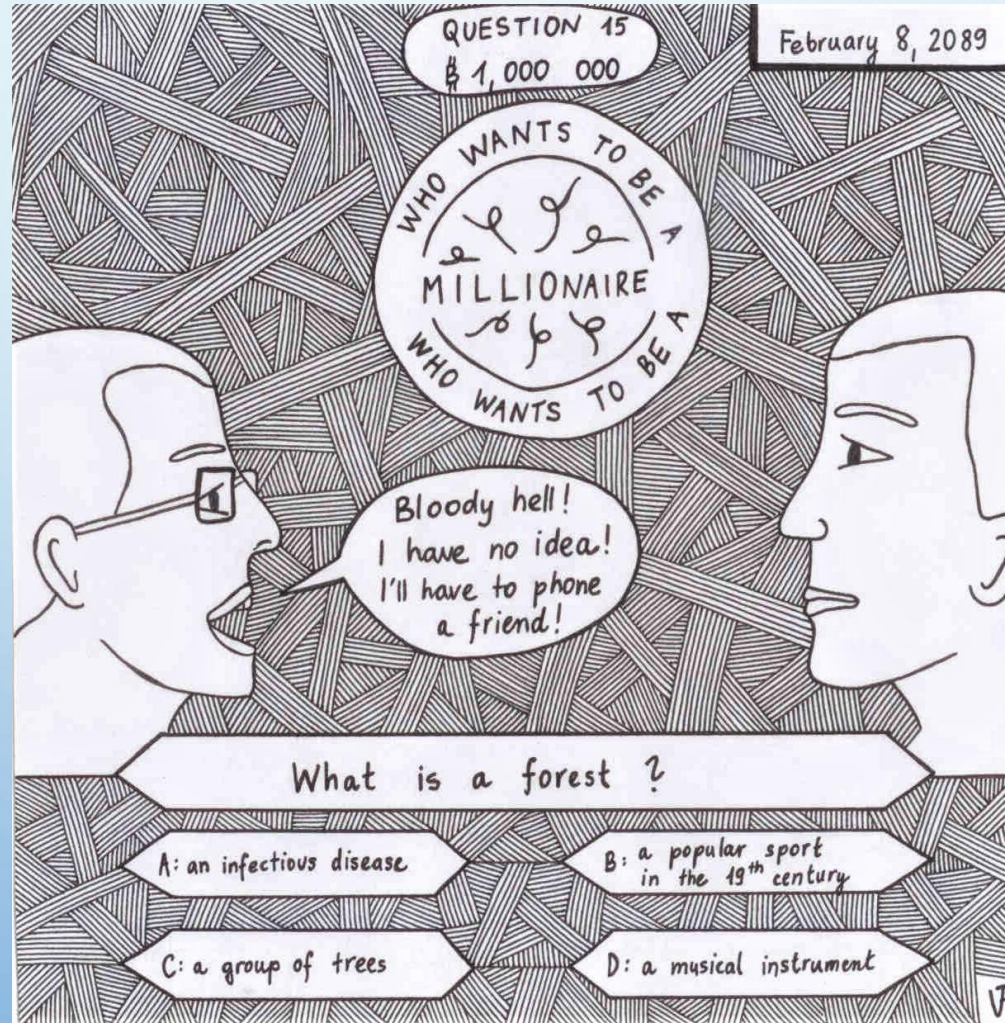
- **ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND EDUCATION:**
- RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT HOW OVERPOPULATION RISKS HUMANITY'S FUTURE – AND ALL PLANETARY LIFE
- POINTS OUT THAT **HUMANITY IS NOT THE ONLY SPECIES ON THE PLANET**
- **OTHER SPECIES HAVE THEIR RIGHTS TOO** (SPECIES'S RIGHT TO CONTINUED EXISTENCE) (STAPLES AND CAFARO 2012)
- **OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS ALSO HAVE RIGHTS ...**

... TO LIVE IN A WORLD IN WHICH THEY CAN THRIVE AND PROSPER – SOMETHING IMPOSSIBLE
IN AN OVERPOPULATED WORLD DEPLETED OF NATURE RESOURCES, AFFLICTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE, AND MANY MORE

(3) ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

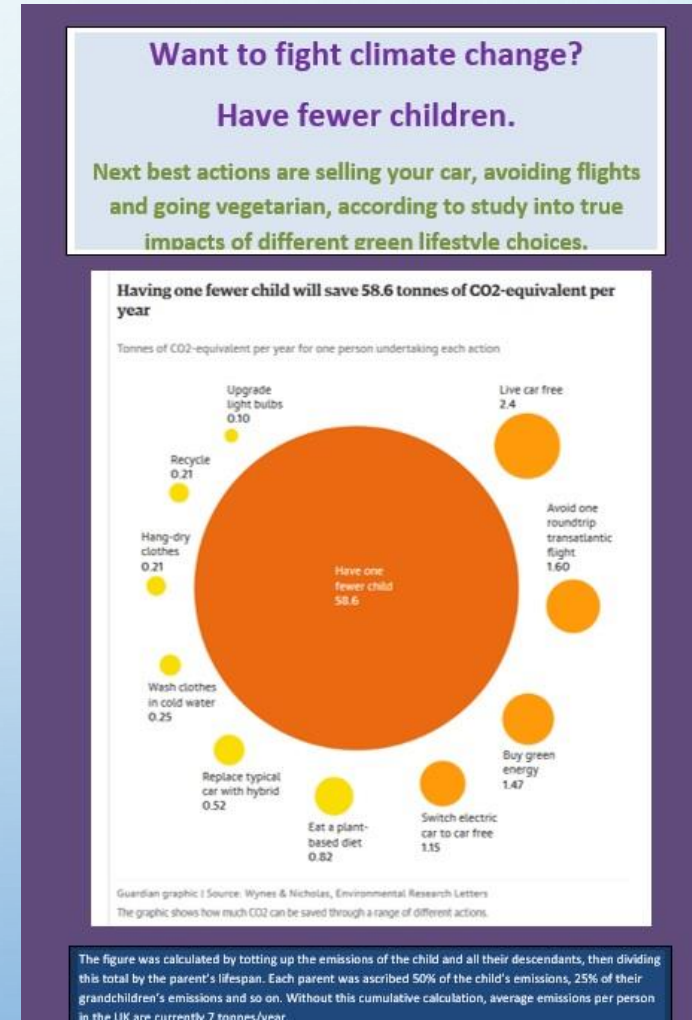
- **ENVIRONMENT, ETHICS AND DEVELOPMENT:**
- *“THE ENVIRONMENT IS A PUBLIC GOOD WHOSE RESOURCES SHOULD BE ENJOYED BY EVERYONE IN THE COMMUNITY REGARDLESS OF THEIR GENDER, RACE, ECONOMIC STATUS OR EVEN POLITICAL AFFILIATION” (SSEBUNYA ET AL. 2019)*
- *“THE ENVIRONMENT IS NOT AND CANNOT BE A LEG OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STOOL. IT IS THE FLOOR UPON WHICH THE STOOL, OR ANY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MODEL, MUST STAND” (ATAPATTU ET AL. 2021)*
- *“SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS DEVELOPMENT THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE PRESENT WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE ABILITY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MEET THEIR NEEDS” (ATAPATTU ET AL. 2021)*

ONE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION



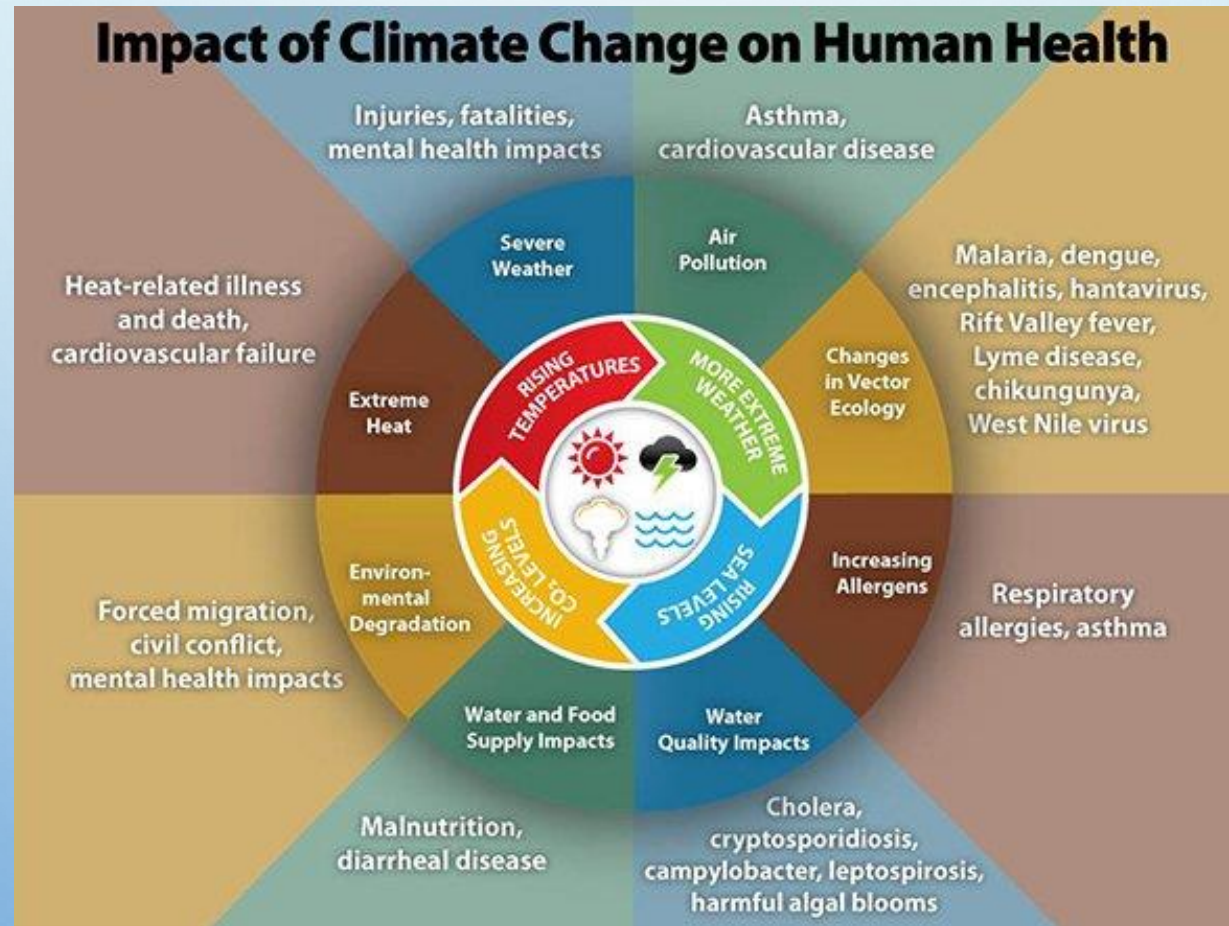
(4) SMALL-FAMILY REPRODUCTIVE ETHICS

- **REPRODUCTIVE ETHICS OF SMALL FAMILIES:**
- THE ETHICAL ASPECTS OF OUR PROCREATIONS, **OUR RIGHT TO PROCREATE IS NOT UNLIMITED**
- IT IS LIMITED BY RIGHTS OF OTHER SPECIES, BY RIGHTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS
- PROMOTION OF REPRODUCTIVE ETHICS OF SMALL FAMILIES ON PRINCIPLE (A MAXIMUM OF TWO-CHILDREN PER FAMILY; I.E., **REPLACEMENT FERTILITY**, AND IDEALLY LESS, I.E., **ONE-CHILD ETHICS**)



INTERCONNECTEDNESS

- **POPULATION – ENVIRONMENT – HEALTH (OF POPULATION) RELATIONSHIP**



(GCCW 2022)

THE ROLE OF BIOETHICS

- **HUMAN OVERPOPULATION IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH CRISIS**
- MEDICINE SHOULD BE A POWERFUL VOICE SHAPING PUBLIC AND POLITICAL ACTION, HOWEVER, HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS HAVE BEEN SLOW TO VOICE THEIR CONCERN AND THEIR OUTRAGE CONCERNING DRAMATIC EVENTS OCCURRING SINCE THE POPULATION EXPANSION HAS STARTED
- THE ESSENCE OF MEDICINE IS ASSISTANCE TO FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS, AND IT IS A MORAL DUTY OF THE AFOREMENTIONED PERSONS TO PAY CONSIDERABLY GREATER ATTENTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, AND TO TAKE A MUCH MORE DECISIVE STAND IN THIS REGARD

THE ROLE OF BIOETHICS

- **HUMAN OVERPOPULATION IS AN ETHICAL CRISIS AND ISSUE**
- WE NEED TO RESHAPE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE, SHIFT FROM EGO-LOGICAL TO ECO-LOGICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EARTH, IMPROVE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER SPECIES AND OUR POSTERITY
- WE NEED TO SHIFT FROM PUBLIC HEALTH TO PLANETARY HEALTH (= THE HEALTH OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION AND THE NATURAL SYSTEMS ON WHICH IT DEPENDS) – OUR PATIENTS ARE PEOPLE AND THE PLANET (GUINTO 2022)
- WE NEED TO DISCUSS THE LINK BETWEEN OVERPOPULATION AND OUR PROFESSION AND THAT OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS AND DISCUSS ETHICAL UNSUSTAINABILITY OF HUMAN OVERPOPULATION (AND OVERCONSUMPTION)

FINAL CONCLUSION

- ADDRESSING HUMAN OVERPOPULATION COMPASSIONATELY, ETHICALLY AND HUMANELY – ALWAYS – SHOULD BE AXIOMATIC FOR BIOETHICISTS WHO SHOULD BE UNIQUELY MOTIVATED TO:
- **(1) SOUND THE ALARM ON HOW OVERPOPULATION RISKS ALL PLANETARY LIFE -**
INFORMING THE PUBLIC AND REMINDING THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS
EMPOWERING DECISION/POLICY-MAKERS TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS
ON THE CONTRARY, HOLDING THEM ACCOUNTABLE WHEN BAD DECISIONS ARE MADE
- **(2) PROMOTE SMALL FAMILIES WORLDWIDE AS A NEW GLOBAL ETHICAL NORM -**
WITH UNDERSTANDING TO ETHNICAL, REGIONAL, CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS SPECIFICATIONS

FINAL CONCLUSION

- WHAT WE SHOULD NOT DO, IS TO IGNORE HUMAN OVERPOPULATION DUE TO ITS MONSTROSITY OR BECAUSE IT IS NOT A POLITICALLY CORRECT TOPIC. **FAILING TO DO SO NOW, MEANS TO BRING ABOUT COERCIVE, UNETHICAL MEASURES (ONE-CHILD POLICY, ETC.) IN THE FUTURE**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION



OSTRICHES DON'T REALLY DO IT, BUT ONE SPECIES OF MAMMALS DOES