



**Which of these is the most effective way of offsetting carbon emissions?**



**Research from the Optimum Population Trust estimates that every £4 spent on providing unmet demand for family planning saves one tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>.**

**A similar reduction would require an £8 investment in tree planting, £15 in wind power, £31 in solar energy and £56 in hybrid vehicle technology.**

Offset your carbon footprint at:

**[www.popoffsets.com](http://www.popoffsets.com)**



## NEWS RELEASE: December 2009

### *Ground-breaking carbon offset project to put population on the Copenhagen agenda*

**Family planning is eight times cheaper as a way of tackling global warming than solar power and four times less costly than wind power, according to the sponsors of a radical new carbon offset initiative.**

UK-based charity, the Optimum Population Trust (OPT), says its research [1] reflects the conclusions of the recently published UN Population Fund report [2], and will give added impetus to calls for the population issue to be to the fore of the global environmental debate at the climate summit in Copenhagen.

OPT is launching the PopOffsets project which has the backing of the charity's influential Patrons including naturalist and broadcaster Sir David Attenborough, former diplomat Sir Crispin Tickell, as well as leading environmental campaigners, Jonathon Porritt and Sara Parkin.

The project has a dedicated website, [www.popoffsets.com](http://www.popoffsets.com), enabling people to offset their carbon footprint by making on-line donations to OPT to support family planning.

The impetus for the project was a major OPT report showing that, for a modest proportion of climate change funding, meeting the unmet demand for family planning would be the most cost-effective means of CO2 reduction.

OPT estimates every £4 spent on family planning saves one tonne of CO2. A similar reduction would require an £8 investment in tree planting, £15 in wind power, £31 in solar energy and £56 in hybrid vehicle technology.

The same broad conclusions have now been given authoritative endorsement by the UN Population Fund report.

**OPT Director Roger Martin said: "It is a plain fact that all population growth increases the number of both carbon emitters and climate change victims, and so exacerbates all problems of both mitigation and adaptation. This fact must be acknowledged, so this central aspect of all environmental problems can be humanely addressed."**

**"PopOffsets is an original and radical initiative that understands this connection and offers a practical and sensible response. For the first time ever individuals, companies and organisations will have the opportunity to offset their carbon voluntarily by supporting projects to provide family planning services where there is currently unmet demand."**

The project's sponsors have made it clear they are opposed to any initiatives that advocate any form of coercion, with all potential projects subject to a rigorous checking process - a pre-condition for financial support.

The PopOffsets launch is timed to highlight the CO2 / population link at the Copenhagen climate change summit.

**OPT Patron, Professor John Guillebaud said: "Politicians have evaded the population dimension to global warming and now it's vitally important Copenhagen recognises this crucially important issue. The PopOffsets initiative is evidence this can be done in a sensible, mature, practical and compassionate way, by empowering people to make sustainable choices."**

[1] The report Fewer Emitters, Lower Emissions, Lest Cost: reducing carbon emissions by investing in family planning was commissioned by OPT in cooperation with LSE from MSc student Thomas Wire in July 2009. See: [www.optimumpopulation.org/reducingemissions.pdf](http://www.optimumpopulation.org/reducingemissions.pdf)

[2] The United Nations Population Fund report Facing a Changing World: Women, Population and Climate was published in November 2009. See: [www.unfpa.org/swp/2009](http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2009)

For more information visit our FAQ's page: [www.popoffsets.com/contact.php](http://www.popoffsets.com/contact.php)

### *Let's face the Facts of Life...*

**Without action world population could hit 9 billion by 2050. Currently it's 6.8 billion.**

**OPT warns the earth may not be able to support half of the present population by 2099.**

**Population levels are rising at a level equal to the creation of a new city of 1.5m people EVERY week.**

**An estimated 80m conceptions a year are unwanted pregnancies.**

#### **Press enquiries:**

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