

**WILD SPECIES THREATENED BY LOW-YIELD FARMING,
NOT GLOBAL WARMING, EXPERT SAYS**

Churchville, VA – “Claims that global warming will destroy up to a million wildlife species—as recently featured on ABC’s Nightline—are willfully misleading,” warned Dennis Avery of Hudson Institute’s Center for Global Food Issues at the American Society of Animal Science’s annual meeting on July 24th.

Worse, said Avery, TV networks and wildlife biologists ignore the real threat to the world’s wildlife: a redoubling of human food demand over the next 50 years that could imperil vast tracts of wildlife habitat. Recognizing the food demand, however, would shift government research funds from climate models to politically incorrect agricultural research stations—our main hope to double crop and livestock yields.

“Modern warming is overwhelmingly natural. Ice cores and cave stalagmites tell us the Earth has a moderate, natural 1500-year climate cycle driven by the sun. All our wildlife species have survived 600 of these cyclical warmings in the last million years,” said Avery. “Trees and plants are often cold-limited, but rarely heat-limited. The very biologists who warned us in the journal *Nature* that a million species might be lost to warming have published their own studies showing that wild species are extending their ranges. Warming is making the forests more diverse, not less.”

“Not a single wild species has been found that has succumbed to modern warming, even though the planet has warmed 0.8 degree C in the past 150 years. If the extinction theory was correct, we already would have warmed thousands of species into extinction.” The only extinction biologists could claim was the golden toad of Costa Rica, which recent investigation has shown succumbed to extinction because of the deforestation of nearby lowlands, not climate warming.

“The crucial difference between our modern warming and those of millennia past is not CO₂, but that humanity is still taking land for low-yield crops and livestock. Moreover, we still have 1 billion people living in the biodiversity hotspots, hunting endangered species and committing slash-and-burn farming.

“Projections show that the global population will grow by another 2 or 3 billion before it stabilizes around the year 2040, and then begins to slowly decline. 7 billion people will likely be affluent enough to demand high-quality diets, compared to 1 billion today. Together, population and affluence will more than double farm demand. The next 200 years will tell whether low-yield farming will crowd out the wildlife species,” Avery warned.

“Incredibly,” he noted, “the very activists saying they’re worried about saving wildlife oppose everything about high-yield farming: the fertilizers, hybrid seeds, safety-tested pesticides, confinement rearing of birds and animals, and the agribusinesses that provide high-yield inputs.”

“For instance, the Green groups want us to quit using the nitrogen fertilizer we make from the air. But to replace commercial nitrogen, the world would need the manure from 7 billion additional cattle—and all the world’s forests to feed them! Their demand for organic fertilizer is incredibly irresponsible.”

“A global primitive farming mandate, as many Green groups endorse, would result only in massive human famine,” forecasted Avery. “That certainly would solve the population pressure, but it also would destroy much of the wildlife. In a famine, every living thing gets thrown into the cookpot, and the land where it lived gets cleared for more low-yield crops.”

“If we really care about wild species, we should support industrial fertilizer, biotechnology and, especially high-yield farming research,” concluded Avery.