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| **Population Glossary** | |
| **age structure** | Percentage of the population (or number of people of each sex) at each age level in a population. |
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| **asexual reproduction** | Reproduction in which a mother cell divides to produce two identical daughter cells that are clones of the mother cell. This type of reproduction is common in single-celled organisms. Compare sexual reproduction. |
| **biotic potential** | Maximum rate at which the population of a given species can increase when there are no limits on its rate of growth. See environmental resistance. |
| **birth rate** | See crude birth rate. |
| **carrying capacity (K)** | Maximum population of a particular species that a given habitat can support over a given period. |
| **crude birth rate** | Annual number of live births per 1,000 people in the population of a geographic area at the midpoint of a given year. Compare crude death rate. |
| **crude death rate** | Annual number of deaths per 1,000 people in the population of a geographic area at the midpoint of a given year. Compare crude birth rate. |
| **death rate** | See crude death rate. |
| **demographic transition** | Hypothesis that countries, as they become industrialized, have declines in death rates followed by declines in birth rates. |
| **dieback** | Sharp reduction in the population of a species when its numbers exceed the carrying capacity of its habitat. See carrying capacity. |
| **emigration** | Movement of people out of a specific geographic area. See migration. Compare immigration. |
| **environmental resistance** | All the limiting factors that act together to limit the growth of a population. See biotic potential, limiting factor. |
| **exponential growth** | Growth in which some quantity, such as population size or economic output, increases at a constant rate per unit of time. An example is the growth sequence 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 and so on; when the increase in quantity over time is plotted, this type of growth yields a curve shaped like the letter J. Compare linear growth. |
| **family planning** | Providing information, clinical services, and contraceptives to help people choose the number and spacing of children they want to have. |
| **fertility** | The number of births that occur to an individual woman or in a population. |
| **immigration** | Migration of people into a country or area to take up permanent residence. |
| **infant mortality rate** | Number of babies out of every 1,000 born each year that die before their first birthday. |
| **intrinsic rate of increase (r)** | Rate at which a population could grow if it had unlimited resources. Compare environmental resistance. |
| **J-shaped curve** | Curve with a shape similar to that of the letter J; can represent prolonged exponential growth. See exponential growth. |
| **K-selected species** | Species that produce a few, often fairly large offspring but invest a great deal of time and energy to ensure that most of those offspring reach reproductive age. Compare r-selected species. |
| **K-strategists** | See K-selected species. |
| **life expectancy** | Average number of years a newborn infant can be expected to live. |
| **linear growth** | Growth in which a quantity increases by some fixed amount during each unit of time. An example is growth that increases in the sequence 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and so on. Compare exponential growth. |
| **logistic growth** | Pattern in which exponential population growth occurs when the population is small, and population growth decreases steadily with time as the population approaches the carrying capacity. See S-shaped curve. |
| **migration** | Movement of people into and out of a specific geographic area. See immigration, emigration. |
| **population change** | An increase or decrease in the size of a population. It is equal to (Births + Immigration) [[minus]] (Deaths + Emigration). |
| **population density** | Number of organisms in a particular population found in a specified area or volume. |
| **population dispersion** | General pattern in which the members of a population are arranged throughout its habitat. |
| **population distribution** | Variation of population density over a particular geographic area. For example, a country has a high population density in its urban areas and a much lower population density in rural areas. |
| **population dynamics** | Major abiotic and biotic factors that tend to increase or decrease the population size and age and sex composition of a species. |
| **population size** | Number of individuals making up a population's gene pool. |
| **replacement-level fertility** | Number of children a couple must have to replace them. The average for a country or the world usually is slightly higher than 2 children per couple (2.1 in the United States and 2.5 in some developing countries) because some children die before reaching their reproductive years. See also total fertility rate. |
| **reproduction** | Production of offspring by one or more parents. |
| **reproductive potential** | See biotic potential. |
| **r-selected species** | Species that reproduce early in their life span and produce large numbers of usually small and short-lived offspring in a short period. Compare K-selected species. |
| **r-strategists** | See r-selected species. |
| **sexual reproduction** | Reproduction in organisms that produce offspring by combining sex cells or gametes (such as ovum and sperm) from both parents. This produces offspring that have combinations of traits from their parents. Compare asexual reproduction. |
| **S-shaped curve** | Leveling off of an exponential, J-shaped curve when a rapidly growing population exceeds the carrying capacity of its environment and ceases to grow. |
| **survivorship curve** | Graph showing the number of survivors in different age groups for a particular species. |
| **total fertility rate (TFR)** | Estimate of the average number of children who will be born alive to a woman during her lifetime if she passes through all her childbearing years (ages 15[[endash]]44) conforming to age-specific fertility rates of a given year. In simpler terms, it is an estimate of the average number of children a woman will have during her childbearing years. |