

15,000 Scientists Sign Letter Warning About Fate of Humanity



New York, November 14 (RHC)-- More than 15,000 scientists from all around the world have signed a letter that warns about human threats and dangers to the environment. The letter released on Monday under the title "Warning to Humanity: A Second Notice" had been signed by 15,364 scientists from 184 countries, stressing that most of the planet's problems were getting "far worse."

The initial version was sent by the Union of Concerned Scientists, a non-profit U.S.-based science advocacy organization, and was backed by 1,700 experts in 1992. A host of environmental calamities are highlighted in the new letter, including catastrophic climate change, deforestation, mass species extinction and lack of access to fresh water.

The warning letter argued that human impacts on the natural world were likely to culminate in "vast human misery," and a planet that was "irretrievably mutilated." The letter says: "Humanity is now being given a second notice ... We are jeopardizing our future by not reining in our intense but geographically and demographically uneven material consumption and by not perceiving continued rapid population growth as a primary driver behind many ecological and even societal threats."

"By failing to adequately limit population growth, reassess the role of an economy rooted in growth, reduce greenhouse gases, incentivize renewable energy, protect habitat, restore ecosystems, curb pollution, halt defaunation, and constrain invasive alien species, humanity is not taking the urgent steps

needed to safeguard our imperiled biosphere," the letter added.

The notice said it was "especially troubling" that the world continued on a path toward "potentially catastrophic climate change due to rising greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels."

The signatories of the letter also stressed that animals were suffering as a result of human activities and were disappearing at an unprecedented pace. The scientists said humans had "unleashed a mass extinction event, the sixth in roughly 540 million years, wherein many current life forms could be annihilated or at least committed to extinction by the end of this century."

Voicing concerns about environmental sustainability and the fate of humanity, the letter said, "To prevent widespread misery and catastrophic biodiversity loss, humanity must practice a more environmentally sustainable alternative to business as usual."

"This prescription was well articulated by the world's leading scientists 25 years ago, but in most respects, we have not heeded their warning. Soon it will be too late to shift course away from our failing trajectory, and time is running out," it added.

U.S. ecologist Professor William Ripple, one of the scientists who initiated the letter, said: "Those who signed this second warning aren't just raising a false alarm. They are acknowledging the obvious signs that we are heading down an unsustainable path." He added: "We are hoping that our letter will ignite a widespread public debate about the global environment and climate."

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