



**ENDANGERED
WILDLIFE TRUST**
Protecting forever, together.

11 July 2019

The Endangered Wildlife Trust joins the Thriving Together campaign to highlight the world's most important yet ignored environmental action

The Thriving Together campaign recognises that family planning is critically important not only for women and girls but also for the environment

Today, the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) joins 150 other leading environmental and reproductive health organisations to pledge support for a first-of-its-kind campaign: Thriving Together. Organisations that have signed up to the Thriving Together campaign form a diverse global alliance united by the agreement that improving access to family planning services is critically important for the environment and biodiversity.

Increasing human pressures are among the many challenges facing planetary health. In addition, by harming ecosystems, people undermine food and water security and human health, and threaten habitats and species. Ensuring family planning is available to all who seek it is among the positive actions organisations must take to lessen these pressures.

The United Nations projects that the global population will rise from 7.7 billion today to 9.8 billion by 2050. Future population growth is uncertain however, and highly sensitive to small changes in the average number of children per mother. If the physical, financial, educational, social and religious barriers to people using family planning services were removed and the average number of children per mother was just 0.5 lower than the UN population projection which is most commonly used, global population would peak at 8.8 billion in 2050, rather than 9.8 billion.

This is all possible, by enabling the exercise of a well-recognised human right, that people should be able to decide for themselves, whether, when, how often and with whom to bring children into the world. Family planning contributes to women's empowerment, improves family and general health, advances education and life opportunities and, by slowing population growth, eases pressures on wildlife and ecosystems.

The Sustainable Development Goals call for integrated solutions. The EWT, along with other organisations backing the Thriving Together campaign, agrees that whether working in health or environmental conservation, through sharing information and working together on strategic projects and policies, we can help human communities and their ecosystems thrive. Successful biodiversity conservation requires taking people, our health, and our interactions with the natural world into account.

Other organisations backing the Thriving Together campaign across the globe include the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health, Cheetah Conservation Fund, International Crane Foundation, Pathfinder International, and Rainforest Trust, among others. Collectively, the organisations work in over 170 countries.

The Thriving Together campaign is spearheaded by the Margaret Pyke Trust, which has over 50 years' experience of family planning and is the only member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) with this expertise.

Dr Harriet Davies-Mostert, Head of Conservation at the EWT, says: "The EWT has endorsed Thriving Together because we see from our work in rural areas that human and environmental health are connected. By partnering with health organisations, we believe conservation organisations can do more. We are confident that this campaign will provide the necessary impetus to influence policy and drive the adoption of more integrated approaches."

David Johnson, Chief Executive at the Margaret Pyke Trust says: "The existence of barriers to family planning is the most important ignored environmental challenge of our day. This changes now. The Thriving Together campaign encourages cross-sectoral support between health and environmental conservation organizations, showcasing that when people can choose freely whether and when to have children it is for the benefit of both people and planet. Barriers to family planning are not only relevant to those who are passionate about improving health, gender equality, empowerment and economic development, but also to those who are passionate about the conservation of biodiversity, the environment and sustainability."

The Margaret Pyke Trust's Thriving Together campaign is informed by its paper '*Removing Barriers to Family Planning, Empowering Sustainable Environmental Conservation*', which sets out how and why family planning is important for the environment. The Thriving Together campaign website ThrivingTogether.Global will be launched on 11 July 2019.

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS:

David Johnson is available for interview. To arrange please contact James Gillies at james@amazonpr.co.uk / 020 7700 6952 or Edward Haynes at edward@amazonpr.co.uk / 020 7700 6952.

About the Endangered Wildlife Trust

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) has worked tirelessly for over 45 years to save wildlife and habitats, with our vision being a world in which both humans and wildlife prosper in harmony with nature. From the smallest frog, to the majestic rhino; from sweeping grasslands to arid drylands; from our shorelines to winding rivers: the EWT is working with you, to protect our world.

The EWT's team of field-based specialists is spread across southern and East Africa, where committed conservation action is needed the most. Working with our partners, including businesses and governments, the EWT is at the forefront of conducting applied research, supporting community conservation and livelihoods, training and building capacity, addressing human wildlife conflict, monitoring threatened species and establishing safe spaces for wildlife range expansion.

A beacon of hope for Africa's wildlife, landscapes and communities, the EWT is protecting forever, together. Find out more at www.ewt.org.za

About Margaret Pyke Trust

The Margaret Pyke Trust, with the Population & Sustainability Network, has been a leader in contraception and sexual health for 50 years. Today, in the UK, the Margaret Pyke Trust provides the broadest range of contraceptive training courses for clinicians nationwide.

Internationally, through the Population & Sustainability Network, the Margaret Pyke Trust promotes reproductive health and rights as an integral element of sustainable development. They work with Network members and partners to design and implement programs improving contraceptive services, and work towards a vision of a world where everyone can decide freely whether, when, and how many children they want, for the benefit of all people and the planet.

Website: <https://margaretpyke.org/>

Twitter: @MargaretPyke

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MargaretPykeTrust/>

About Thriving Together

At the heart of the Thriving Together campaign is the widespread agreement, for the first time, that removal of barriers to family planning are critically important not only for women and girls, but also for environmental conservation and biodiversity. The campaign is the start of the process to change global policy to recognize this. Around 150 leading environmental and reproductive health organizations working in over 170 countries have declared their support for the campaign, with particular support from African organizations, working in all 54 African nations. The Thriving Together website, statement and paper can be viewed [here](#).