



## *In The News*

Current Events in Earth & Space Science

Summaries for the Classroom

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### **Population 7 Billion**

A United Nations report (State of World Population 2011: <http://foweb.unfpa.org/SWP2011/reports/EN-SWOP2011-FINAL.pdf>) projects that world population, instead of stabilizing at above 9 billion by 2050, will keep growing and may hit 10.1 billion by 2100. Can the Earth support seven billion now, and the three billion people who are expected to be added by the end of this century?

#### **Articles to Share with Students**

National Geographic – Population 7 Billion

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/01/seven-billion/kunzig-text>

BBC News – Population 7 billion: UN sets out challenges

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-15459643>

The Wall Street Journal – How do you get to 7 billion people?

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204485304576643013762503654.html>

NPR AUDIO: 7 Billion and Counting: Can Earth Handle It?

<http://preview.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=132708954&live=1>

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC VIDEO: 7 Billion

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sc4HxPxNrZ0>

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC VIDEO: 7 Billion: Are You Typical?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4B2xOvKFFz4>

#### **General Information**

7 Billion People, 7 Billion Actions

<http://www.7billionactions.org/>

United Nations Population Fund

<http://www.unfpa.org/public/>

## New York Times Topics - Populations

<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/p/population/index.html>

### Questions for Classroom Discussion

- Where is the global population increasing the fastest? The slowest?
- Why is the global population increasing?
- What do you think are the opportunities and challenges of having a global population of 7 billion?
- With a planet of 7 billion what are the implications for each of the following: sustainability, urbanization, access to health services, youth empowerment.
- What will be the impacts on the hydrosphere of planet Earth with a continual rise in population?
- What will be the impacts on the atmosphere of planet Earth with a continual rise in population?
- What will be the impacts on the biosphere (beyond humans) of planet Earth with a continual rise in population?
- Do you think planet Earth can support 7 billion people? Why/why not?

### Tags

Population, Human Impacts

### Big Ideas

From the Earth Science Literacy Principles

- Big Idea 1. Earth scientists use repeatable observations and testable ideas to understand and explain our planet. (1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7)
- Big Idea 6. Life evolves on a dynamic Earth and continuously modifies Earth. (6.7, 6.8)
- Big Idea 7. Humans depend on Earth for resources. (7.1, 7.3, 7.5, 7.8, 7.10)
- Big Idea 9. Humans significantly alter the Earth. (9.1, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7, 9.9)

From The Big Ideas in Earth and Space Science (ESBD)

- The Biosphere (17)
- The Nature of Science (21, 22, 25)

*Compiled October 28, 2011, by L.A. Guertin*