CRITICAL REASONING- UNDERSTANDING & CRITIZING ARGUMENTS

Read the following sections in the article ”Nightmare in Green” by Jarrett Wollstein

The Environmental Elite, Implementing the World Environmental Regime (from The Biodiversity Treaty to the end of the section), Sustainable Development, and Fighting Back.

Write a short essay (approximately 1000 words) in which you summarize the arguments in these sections of Wollstein’s article and evaluate them according to any of the methods you have learned in the course so far that seem appropriate.

**Nightmare in Green**

**The Authoritarian Environmental Movement Wants to Destroy Industrial Civilization**

**SEPTEMBER 01, 1998 by**[**JARRET B. WOLLSTEIN**](http://www.fee.org/authors/detail/jarret-b-wollstein)

*Jarret Wollstein is a founder and director of the International Society for Individual Liberty, a global libertarian organization with members in over 70 countries. He is also the author of eight books, including*Lethal Compassion: Why Government Medicine Is the Cure that Kills (with Mary Ruwart).

*“The threat of an environmental crisis will be the ‘international disaster key’ that will unlock the New World Order.”[*[*1*](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#1)*]  
—Mikhail Gorbachev, Moscow, 1991*

In Colton, California, a fly has brought economic development to a screeching halt. This San Bernardino County town of 45,000 was already in bad shape from the closing of a military base. The foreclosure rate is among the highest in the state, and the city council is considering putting up the civic center as collateral to raise funds.

Unfortunately for its human residents, Colton is also home to the Delhi sand fly, which is listed by the Environmental Protection Agency as an endangered species. To protect the fly, state authorities have blocked construction of a new hospital and industrial park that would have brought in over $171 million in investment and thousands of new jobs. In fact, any major development is impossible because of the fly.[[2](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "2)]

The incident in Colton is just one example of the increasingly acrimonious conflict between property owners and environmental bureaucrats. It could even turn out to be the opening shot of an all-out environmental war. On one side are ordinary citizens, farmers, and ranchers who are struggling to preserve their property, freedom, and way of life. On the other side are environmental bureaucrats who are issuing increasingly draconian regulations and orders.

**The Environmental Elite**

In the early 1970s, the environment became the focus of enormous media attention. At least some of the problems were real, if often exaggerated. Untreated sewage was being discharged into coastal estuaries. Toxic runoff from farms and factories was killing fish and birds. Like many Americans, I was concerned. During the mid-1980s, I even worked briefly for the Natural Resources Defense Council—a private environmental advocacy organization.

Today, the political climate has changed radically. Environmental groups—including the Sierra Club, Audubon Society, Nature Conservancy, Greenpeace, and Worldwatch Institute—have become extremely influential and powerful. Greenpeace alone boasts some six million members. The Sierra Club and Worldwatch Institute have “adviser” status with the United Nations. These environmental groups have become the most powerful lobby in Washington, D.C., and at the U.N.

The result: authoritarian environmental political agendas—not science—are increasingly determining policy. There has also been a frightening change within the environmental movement. For many, the goal is no longer clean air and water, and a safe environment for human beings. Instead, for many environmentalists, the goal is to protect “sacred Mother Earth”—meaning every bug, rat, fern, and species*other than man.*

Extreme environmentalists are not shy about admitting their goals. As Reed Noss states in his article “Rewilding America,” “the collective needs of non-human species must take precedence over the needs and desires of humans.”[[3](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#3)] Indeed, for many, man is the enemy.

This attitude was made crystal clear by Maurice Strong, secretary general of the 1992 U.N. Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro. Just the year before, Strong had declared: “It is clear that current lifestyles and consumption patterns of the affluent middle class—involving high meat intake, consumption of large amounts of frozen and convenience foods, use of fossil fuels, ownership of motor vehicles and small electrical appliances, home and workplace air-conditioning, and suburban housing are not sustainable.”[[4](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#4)]

Some extreme environmentalists want to take us back to the Middle Ages. E. F. Schumacher, author of*Small Is Beautiful,* says the world was much better in medieval times, when people rarely traveled beyond the village in which they were born. Rudolf Bahro, founder of the German green movement, wants us all to live in small communities and to eliminate our cars, airplanes, computers, and most other modern devices.

Other authoritarian “defenders of the earth” would like to reduce the human population to prehistoric levels. Warren Hern says “the human species has become a malignancy, an ‘ecotumor’ that is growing out of control.”[[5](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#5)] David Foreman, co-founder of Earth First!, agrees. “We are a cancer on nature,” he declares.[[6](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "6)]Earth First!’s motto proudly declares its ultimate goal: “Back to the Pleistocene.”

How do they propose we get there? National Park Services biologist David Graber suggests, “Until such time as Homo Sapiens should decide to rejoin nature, some of us can only hope for the right virus to come along.”[[7](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#7)] Many extreme environmentalists are determined to end industrial civilization, one way or another.

**The Rio Summit and Green Marxism**

In June 1992 over 20,000 people from around the world gathered in Rio de Janeiro for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The working session of the conference was the “Earth Summit,” attended by representatives from 178 nations and hundreds of U.N. nongovernment organizations (NGOs).

The chairman of the Earth Summit was Norway’s Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, who was also vice president of the International Socialist Party.[[8](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#8)] Brundtland readily admitted that the Earth Summit agenda was based on the party’s platform. True to form, an endless parade of socialists, extreme environmentalists, and representatives of authoritarian regimes chastised the United States for “consuming too much” and exploiting the Third World. Their solution: redistribution of our wealth through global taxes and outright expropriation. The enforcement mechanism: a beefed up United Nations with new powers to jail “environmental criminals” and seize their property without trial.

This authoritarian program was spelled out in the conference’s Rio Declaration, Earth Charter, and Agenda 21—an 800-page agreement with 115 specific proposals. According to the late Dixy Lee Ray, Agenda 21 seeks to establish a mechanism for transferring wealth from the citizens of the United States to the Third World. “Fear of environmental crises” would be used to create a world government and U.N. central direction.[[9](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "9)]

Henry Lamb, in his article “The Year of Decision,” writes that Americans fail to realize that their enemy is the “hoards of NGOs [who are] cheering the proposals pushed by international statesmen at world conferences designed to achieve with verbosity what could not be accomplished with bombs.”[[10](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#10)]

**Implementing the World Environmental Regime**

The primary mechanism for implementing Agenda 21 and the other extreme environmental goals of the Earth Summit are international treaties. The U.N. has passed over 300 environmental treaties, and many have been ratified by the United States.

Under the U.S. Constitution, once a treaty is ratified by the Senate, its provisions supersede all other laws—federal, state, and local. Article VI, Section 2 of the Constitution clearly states that “all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land.”

A treaty that gives a foreign power control over U.S. territory is obviously a very serious matter. At the least, you would expect extensive media coverage and thoughtful debate. But in reality, these treaties have been virtually ignored by the mainstream press and often rubber-stamped by congressmen who have never read them. As a result, few Americans have even heard of the World Heritage Treaty or the Biodiversity Treaty, or dozens of less ambitious treaties. Yet these treaties are about to have a profound effect on every aspect of your life; from where you live and work, to what you eat, to whether you will be allowed to own a car. Here are two examples:

*The World Heritage Treaty.* This treaty imposes a total ban on human use of protected areas. It was signed in 1973 by President Nixon and subsequently ratified by the U.S. Senate. It creates the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, charged with “protecting” any building or land *designated by the committee* as a World Heritage Site.[[11](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#11)] No subsequent U.S. approval is required, and a recent attempt in the Senate to require congressional approval was defeated.

Typically, U.N. “protection” of land means a total ban on virtually any human use other than limited tourism. Banned activities include mining, logging, farming, and permanent human habitation. The EPA and its state counterparts are the lead enforcement agencies.

In the United States, 47 designated “bio-sphere reserves” are now under partial or complete control of UNESCO and the U.N. World Heritage Committee. “Protected sites” include the Statue of Liberty, the Everglades National Park, Grand Canyon, Yosemite National Park, and Yellowstone Park.[[12](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "12)]

Existing and proposed biosphere reserves in the United States now include millions of acres. The Yellowstone Bioreserve alone has over 22 million acres. But even that pales in comparison to the proposed Ozarks Highlands Biosphere, which will include 54,000 square miles.[[13](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "13)]

The total U.S. area currently under U.N. “protection” constitutes over 200 million acres, nearly twice the area of the state of Idaho.

Human use of U.S. land in and around U.N. Biosphere Reserves is being severely limited or banned entirely. Following the designation of the Yellowstone Bioreserve, the New World Gold Mine—located five miles *outside* of Yellowstone—was forced by the EPA to suspend all operations. In and around the Adirondacks State Park in New York—part of the North Bioregion—landowners have been told by environmental authorities that they can’t make any additions to their homes and have been forced to abandon farming practices they’ve used for generations.

*The Biodiversity Treaty.* This treaty makes violating U.N. environmental decrees a criminal offense, punishable by prison and confiscation of assets without trial.[[14](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#14)] It was signed by President Clinton in 1993, but never ratified by the Senate. Clinton says ratifying it is his “top foreign policy objective.”

Under the treaty, NGOs would work with U.S. agencies like the EPA to ensure “sustainable development”—which in practice means *no* development, and certainly none that hasn’t been approved by U.S. and U.N. environmental bureaucrats.

Although the Biodiversity Treaty is still unratified, it is nevertheless rapidly being implemented throughout the country by executive order. A critical step took place in January 1996, when President Clinton signed Executive Order 12986 giving the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources immunity from lawsuits in the United States.

The IUCN is the major administrative agency for the U.N.’s global environmental agenda. It includes representatives from over 800 state and federal government agencies and nongovernment organizations in 133 countries. The IUCN’s master plan for the United States is the Wildlands Program, which is presented in U.N. Global Biodiversity Assessment (Section 10.4.2.2.3). The goal of this incredible program is to turn 50 percent of the United States—including thousands of existing towns and communities—into an “eco-park” in which most human use is prohibited. According to *Science* magazine, the Wildlands Project calls for “23.4% of the land [in the United States] to be returned to wilderness, and another 26.2% to be severely restricted in terms of human use. Most roads would be closed; some would be ripped out of the landscape.”[[15](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#15)] As Marilyn Brannan, associate editor of *Monetary & Economic Review*, commented, “It cannot be too strongly emphasized that this is a radical agenda designed to control not just the land, but all human activity as well.”[[16](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#16)]

Section 10.5 of the Global Biological Assessment states that in 20 to 50 years, all citizens living within reserves will be “relocated.” Tens of millions of people would be involved in this relocation.[[17](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "17)]

John Davis, editor of the Wildlands Project journal, *Wild Earth,* explains the ultimate objective: “Wilderness recovery must start now but continue indefinitely—expanding wilderness until the matrix, not just the nexus, is wild. . . . Does [this] mean that Wild Earth and the Wildlands Project advocate the end of industrial civilization? Most assuredly. Everything civilized must go.”[[18](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#18)]

Fortunately the Biodiversity Treaty faces strong opposition. But that doesn’t mean we can relax. As noted, Clinton (like other presidents) has been circumventing Congress by enforcing his policies through executive order, regulation, and by strong-arming local governments. That’s what’s happening now with the Biodiversity Treaty and Agenda 21.

**Sustainable Development**

If you search under the keyword “sustainability” on the Internet you will find hundreds of thousands of listings, including sites for dozens of local sustainability councils. Maurice Strong’s “Earth Council” is the global coordinator for sustainability.[[19](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "19)] Many local governments are acting as if Biodiversity Treaty and its plan for a “sustainable” U.S. economy were the law of land.

For example, in October 1996 Mayor Willie Brown announced his new “Sustainability Plan” for San Francisco, which calls for eventual elimination of all cars and trucks from the city. The plan states that “Ultimately, in a sustainable San Francisco, almost all trips to and within the City will be on public transit, foot or bicycle as will a good part of trips in the larger Bay Region. Walking through streets designed for pedestrians and bicycles will be more pleasant than walking through those designed for the automobile. . . . Old, obsolete highway segments of the automobile era will be demolished. . . . Only through the cooperation of an enlightened San Franciscans [sic] will the City become a leading global citizen.”[[20](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#20)]

Brown’s plan doesn’t explain how people are expected to get to the city without cars. It doesn’t explain how the 900,000 people living in San Francisco will be supplied with food and other merchandise without trucks. It doesn’t explain how anyone will even be able to move a sofa or refrigerator from one house to another (by oxcart?). And San Francisco is just one of 40 U.S. cities that now plan to eliminate cars and trucks in the name of sustainability.

Many biodiversity councils have been established. For instance, the Chicago Region Biodiversity Council is a coalition of 34 federal agencies, cultural organizations, and environmental groups, which the *Chicago Tribune* calls “an ambitious and unprecedented effort to restore what nature created, not piece-by-piece, but on a regional scale. . . . The idea is to create a network of native natural areas not just in [Illinois] forest preserves but in city and suburban neighborhoods and on corporate campuses. Lawns and parkways could be replaced by fields of prairies, wildflowers, and boring detention ponds could be replaced by living wetlands.”[[21](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116#21)]

Of course, the lawns they are planning on eliminating are those of people like you and me. And the parkways they want to turn into flowers are our major means of transportation. Earth First! could hardly ask for more.

The shocking reality is that without most of us even being aware of its existence, a deadly alliance of authoritarian environmentalists and utopian city planners has been moving full speed ahead to roll back industrial civilization.

**Fighting Back**

As awareness grows of the power grab in the name of the environment, resistance is mounting. In 40 states, nearly 100 bills have been introduced to curtail environmental overregulation. In the last five years, 23 states have passed laws strengthening property rights. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that if environmental regulations destroy the value of a person’s property, it is a “taking” under the Fifth Amendment and the owner must be compensated.[[22](http://www.fee.org/vnews.php?nid=4116" \l "22)] And pending before Congress, the Property Rights Act would compensate property owners who lose 35 percent or more of the value of their property because of government regulations. A variety of organizations is fighting the global, environmentalist power grab. While, admittedly, compensation would come from the taxpayers, the real import of these measures is that government takings would be constrained.

The authoritarian environmental movement is global, powerful, and well organized. Many Americans are being required to surrender their liberty in the name of “the environment” without a shot being fired. If a crazed foreign despot tried to force the American people to give up their cars, homes, businesses, standard of living, and freedom in the name of socialism and the glory of the state, he’d be hanged. But when the new environmental totalitarians demand precisely the same policies in the name of “saving the earth,” millions of Americans applaud.

Once the American people are aware of the full dimensions of the authoritarian environment agenda to take away their cars, air conditioners, factories, and homes, they will surely reject this totalitarian environmental agenda and return to sanity.

We can have both a safe, livable environment and freedom and prosperity, but only if we expose and reject the environmental authoritarian movement to destroy industrial civilization.

**Notes**

1. Quoted in “Behind the Green Curtain: The Globalist Radical Environmental Agenda,” *McAlvany Intelligence Advisor*, October 1997, p. 7.
2. “Endangered Fly Frustrates Town Eager for Business,” *Contra Costa Times*, June 6, 1997, p. A-10.
3. Reed Noss, “Rewilding America,” *Eco-Logic Magazine* (Environmental Conservation Organization) November/December 1995, p. 20.
4. *Earth in Focus*, No. 2, UNCED, p. 2.
5. Ramon G. McLeon, “Humans are ‘Planetary Malignancy,’ Scientist Says,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 1, 1994, p. A-3.
6. Quoted in “Only Man’s Presence Can Save Nature” (unsigned article), *Harper’s*, April 1990, p. 48.
7. Dave M. Graber, “Mother Nature as a Hothouse Flower,” *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, October 22, 1989, p. 9.
8. Dixy Lee Ray with Lou Guzzo, *Environmental Overkill: Whatever Happened to Common Sense?*(Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1993), p. 5.
9. *Ibid.,* p. 10.
10. Henry Lamb, “The Year of Decision,” *Eco-Logic Magazine* (Environmental Conservation Organization), January/February 1996.
11. Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO, 1972, and signed by 150 countries. Additional information may be obtained from the website: <http://www.unesco.org/whc/intro-en.htm>.
12. A complete listing appears on the UNESCO Website.
13. Tom Uhlenbrock, “Residents Fear Huge U.S./U.N. Land Grab,” *Wake Up Call America*, July/August 1997.
14. McAlvany.
15. “The High Cost of Biodiversity” (unsigned article), *Science*, June 25, 1993, p. 1868.
16. Marilyn Brannan, “The Wildlands Project Unleashes Its War on Mankind,” Special Report by the*Monetary and Economic Review*, March 1996, p. 6.
17. See United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 8a-3; United Nations Global Biodiversity Assessment, Section 10.4.2.2.3; U.S. Man and the Biosphere Strategic Plan (1994 draft); U.S. Heritage Corridors Program; “The Wildlands Project,” *Wild Earth*, December 1992; and “The High Cost of Biodiversity” (see endnote 15).
18. Quoted in William Norman Grigg, “Battle for Sustainable Freedom,” *The New American*, April 29, 1996, p. 8.
19. Brannan.
20. “Sustainability Plan for San Francisco,” Office of the Mayor, San Francisco, October 1996.
21. Quoted in “Insider Report,” *The New American*, May 13, 1996, p. 11.
22. *Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council*, 505 U.S.C. 111 Set. 2886, 1992.