

Call to re-name the human species

NEW YORK, USA, December 7, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A leading science writer has called for the official re-naming of the human species.

In "[Surviving the 21st Century](#)", author [Julian Cribb](#) presents the scientific evidence for the ten greatest threats facing humanity – and what we can do about them. The book is published by world-leading science publisher Springer International.

"Today's humans have surrounded ourselves with huge existential risks," he says.

"We've already eliminated almost two thirds of the world's large animals, we're losing water, topsoil, fish and forests at totally unsustainable rates, we're poisoning every person on the planet every day, we're improving weapons capable of obliterating everyone many times over and we're on track for a climate that could render Earth largely uninhabitable within three or four generations. And that's just part of it.

"Humans were named *Homo sapiens* – wise man – by the Swedish scholar Linnaeus in 1758, but when you look at how modern humans are behaving, it's anything but wise."

"Surviving the 21st Century" argues that by continuing to call ourselves 'wise', humans are risking our own future due to self-delusion about how smart we really are.

"It has become clear that one of the greatest obstacles to wise, universal action to eliminate each of these threats is our self-admiration and the overconfidence it brings," says Cribb. "Insisting we are a wise species in the face of mounting evidence of man-made risks capable of bringing down civilisation is a like a dangerous drug fantasy."

The book proposes that humans should drop the title *Homo sapiens* – and choose another which more truthfully describes our species through a worldwide debate on the internet and social media in which anyone and everyone can take part.

There are usually five conditions for changing the scientific name of a species:

- The discovery of new scientific attributes
- Changes in the common understanding of the species
- Changes found in its evolutionary descent
- Correcting an error in its original name
- The lack of a type specimen (or holotype) representative of the whole species.

"Basically, *Homo sapiens* needs to be re-named on all five of these grounds," Cribb says.

"By sticking with an inaccurate, out-of-date Latin name, science is not helping humanity to face the reality of our situation as these ten huge existential threats combine to overshadow our future.

"Scientists need to take the lead by running a worldwide debate that canvases the kind of creature we have truly become in the 21st Century."

“Trading in an antique Latin name for something a bit more contemporary might not seem to matter much, to some people.

“But it does matter,” Cribb says. “A name is who you are. If you lose your name it is a special form of shaming – once that might well cause you to reflect on who you have become, and what you have to do to earn back your good name.”

The book proposes that the loss of the name *Homo sapiens* does not need to be a permanent demotion. It can be earned back, provided humans fulfil ten criteria that would together define them as a wise species.

“In the book, I propose ten basic tests for how wise or unwise humans are. They include eliminating weapons of mass destruction, reversing climate change, ending our poisoning of the planet, ending the 6th Extinction we are causing, putting women into leadership positions globally, curbing human numbers, recycling all minerals, nutrients and water and society taking ethical control of dangerous new technologies like robotics, artificial intelligence and quantum computing.

“Our progress in each of these tests will show clearly how wise or unwise we are and how committed we are to a safer, healthier, more sustainable future – or to one that is dark, dangerous and potentially deadly for all.

“Like the weather, the results of these tests should be on the nightly news, on every smartphone and computer, on the back of the cereal packet. Everyone should be able to see them – because they define humanity’s prospects for a brighter, safer future.”

Cribb says humans probably first developed wisdom – the ability to perceive risks and opportunities clearly and then take considered action – more than a million years ago, when they first used fire as a defence against predators. Wise foresight has saved us many times since.

“Wisdom has carried us through all the different ages of humanity, alerting us to dangers and enabling us to avoid or neutralise them, usually with technology. But you need to fully understand your risks before you can solve them.

“Modern humanity is no different: with wisdom we can survive and prosper together. Without it, we may well go down in darkness together.”

More information:

Publisher: Dr Sher Saini, Springer International, New York,

email: Sherestha.Saini@springer.com

Author: Julian Cribb, +61 418639245 or Julian.cribb813@gmail.com

<http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-41270-2>

Reviews:

http://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783319412696?wt_mc=ThirdParty.SpringerLink.3.EPR653>About_eBook#reviews

Julian Cribb

Julian Cribb

+61418639245

email us here

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases.
© 1995-2016 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.