

U.N. Climate Chief: Stop Worrying and Have Children

Climate change may well be a problem, but the chief of the United Nations' agency on climate says it won't destroy the world – and shouldn't stop young people from having children. Alarmist rhetoric from “doomsters and extremists” that babies will destroy the planet “resembles religious extremism” and “will only add to [young women's] burden” by “provoking anxiety,” he said.

Petteri Taalas is no “climate-change denier.” He is secretary-general of the [World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#), the UN's special agency on weather and climate with 193 member states and territories. The WMO's most [recent](#) global climate report states that “evidence exists of anthropogenic drivers” for carbon emissions (but not that they are “[d]etermining the causal factors” of natural disasters). Talaas' foreword was followed by statements from both the UN secretary-general and the president of the UN General Assembly. And Taalas recently [called](#) for “urgent climate action.”

That makes his calming words all the more significant.

Man-made climate change, Taalas says, “is not going to be the end of the world. The world is just becoming more challenging. In parts of the globe living conditions are becoming worse, but people have survived in harsh conditions.”

The real threat today, he says, is from misguided environmental extremism, which demands the world make radical changes to their economic – and personal – lives or become complicit in genocide.

“While climate skepticism has become less of an issue, now we are being challenged from the other side,” Taalas says. “They are doomsters and extremists; they make threats.”

As an example of extreme proposals, Taalas says they “demand zero [carbon] emissions by 2025.”

And their faith rivals that of the most convinced religious zealot, Taalas [tells](#) Finland’s financial newspaper *Talouselämä* (which translates to “economic life”) on September 6. (While much of the article is behind a paywall, English translations have [crept](#) into the U.S. media.)

“The IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] reports have been read in a similar way to the Bible: you try to find certain pieces or sections from which you try to justify your extreme views. This resembles religious extremism,” Taalas says.

This polarized environment negatively impacts young people’s mental health – especially for women who want to have children.

“The atmosphere created by the media has been provoking anxiety. The latest idea is that children are a negative thing. I am worried for young mothers, who are already under much pressure. This will only add to their burden.”

The most prominent person to ask this question this year has been Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who asked in a social media video, “[Is it OK to still have children?](#)” Environmentalists [warn](#) that the largest carbon footprint a person will ever leave is having children. Senator Bernie Sanders recently suggested U.S. taxpayers should fund abortion around the globe as a means of reducing [overpopulation](#). (Eating meat also warms the earth because of what the Green New Deal bluntly classified as “farting cows.”)

Taalas dismisses these concerns. “If you start to live like an Orthodox monk” – who is celibate and follows a vegan diet during fasting seasons – “the world is not going to be saved,” he said.

Taalas deserves hearing in an age when the words “climate change” cannot be uttered apart from “catastrophic.” *Adapting* to predicted climate change may be less painful than adopting solutions to prevent it.

As I noted when Prince Harry and Meghan Markle announced they would they plan to have a “[maximum](#)” of two children, the much-cited (and likely little-read) IPCC report estimates the cost to repair the planet if politicians do absolutely nothing:

The IPCC [found](#) that if the governments around the world do nothing to lower CO2 emissions, which it calls “the no-policy baseline scenario,” it will cause “a global gross domestic product (GDP) loss of 2.6%” by 2100.

Compare that, momentarily, to the cost of a population bust. The IMF found that in the more developed countries, including the UK, the increase in public health spending alone “over 2015–50 is equivalent to 57 percent of today’s GDP, and the present discounted value (PDV) of the increase between 2050 and 2100 would be a staggering 163 percent of GDP.

If population dips, the cost to social welfare systems alone vastly outstrips the cost of adaptation. This is but one example. Proposals that would eliminate jobs and opportunity by banning useful industry or redistributing wealth will only intensify the pain. The Green New Deal’s \$93 trillion price tag may not be worth paying.

A woman’s lifelong regret that she never had the children that she wanted is certainly not.

We must be clear-eyed that neither the corporate titans that the environmental Left excoriates, nor the political elite whom it empowers, will bear the worst of future economic changes. (Often, like Ted Turner – the population reduction advocate who has [five](#) children and raises buffalo – they do not adopt their proffered lifestyle changes, either.) The

wealthy and powerful will always have sufficient resources to cope with the consequences. The brunt will fall on the world's poor and middle class, who cannot afford meat or travel, who are deprived of employment opportunities, and whose taxes rise astronomically.

We must wisely decide when, how – and *if* – we wish to adapt. We must analyze the man-made contribution to climate change, identify the nations most responsible for it, and weigh the costs of imposing often-draconian solutions versus the actual costs of adapting to a modestly warmer environment. And we must do so with the understanding that we are saving the planet for a purpose: to hand it on to a new generation.

When it comes to climate change, Christians owe the world more than our action. We owe it our prudence.

–

This [article](#) is republished with permission from the Acton Institute.

[Image Credit: Pixabay-tookapic]