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I think it's very important that we think about the ways that population interacts with the environment. It's important to look at population size, population distribution, and population composition and look at the ways that that produces changes in the environment and the effect those changes have on us and our well-being.

In the United States more than 50% of U.S. residents live within 50 miles of a coastal zone. This puts increasing pressure on that zone, not just because of the number of people but also the way that that zone is being used. So that creates additional pressures for those resources.

I think when we look at human population size, where we decide to live and how we use those resources; we have a very clear sense that we, as human beings, can impact the environment both in a negative way and in a positive way. And we have to be cognizant. We have to recognize those linkages.

I think as human beings we have the potential to positively and negatively impact the environment through the choices that we make and through the decisions we make with regard to our family and family size. If we think about some of the potential positive ways that we can impact the environment, I think mostly it happens at the community level. When we work with communities where individuals recognize the power that they have to work together to improve their livelihoods and economic opportunities, they help improve the environment.

When we think of population trends, it's very important for us to recognize that there are a number of things that are happening simultaneously and it's very important that we don't only talk about population growth. That's very important and that's happening predominantly in the developing world, the less industrialized countries. At the same time, in many developed countries such as Europe and Japan, there is a phenomenon of population aging, which we must recognize. There is a sense that as there are large numbers of young people that we need to pay attention to this phenomenon. More and more young people means sustained economic growth over time, but a sustained population growth, which has a potential to have an adverse effect on the environment.

There are a group of folks who say that the population will continue to explode and that we need to look at ways that we can better manage our environment. There are others who disagree and say that the population will not explode, that we have a problem of population aging and that fertility levels are declining. These represent extreme points of view and what we need to consider are the merits of both arguments. Yes, population aging is a reality. At the same time we have a very young population, who are the parents of tomorrow, who are already here today. So we need to find the balance between those two scenarios.

The concept of an ecological footprint is fairly important because it allows us to develop some sort of measure of the impact that we living in the United States may have compared to the potential impact that others living in other parts of the world may have. And it has allowed us to recognize that in certain countries, if we compare our impact, we can have 30 times more the impact of an average citizen from Bangladesh on the environment. What this means is that we must pay attention to our levels of consumption and be more cognizant of the impact of the choices that we make for our lives.

Certainly, the population of the United States is growing. We have the third largest population in the world. We are one of the population giants after China and India and we are the largest industrialized country in terms of population. So we certainly need to pay attention to our population size and the impact that that has on the environment. Coupled with that are the levels of consumption and the type of lifestyle to which we continue to aspire.

It's very difficult, as Americans, to tell folks in the developed or in the developing world that you cannot aspire to the same level of lifestyle that we have, when we hold ourselves up as a leader, as an example, in so many regions and in so many areas. So, what we need to think about are ways that we can work with the rest of the world to contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle while setting the example within our own country.

Water and food are two critical elements that we need for survival. Certainly there is enough food to feed the world. The question is distribution and access. We need to find better ways that put in place better incentives and policies to better distribute that food.

Water is another critical resource that we need to continue to pay attention to. It's very, very interesting when you look at the trends in the United States. The states where we have the greatest population growth tend to be the driest states. So you have Arizona, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Nevada and these are states where we have very clear linkages between population growth, the use of water that's used both for domestic agriculture and also industrial purposes. And so we need to find a better balance in our lives and in the use of those resources.

There is a very important link between investing in women's education, particularly for young girls, and increasing economic opportunities for young women. Research has shown that once we invest in these types of policies and efforts, women tend to delay childbearing and tend to increase their economic opportunities. This is very, very important particularly in countries in sub-Saharan Africa where women tend to be the major custodians of the environment. They are in charge of managing the environment most frequently. So it's a very, very important investment that we can make.

In the Philippines we have managed to work with a number of groups at the community level whereby communities have mobilized themselves and they have said, "you know, the link between population and environment is important, but we must think about what we all care about the most. And what we care about the most is increasing livelihood opportunities for ourselves and for our family and ensuring the well-being of our

families.” And these communities have come together in innovative and creative ways to manage both their population growth and population movement with natural resources management.

It’s very important that we think about the ways that population dynamics and migration, impact biodiversity resources, particularly in protected areas. This is particularly salient for island ecosystems because they are very small and they’re very dependent upon these resources. So the more people you have going into these protected areas, and particularly coastal zones and marine protected areas to secure livelihoods and often through initiatives linked to tourism, the greater risk there is to those resources and the long-term sustainability for the well-being of those peoples.

China and India are extremely important countries from a demographic and environment perspective. They are the population giants of the world. So we need to pay very close attention to what’s happening with regards to their populations and how they’re using natural resources. Right now in China there are increasing levels of development, of new cars. Many private sector firms are moving in and building new cars and the Chinese population is aspiring to greater car use, emulating our example here in the United States. So it’s something that we need to pay closer attention to and bear in mind the levels of pollution that can come from the use of these cars.

One of the amazing things about us as human beings is our capacity to be innovative. We cannot talk about linkages between population and the environment without putting that in the context of human creativity. And one of the ways in which we, as human beings, are most creative is in terms of technological developments and adapting to situations. So if you wanted to consider the ways that population has an impact on the environment, you have to do that in the context of technology and the potential for technological innovation to reduce the potential impact that we as humans may have on the environment.

Technology certainly has the potential to help particularly with regard to energy use. At the same time, if you think of marine resources, technology has allowed us to fish deeper and be more invasive in trying to get a higher fish catch. So technology is not a clear good story. There may be a bad side to it, too. We need to harness technology and maximize it for the benefit of the environment.

When we think of our children, and when I talk to folks in many developing countries about what they hope for their children, they are extremely hopeful because they believe that they themselves have the capacity to act. They also look to us here in the United States for leadership and they say that they cannot do this themselves without working with us and without us setting an example. So I am very hopeful. We have made much progress over the last two decades and I think we can continue to make many improvements in our lives.

I think overall we have to recognize the major pressure points. Certainly climate change is an important consideration and when we look at the potential of climate change to contribute to natural disasters, as in the recent spate of hurricanes that we had in the

Caribbean and the southern part of the United States. These are factors that we need to take into account. Urbanization is also a significant trend. More than 50% of the world is urban right now. Urbanization is both a good and a bad story so we need to better manage that urban growth in a way that we can harness the potential benefits we may get from living in those areas. I think we are doing much better than we did 30 years ago, but we still have some areas to work on.

I think when we talk about the ways that we as human beings have an impact on the environment we must think of security. Security is a very important consideration. When you look at an island like Haiti, there is a tradition in Haiti of burying a child's umbilical cord at the root of a tree to inculcate a sense of belonging, an attachment to the earth. But what happens in a country like Haiti when there are no more trees? There is no longer that identification with the land and when a hurricane comes or there is increased flooding, as we had recently, close to 2,000 people died. And what happens to the people who are left? Many of them want to leave. So we need to think about what we do with regard to population and environment is linked to economic security and political security, not just for us here in the United States but also abroad.

I think Haiti is a fascinating country for us to think about how the interaction of population, health and environment comes together. When you look at the population makeup of Haiti, it has the highest percentage of young people in the Western Hemisphere, the highest percentage of people that are under age 15. What this means is that there will be sustained population growth for the next decade. This age group represents tomorrow's parents who are already here today. So you have more people, sustained population growth, a fairly degraded environment, political instability and natural disasters all coming together in an extremely poor environment. Haiti is a case that we can look at and learn from and think about interventions that we can apply elsewhere. And when we intervene at the endpoint, when the disaster has already occurred, Americans spend so much more money at that point, whereas if we had gone in earlier and helped earlier we would have saved a lot more of that investment and saved many more lives. So it's an enormous opportunity for us to do better and to learn.

It's fascinating when we as Americans go abroad and talk to people in other countries about their perceptions of us. Generally, they are very supportive and very open to working with us and feel that we have a contribution to make to their well-being. And they're willing to learn from us and they want us to learn from them, as we certainly can. And it's interesting when you talk to Americans here in the United States; you get somewhat of a different perspective. I think we all think that the contribution that we make to foreign assistance is much more than it actually is. It costs an American family, on average, about \$42 a year to support foreign assistance. Less than 1% of the federal budget goes to foreign assistance. So Americans want to do more but I think overall we don't have a sense of how little we are doing and why it's important to our well-being here in the United States.