

Statement of Patrick Moore, Ph.D.

**Before the House Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans and Wildlife**

May 22, 2019

**“Responding to the Global Assessment Report of the
Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity
and Ecosystem Services.”**

Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member McClintock, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify at today’s hearing.

In 1971, as a PhD student in ecology I joined an activist group in a church basement in Vancouver Canada and sailed on a small boat across the Pacific to protest US Hydrogen bomb testing in Alaska. We became Greenpeace.

After 15 years in the top committee I had to leave as Greenpeace began to adopt policies that I could not accept from my scientific perspective. I have made it my lifelong mission to apply sound scientific principles when considering the critical environmental issues facing us today

It was not until the early 1900s, marked by the final demise of the passenger pigeon in 1914, that the general public began to take a keen interest in the subject of species extinction. This awakening was inspired by the early activism of Theodore Roosevelt, John Muir and Gifford Pinchot.

Thus our species, homo sapiens, became the first and only species to be seriously concerned about the survival of all the

other species on this Earth, to the best of our knowledge the only home for life in the universe.

As a result of this now international concern, institutions have been created to identify endangered species and to develop programs to prevent their extinction and to ensure their long-term survival.

As a result, in the past century, there has been a marked decline in the number of extinctions as these programs have been implemented and have been largely successful, as these graphs clearly demonstrate. Fewer than 900 extinctions have been documented in the 500 years since 1500 AD. About 95 percent of them were on islands.

In February 1999, National Geographic published a chart showing the five major extinction events during the past 600 million years. It clearly shows that the number of taxonomic families of life have steadily increased despite great cataclysms such as asteroid impacts and massive volcanic eruptions.

The accompanying text warned of a Sixth Mass Extinction driven by humanity. Number 6 on the graph notes that beetles, amphibians, birds and large mammals are the hardest hit. I asked the editors, "Why does the line turn fuzzy at the end"? I knew that no entire taxonomic families have gone extinct in modern times. They replied, but did not explain the fuzziness. The downturn at the end of the graph is bogus.

There is good paleontology for the five major extinctions, during which 50-90 percent of all existing species became extinct. There is zero evidence that any such event is occurring now or has even begun to occur.

Human-caused extinction began in earnest when our ancestors went out of Africa and colonized other lands. The species in

those regions had not evolved in the presence of humans and many did not survive the experience. Australia 60,000 year ago, the New World 15,000 years ago, New Zealand 1200 years ago. All the islands colonized by Europeans from year 1500 on suffered pulses of extinctions, mainly due to overhunting and introduced species of predators and disease.

There are three primary causes of species extinction by humans.

1. Overhunting for food and purposeful eradication of pests. The dodo bird on Mauritius, the passenger pigeon, the Carolinian parakeet in the US south, and the mastodon are typical examples
2. Massive clearing of native ecosystems for food and fiber production. Vast fields of corn are grown for biofuel due to “green” priorities. Equally vast expanses of land have been converted to palm oil plantations for biodiesel. The same is true of massive solar farms covering land that could be rich in native species. These policies should be reconsidered.
3. The introduction of exotic predators, such as rats, cats, foxes and snakes, especially on islands where this has been the greatest cause of extinction in recent centuries. This has abated somewhat as particularly vulnerable species are already extinct and those remaining are either not vulnerable or are protected by programs aimed at their survival and recovery.

The IBPES claims there are 8 million species. Yet only 1.8 million species have been identified and named. Thus the IBPES believes there are 6.2 million unidentified and unnamed species. Therefore one million of the unknown species could go extinct overnight and we would not notice it because we would not know they had existed.

This is highly unprofessional. **Scientists should not, in fact cannot, predict estimates of endangered species or species extinction based on millions of undocumented species.**

This is not a new phenomenon. The so-called **Sixth Great Extinction** has been predicted for decades. It has not come to pass, similar to virtually every doomsday prediction made in human history.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature is the only international observer organization in the UN General Assembly with expertise in issues concerning the environment, specifically biodiversity, nature conservation and sustainable natural resource use.

The IUCN estimates that fewer than 28,000 species are threatened with extinction today. The IBPES estimate is one million species. The IUCN estimate is based on real species with Latin names. The IBPES estimate is largely based on unknown species with no names.

My organization, the CO2 Coalition, finds the IUCN findings on biodiversity and endangered species to be far more credible than those of the IBPES.

It is clear that the highly exaggerated claims of the IBPES are not so much out of concern for endangered species as they are a front for a radical political, social, and economic “transformation” of our entire civilization. Their recommendation for an end to economic growth alone condemns the developing world to increased poverty and suffering, and economic stagnation in the developed countries.

Appealing to the “green” urban class they recommend “urban agriculture and rooftop gardens” as part of their “transformational” agenda. No mention is made of eliminating

millions of acres of former native ecosystems converted to biofuel plantations and solar farms.

As with the manufactured “climate crisis” they are using the specter of mass extinction as a fear tactic to scare the public into compliance. The IBPES itself is an existential threat to sensible policy on biodiversity conservation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on this important subject.

Attached please find the chapter on “Biodiversity, Endangered Species and Extinction” from my book, “Confessions of a Greenpeace Dropout: The Making of a Sensible Environmentalist”. I would request it be made part of the record.

Also attached is a screenshot from the Greenpeace International website on January 27, 2007, 21 years after I left Greenpeace that makes it perfectly clear that they considered me to be a founder of the organization up until that time.