

## OVERPOPULATION

All biologists know that , unless checked, a biopopulation will grow until it fills its ecological niche, and that in this process it may dislodge other biopopulations competing for the same niche. Once the biopopulation has attained that maximum, it remains stagnant in number--until the resources in the niche start to decline, either because they are not renewable or because they reproduce at a lower rate than the rate at which they are consumed. Mankind is precisely on the brink of filling its niche to capacity, and of exploiting it to intensively, that it is dislodging (actually eliminating) a number of other species, and that it is rendering that niche unfit for its own posterity. At the same time, humans are the only organisms capable of understanding this elementary truth and of taking measures that would enable humankind to continue living on Earth for several

more million years. The only obstacles so far are greed--the lust for economic and political power--the superstition that "the more the merrier", and the anthropocentric morality involving the belief that we can do with "our" planet exactly as we wish. In short, unless we alter radically our own attitudes and beliefs concerning the use of the environment, we are doomed to extinction.