



Media Release

Prof David Goodall reflects on life and the planet - the day before his death Well 104 year old believes he's "getting out just in time"

The death of 104 year old Australian professor Dr David Goodall in Switzerland this month has attracted attention from around the world.

The large media contingent that gathered in Basel to welcome, and then interview Dr Goodall in his last days, came as a surprise to the professor who said he welcomed the opportunity to outline some of his concerns for the world.

In the hours and days prior to his final appointment the esteemed ecologist spoke extensively to the person then in charge of his assisted voluntary death with the Foundation Eternal Spirit, Rudy Habegger and Exit International Director Dr Philip Nitschke. He raised a number of points.

A particular issue was his annoyance at having to travel to *"the other side of the world"* to access the peaceful death he saw as his right. In a letter written as he left Australia and addressed to "his fellow Australians" he stated,

"I would have preferred to end my days in Australia, the country of my adoption. Unfortunately the dominant forces in the medical profession have exerted every effort to thwart any attempt at independent actions by the elderly in ending their lives."

<https://exitinternational.net/docs/Davidletter.pdf>

Professor Goodall repeated concerns about the future of the planet. He identified population pressure and the carrying capacity of the planet as significant issues.

"There are just too many of us, consuming too much, changing too many ecosystems too fast"

He referred to the early predictions of the damage caused by unchecked population growth as identified by Paul Ehrlich in his 1968 book, *The Population Bomb*.

Not surprisingly, Professor Goodall cited global warming as evidence of unmanaged growth. More surprisingly perhaps, he considered his own decision to 'exit' of his own accord as his personal contribution to addressing over-population. He encouraged other older people to do the same.

"One thing we could all do at least is to let those who want to die - like me - the chance to easily carry this out, without having to go to extraordinary measures (like traveling to Switzerland!)"

He added:

"It is too late to revert back to the relatively calm and evenly balanced systems we had enjoyed up to the 1950's"

"All we can do now is to adapt to the resulting changes and the damages we caused, us in the first world to an overwhelming degree being responsible for this."

"It will be hard enough to curb the further effects by abiding to such ideas as the Paris climate agreements. I am not very optimistic if we are even going to do that! Too many particular short term interests are involved. But it is worth giving it a good try. We might prevent the changes spiralling out of control. That would decimate the populations greatly and might make the planet a very hostile place."

"Allowing end of life choice for the elderly, not just the terminally ill is a logical step."

When I asked if he felt he was "getting out, just in time!", he quickly agreed.

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