Population pressure

- Environmental health (9) on 28th Nov. 2024
- (cf.) Chapter 15 "Healthy Communities" of Frumkin's text 3rd ed.
- Key concepts
 - Fertility rates are falling in some regions, global population still grows, especially in poor countries
 - Global population is becoming increasingly urban
 - Population growth with affluence/technology (using resource) exerts pressures on natural resources and ecosystem integrity
 - Ecological footprint is to measure impact of population and resource use on the ecosystem
 - Carrying capacity = No. people who an ecosystem or the entire Earth can support
 - Limiting population growth and reducing per capita resourse use contribute to environmental health

Population and resource use are uneven

World Population (2024 and historical)

View the complete population historical table

Year (July 1)	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Median Age	Fertility Rate	Density (P/Km²)
2024	8,161,972,572	0.87 %	70,237,642	30.6	2.25	55
2023	8,091,734,930	0.88 %	70,327,738	30.4	2.25	54
2022	8,021,407,192	0.84 %	66,958,801	30.1	2.27	54
2021	7,954,448,391	0.86 %	67,447,099	29.8	2.29	53
2020	7,887,001,292	0.97 %	75,707,594	29.6	2.32	53
2015	7,470,491,872	1.25 %	89,751,945	28	2.54	50

https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/

- Fertility declines in virtually every region of the world
 - Rapid in Europe, Asia, North America "birth dearth"
 - Africa's fertility drops due to HIV/AIDS (40 million people are HIV positive, 75% of them live in sub-Sahara), but the drop is attenuated due to international programs incl. UNAIDS
- UN-DESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs), population division's report
 - Annual population growth ~ 78 million ~ slightly more than 100 million during 2014-2017
 - Projection: 8 billion by 2025, 9.1 billion by 2050
 - 99% growth occurs in the world's poor, developing countries (sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, South Asia).
 - 90% of 1.2 billion teenagers live in developing countries
- https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs/Probabilistic/POP/TOT/900





Measuring population impact

See, https://ecotope.org/blog/saved-by-ester-boserup/

- Malthus T (1803): Human populations have a tendency to increase exponentially, unless limited by starvation, disease or fertility limitation policies, but agriculture only increased its productivity in linear fashion, resulting in famines
- Neo-malthusians: Population is a driver of negative environmental changes
- Boserup E (1965): Population growth is the force stimulating technological change and intensification. Increases of population density resulted in land scarcity, which triggered agricultural intensification through application of improved technology (e.g. better tools, irrigation, terracing, shortening of fallows)
- Ehrlich PR, Holdren JP (1971): Developing countries have large impact on environment due to rapid population growth, developed countries do so due to high affluence and technology level.

* Impact = Population x Affluence x Technology (I=PAT) see, Ehrlich PR, Ehrlich AH (1990) The Population Explosion, Touchstone, too.

- Lomborg vs Bongaarts and others
 - Debates between optimists and pessimists about the population growth exceeding environmental limits.
 - https://doi.org/10.1007/s11111-023-00424-5





Intensification (Boserup 1965): increases in population density drive resource demand and adoption of more productive technologies.

- Involution (Geertz 1963): as technical limits to productivity increase draw near within a given technical system (regime), productivity stagnates. Indicates that regime shifts are likely.
- Collapse (Malthus 1798): after technical limits to increasing production are reached, resource production per capita shrinks and human systems collapse. Rarely observed.
- * Regime Shifts: shifts in technical/social systems of production.



Ester Boserup 1910-1999 Danish Economist

Long term history of world population growth



- Deevey (1960) https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/24940623
 - Log-log graph shows a sequence of multistep logarithmic growth
 - "Three population surges" correspond to cultural revolution (use of stone tools), agricultural revolution (farming with sedentary life), scientificindustrial revolution (use of fossil fuels and machinery)
- Annual increase rate since 1750 (bars in the Figure 1 top right)
 - Before 1750, less than 0.5%
 - 1750-1930, 0.5-1%
 - After 1950, higher than 1.6%, mostly in developing countries

Population and urbanization

- World is in the middle of urban revolution
- Global population live in urban area
 - More than 50% (2008) \rightarrow 60% by 2030
 - UN-DESA: 3.3 billion (2007) → 6.4 billion (2050)
- Big cities in Africa are growing at 4% per year. It will be double within 20 years
- Infrastructure of most cities in developing countries cannot keep pace with such rapid/continuous urban growth
- Urban growth ← fleeing collapsing rural economies, lack of rural infrastructure/services, landlessness, lack of rural employment opportunities (push factors)
- On the other hand, urban sprawl also occur in some places (emphasis on private spaces, large footprint).



Figure 15.1 World Population: Urban and Rural, 1950–2050



Conventional Suburban Development

Figure 15.4 Schematic Comparison of Street Networks and Land Use in a Traditional Neighborhood and in an Area of Sprawl

Source: Courtesy of Thomas E. Low, DPZ, Charlotte, North Carolina.

The traditional town and city design in the upper panel features a gridlike arrangement of streets, high **connectivity**, placement of different land uses near each other, and high **density**. In the *loop and lollipop* arrangement of streets shown in the lower panel, different parcels of land are developed independently and not linked to each other, resulting in low connectivity, low-density land use, and separation of different land uses.

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(Source: Frumkin's text 3rd Ed.)
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Source: United Nations, 2014, p. 7.

Population and environment https://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/city_footprint2.pdf

- Ecological Footprint
 - (Wackernagel and Rees, 1997) A measure of how much area of biologically productive land and water an individual, population or activity requires to produce all the resources it consumes and to absorb the waste it generates using prevailing technology and resource management practices.
 - Usually measured in global hectares. Because trade is global, an individual or country's footprint includes land or sea from all over the world.
- Carrying Capacity
 - The number of people the Earth (or specified region) can support. Estimates depend on what's included and how it's measured
 - vegetarian diet with 2500 kcal/day → 40 billion, meat diets → 10 billion, if developing population live at the standard of developed, 2 billion



Fig. 1. The ecological footprint. The ecological footprints of individual regions are much larger than the areas they physically occupy. Since industrial economies draw on resources from all over the world, we say that they are in effect appropriating carrying capacity from elsewhere, including the global commons (Phil Testemale).



y-axis: number of planet earths, x-axis: years

Population \rightarrow Land Use (\leftarrow Urbanization, Policy, Economic growth incl. industrialization) \rightarrow Biodiversity loss, CO₂ emission

- Weber H, Sciubba JD (2019) The Effect of Population Growth on the Environment: Evidence from European Regions. *European Journal of Population*, 35(2): 379-402. https://dx.doi.org/10.1007%2Fs10680-018-9 486-0
- de Leon Barido DP, Marshall JD (2014) Relationship between urbanization and CO2 emissions depends on income level and policy. *Environmental Science & Technology*, 48: 3632-3639. https://doi.org/10.1021/es405117n
- Foley JA et al. (2005) Global consequences of land use. Science, 309: 570-574. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1111772
- Regression model in IUSSP conference (2001) states that the impact of population on CO₂ varies by affluence. https://iussp.org/sites/default/files/ Brazil2001/s00/S09_04_Shi.pdf
- Casey G, Garol O (2017) https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/12/1/014003
- D'Sauza R (2022) https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/population-driv es-climate-change/
- Sarif MO et al. (2024) https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2024.122469

Population-Environment Scoreboard

- "Earth Summit" (at Rio de Janeiro, 1992) : set specific goals
 * Rio+5 (UN General Assembly, 1997): little progress or worsened
 * Rio+20 (UN Conference on Sustainable Development, 2012)
- Poverty had increased, partly due to population growth
- Situation of environments
 - Arable Land: Degraded, Small scale farmers cannot produce enough food to feed their families
 - Freshwater: Growing populations place pressure on freshwater supplies. In 1995, 2.3 billion lived in water stressed areas. Lack of clean water: 1 billion in 1990, 1.2 billion in 2007. Chronic water shortages will be the most limiting factor on future economic development. World Resource Institute prospects 3.5 billion people live under water-shortage stress by 2025.
 - Oceans: Coastal wetland have deteriorated. 40% of coral reefs were lost. FAO (2009, 2011) reported 3/4 of world major commercial fish stocks are fully/over-exploited or depleted. 2 billion people depends on seafood for protein <u>https://www.fao.org/3/i2389e/i2389e.pdf</u>
 - Forests: Deforestation increased (Brazilian amazon, rate was 70% increased in 1992-2002). 37 million ha forest was lost in 2000-2005.
 - Biodiversity: Losing species at 100-1000 times faster than natural loss. During 1990s, 27,000/yr animal/plant species extinct. IUCN Red list: 41415 species. Species diversity is essential for human health as the source of medicine and food.
 - Climate Change: Population growth → energy use → CO2 → global warming and climate change. Though COP3 FCCC Kyoto Protocol → COP21 Paris Agreement, still ongoing





FIGURE A12 Percentages of fish stocks in different status by major fishing areas in 2009



Poverty and population

- Rapid, unsustainable population growth = a principal contributor to poverty
- 1/4 ~ 1/5 of Earth's people live in extreme poverty (<u>absolute poverty</u>: spend less than US\$1/day in 1985, \$1.25/day in 2008, \$1.90/day in 2015) (cf.) <u>Relative poverty</u> (the poorest segment ~ 1/5 or 2/5 ~ of the population, sometimes less than half of the median income) should also be paid attention. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/11985/9780821376133.pdf
- Lower fertility and slower population growth have not brought an improved living standard for the average person. In 1980, about 2.5 billion people lived in less than \$2 per day.
- Extreme poverty decreased during recent decades (from 1.9 billion in 1981 to 1.8 billion in 1990, 1.4 billion in 2005) partly due to MDG1

Environmental Distress Syndrome

- Population pressure and excessive resource use threats the health of the environment
- Deteriorating environmental conditions and concomitant threats to human health
- Five symptoms
 - Reemerging/Emerging infectious diseases
 - Loss of biodiversity
 - Growing dominance of generalist species
 - Declines of pollinators are intrinsic to the propagation of flowering plants.
 - Proliferation of harmful algal blooms along the world's coastlines \rightarrow outbreaks?