

Chapter 2

Population

Population: A Critical Issue

- A study of population is important in understanding a number of issues in human geography. So our first main issue is a study of population. The Key Issues your book mentions are:
 1. Where is the world's population distributed?
 2. Where has the world's population increased?
 3. Why is population increasing at different rates in different countries?
 4. Why might the world face an overpopulation problem?

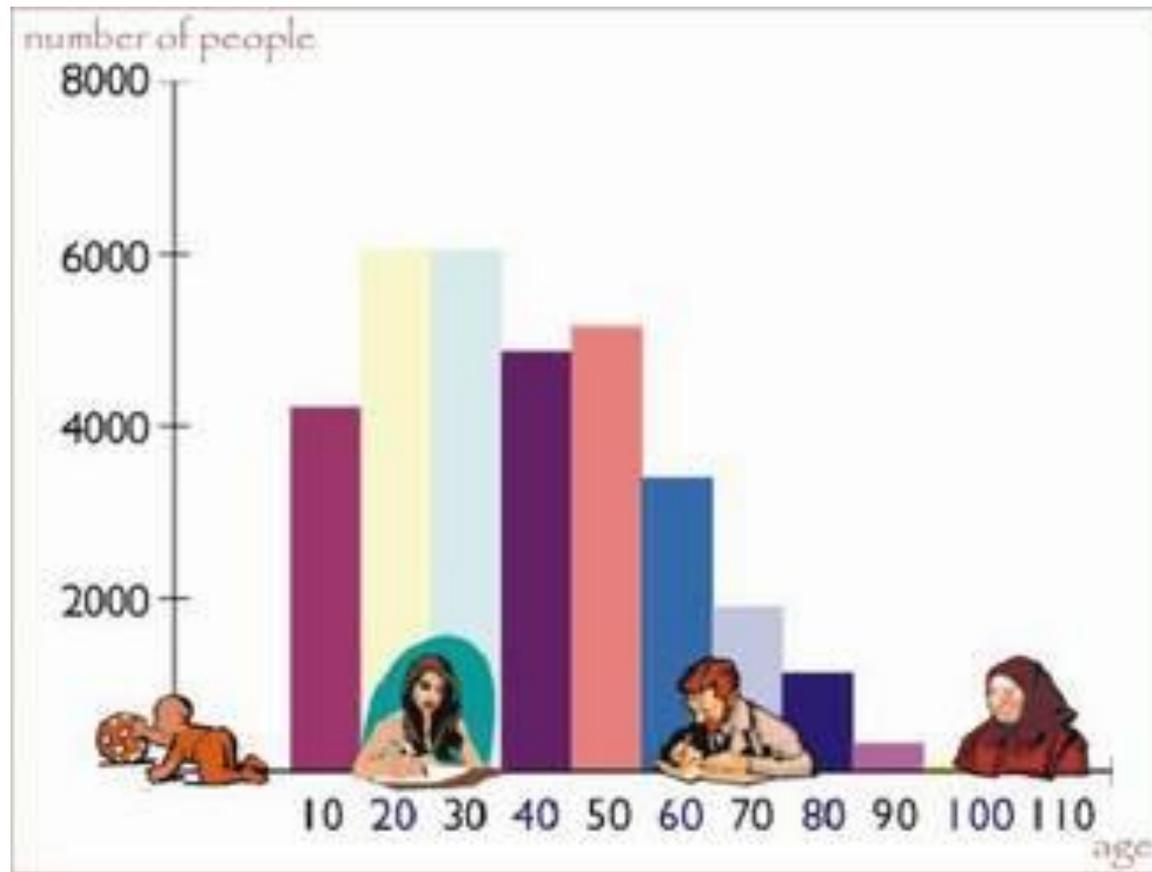
Study of Population

- The study of population is critically important for three reasons:
 - The world's population increased at a faster rate during the second half of the twentieth century than ever before in history.
 - Virtually all global population growth is concentrated in less developed countries.
 - More people are alive at this time – in excess of 6 billion— than at any time in human history.



Demography

- The scientific study of population characteristics is called demography.



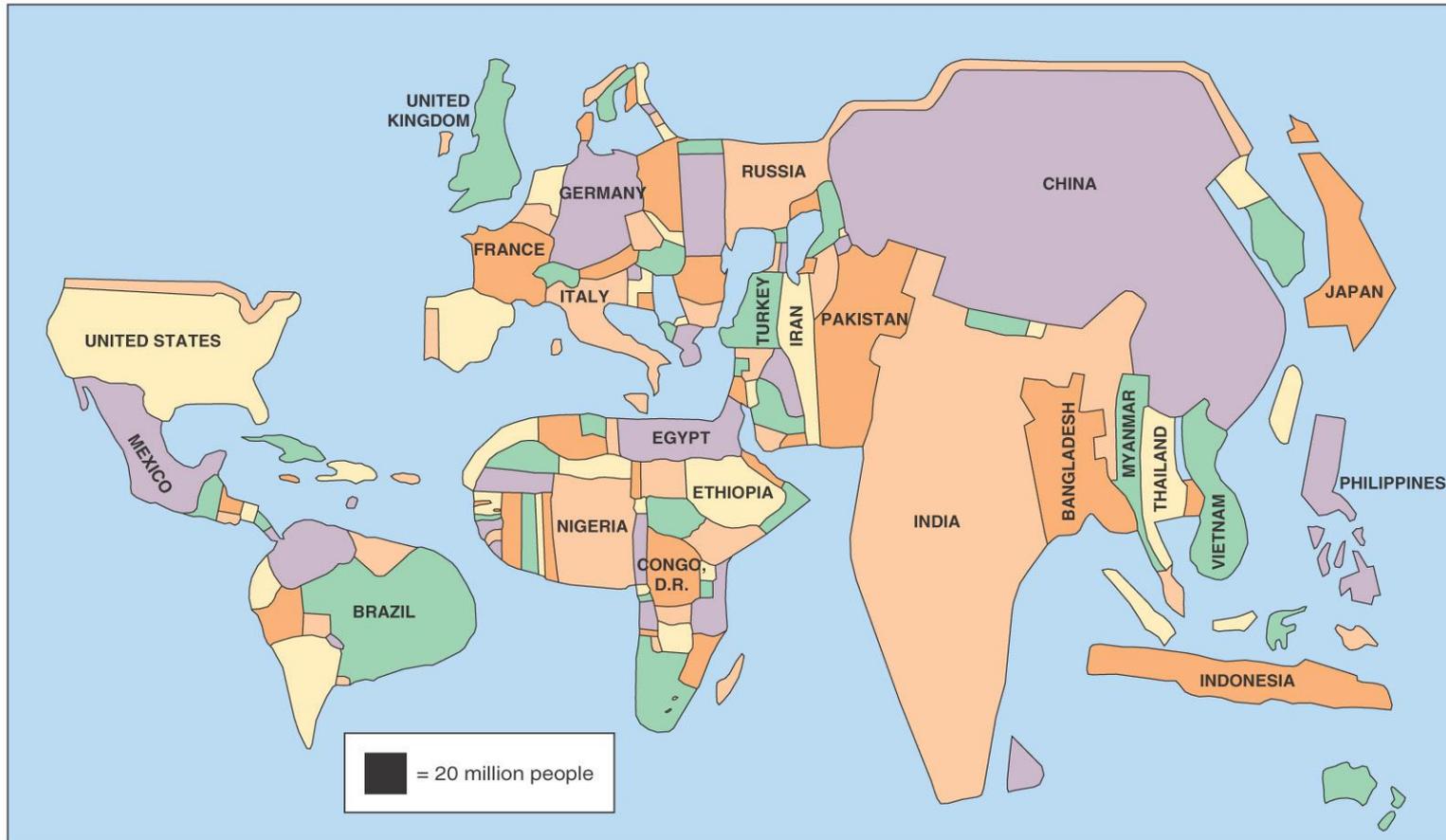
The issue of Overpopulation

- Overpopulation is not as much an issue of the population of the world but instead, the relationship between number of people on the earth and available resources.
- Locally, geographers find that overpopulation is currently a threat in some regions of the world but not in others. It depends on each regions balance between population and resources.

Issue 1: Distribution of World Population

- The Main Points of this issue are:
 - Population concentrations
 - *The four largest population clusters*
 - *Other population clusters*
 - Sparsely populated regions
 - *Dry lands* – *Cold lands*
 - *Wet lands* – *High lands*
 - Population density
 - *Arithmetic density*
 - *Physiological density*
 - *Agricultural density*

World Population Cartogram



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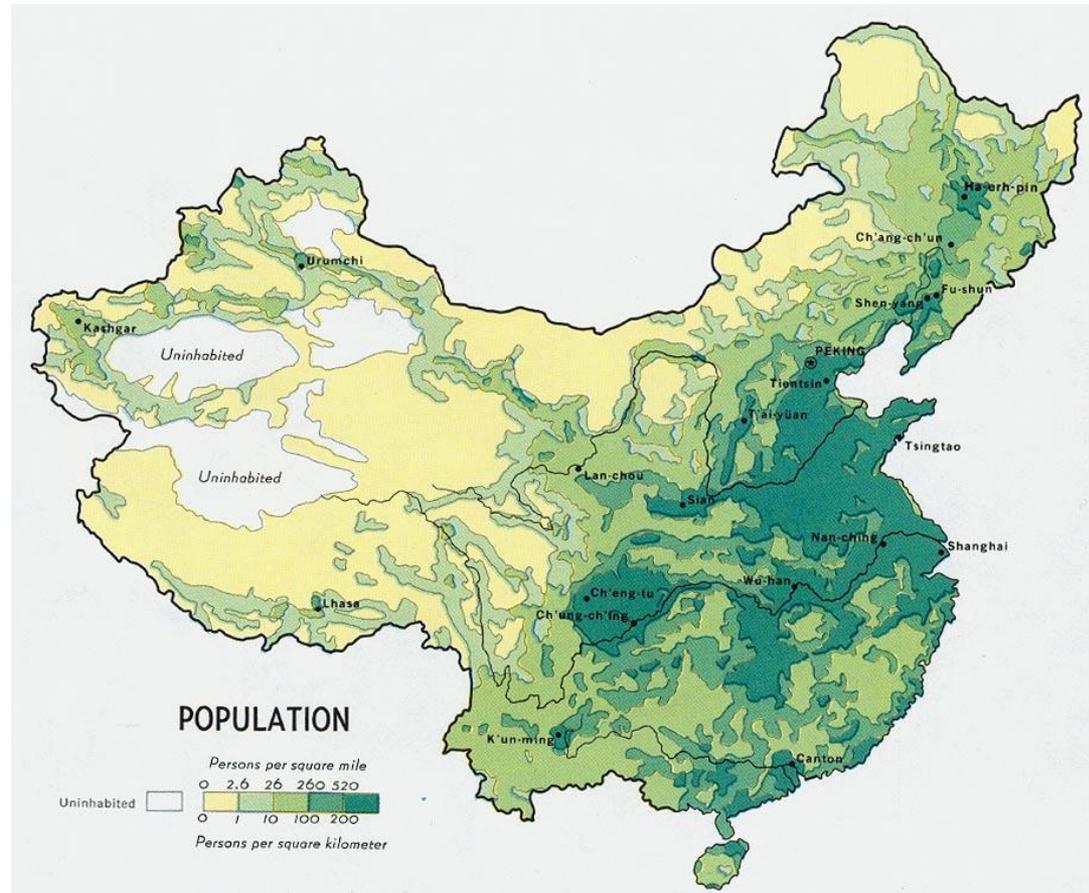
Fig. 2-1: This cartogram displays countries by the size of their population rather than their land area. (Only countries with 50 million or more people are named.)

Top 10 Population Rank

Rank	Country	Population
1	China	1,273,111,290 (July 2001 est.)
2	India	1,029,991,145 (July 2001 est.)
3	United States	278,058,881 (July 2001 est.)
4	Indonesia	228,437,870 (July 2001 est.)
5	Brazil	174,468,575
6	Russia	145,470,197 (July 2001 est.)
7	Pakistan	144,616,639 (July 2001 est.)
8	Bangladesh	131,269,860 (July 2001 est.)
9	Japan	126,771,662 (July 2001 est.)
10	Nigeria	126,635,626

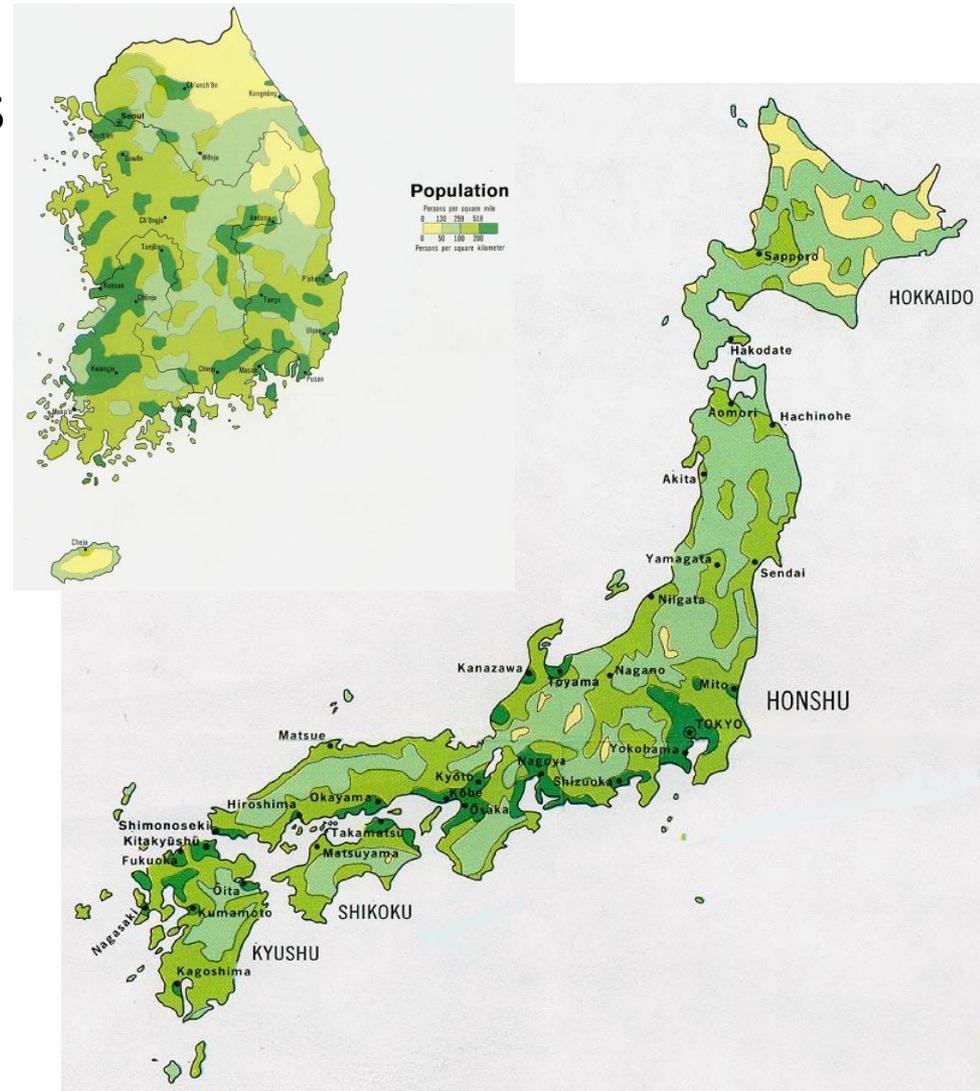
East Asia - China

- The largest cluster of inhabitants is in East Asia.
- One-fifth of the world's people live in this region.
- Five-sixths of the people in this region live in China



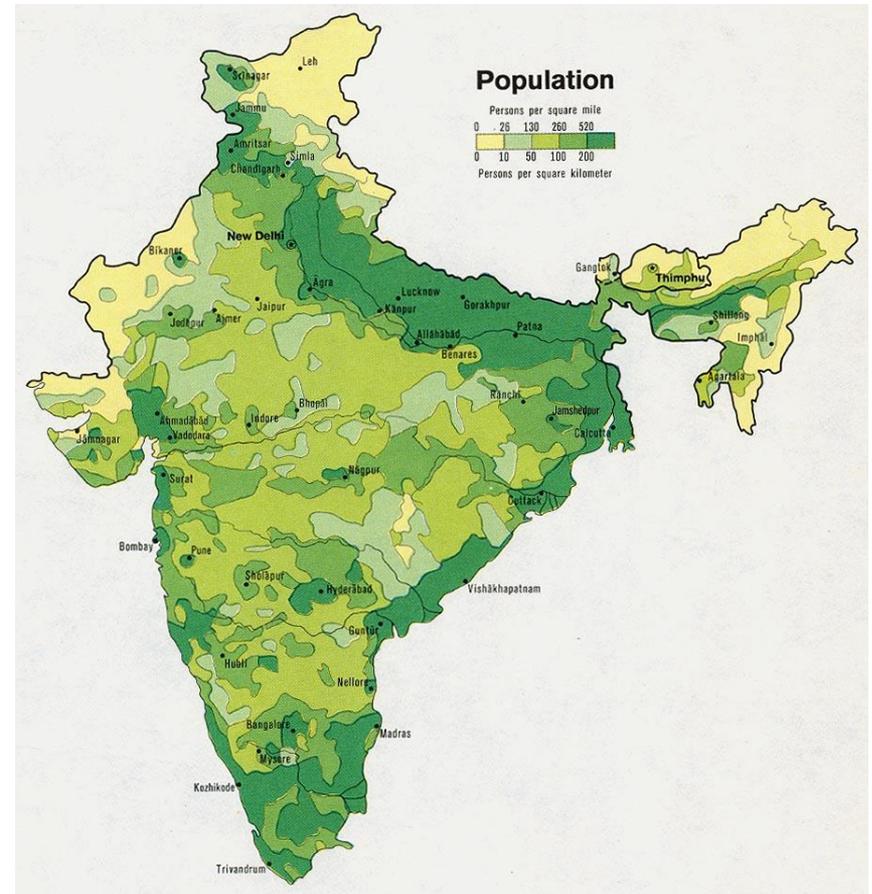
East Asia – Japan & Korea

- Japan and South Korea's population is distributed differently and is also not uniform.
- Here, more than three-fourths of the Japanese and Koreans live in urban areas.



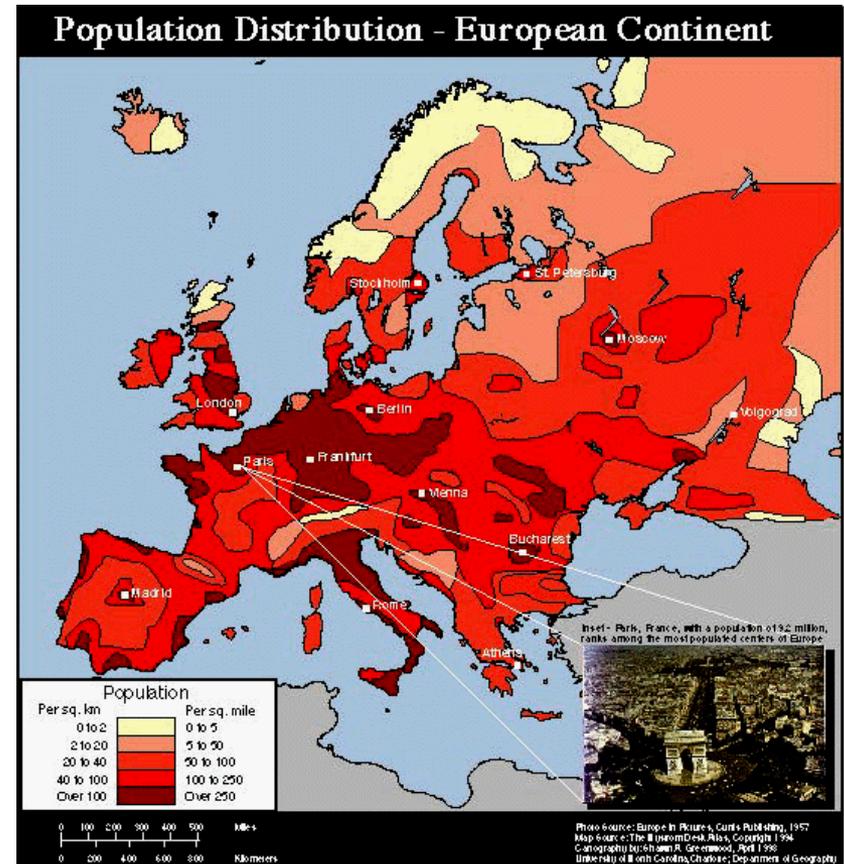
South Asia

- The second-largest concentration of people, roughly one-fifth of the world's population, is in South Asia.
- India is the world's second most populous country and it contains more than three-fourths of the South Asia population concentration.



Europe

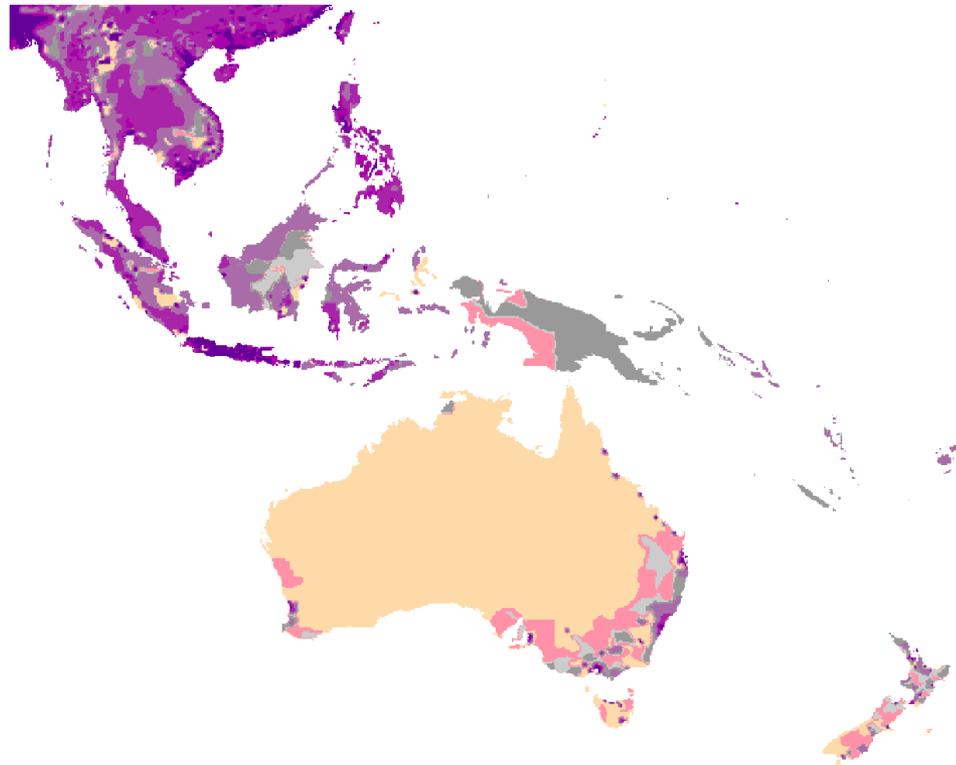
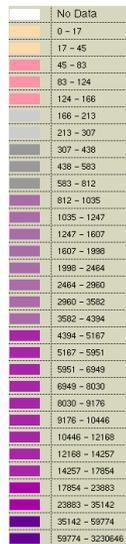
- Combining the populations of Western & Eastern Europe and the European Russia forms the world's third-largest population cluster.
- One-ninth of the world's people live in this region.
- Three-fourths of Europe's inhabitants live in cities.
- Interestingly, they import food and other resources.



Southeast Asia

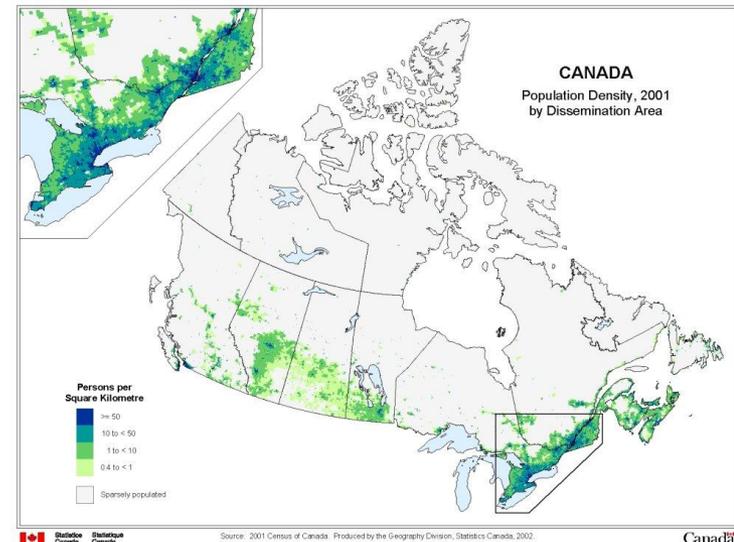
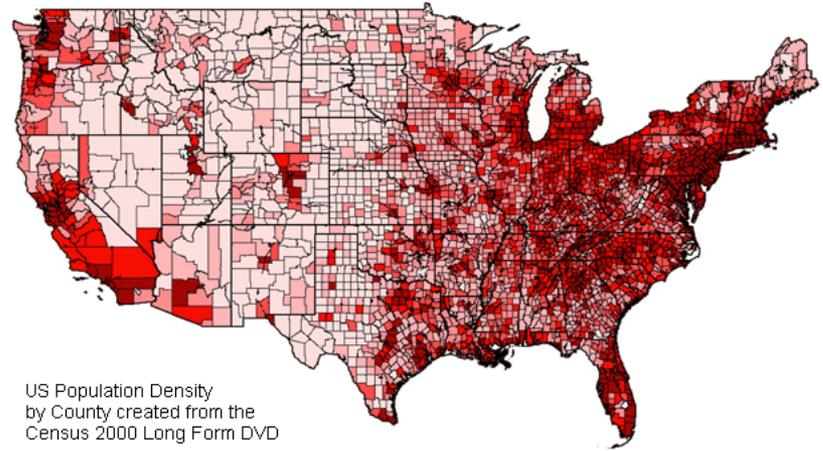
- The world's fourth-largest population cluster, after Europe, is in Southeast Asia, mostly on a series of islands. Indonesia, which consists of 13,677 islands, is the world's fourth most populous country.

Smoothed
Population
Counts

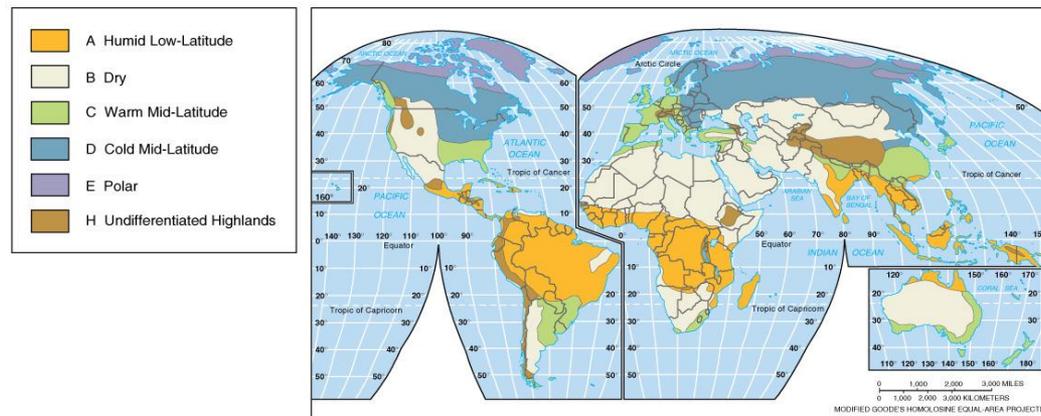
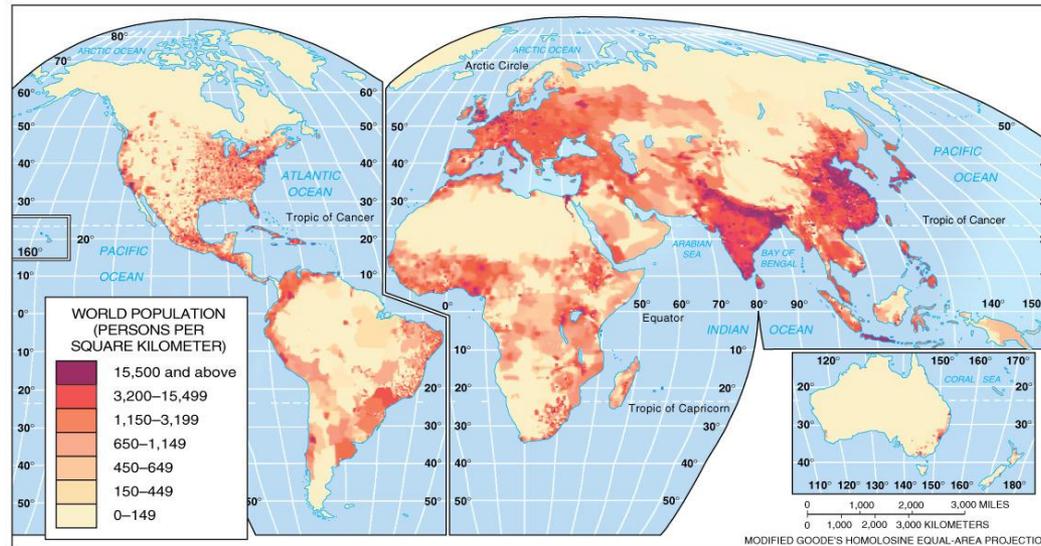


The United States & Canada

- The largest population concentration in the Western Hemisphere is in the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada.
- About 2 percent of the world's people live in these areas.
- An interesting point is that less than 5% of the people in this area are farmers.



World Population Distribution

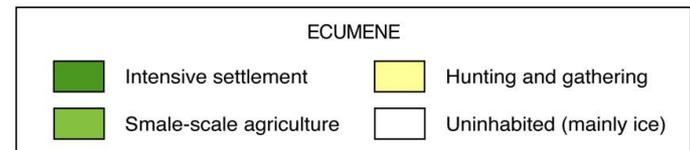
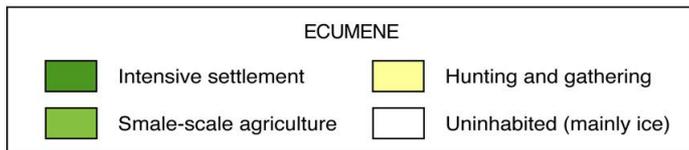
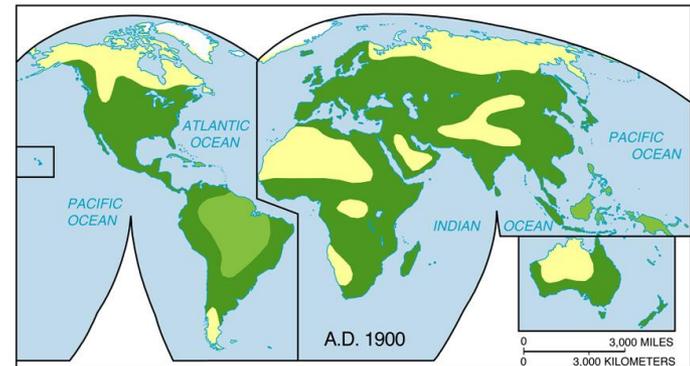
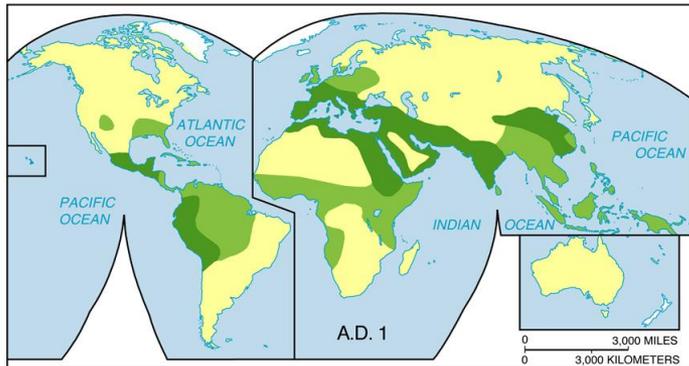
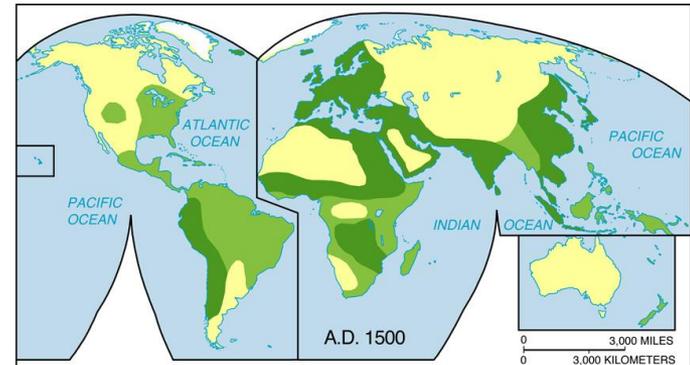
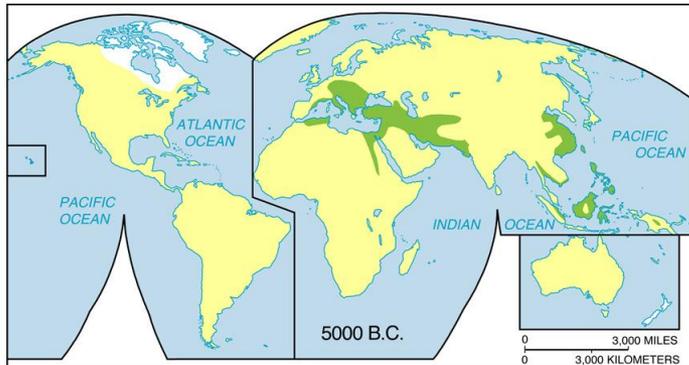


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Fig. 2-2: World population is very unevenly distributed across the Earth's surface and it can be compared to climate distribution.

Expansion of the Ecumene

5000 B.C.–A.D. 1900



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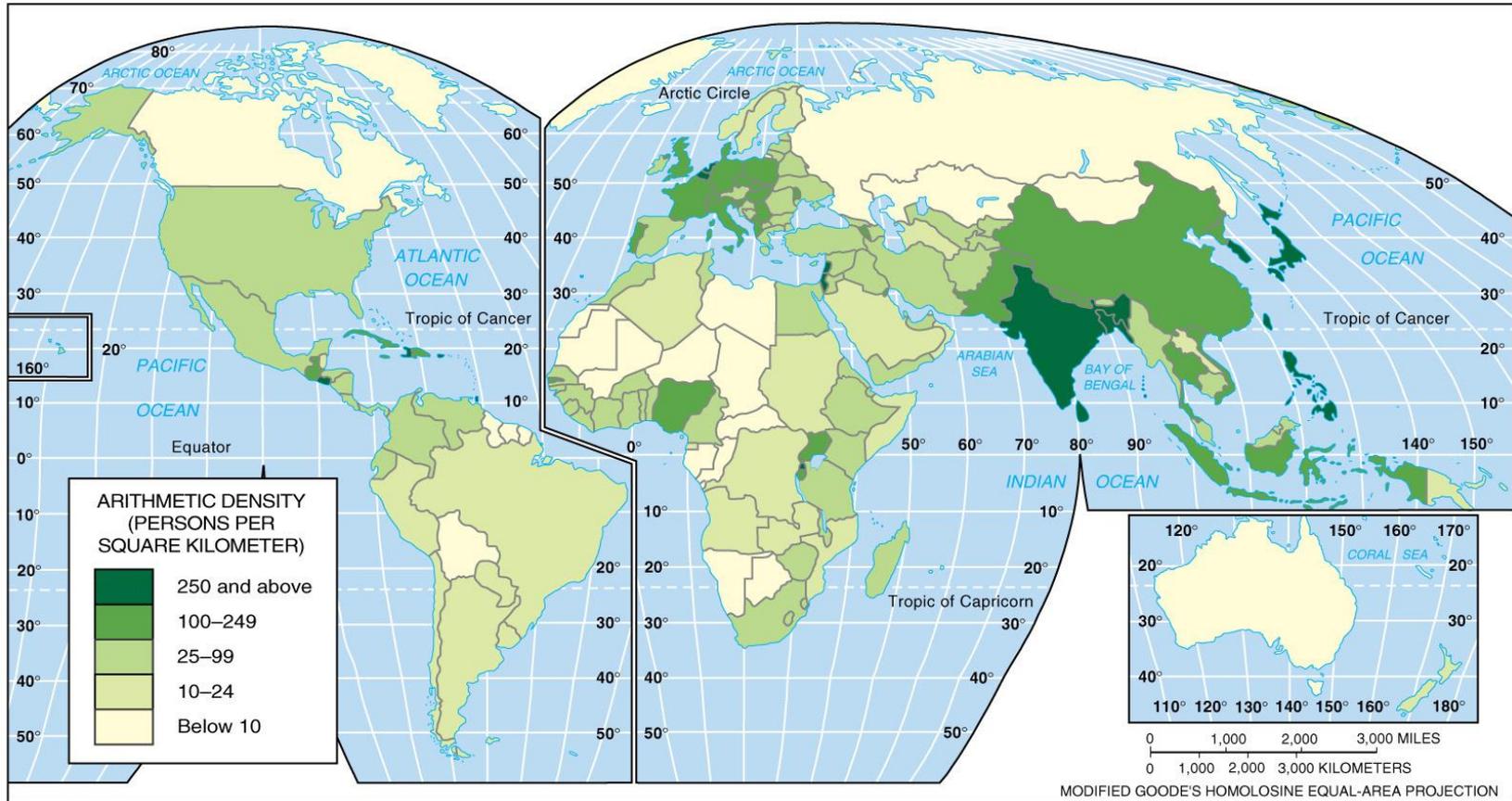
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Fig. 2-3: The ecumene, or the portion of the Earth with permanent human settlement, has expanded to cover most of the world's land area.

Sparsely Populated Areas

- **Dry Areas**
 - Areas too dry for farming cover approximately 20 percent of Earth's land surface.
 - Deserts generally lack sufficient water to grow crops.
- **Wet Areas**
 - Areas that receive very high levels of precipitation.
 - These areas are located primarily near the equator.
 - The combination of rain and heat rapidly depletes nutrients from the soil, hindering agriculture
- **Cold Areas**
 - Much of the land near the North and South poles, perpetually covered with ice (permafrost).
- **High Areas**
 - Relatively few people live at high elevations with some significant exceptions in Latin America and Africa.

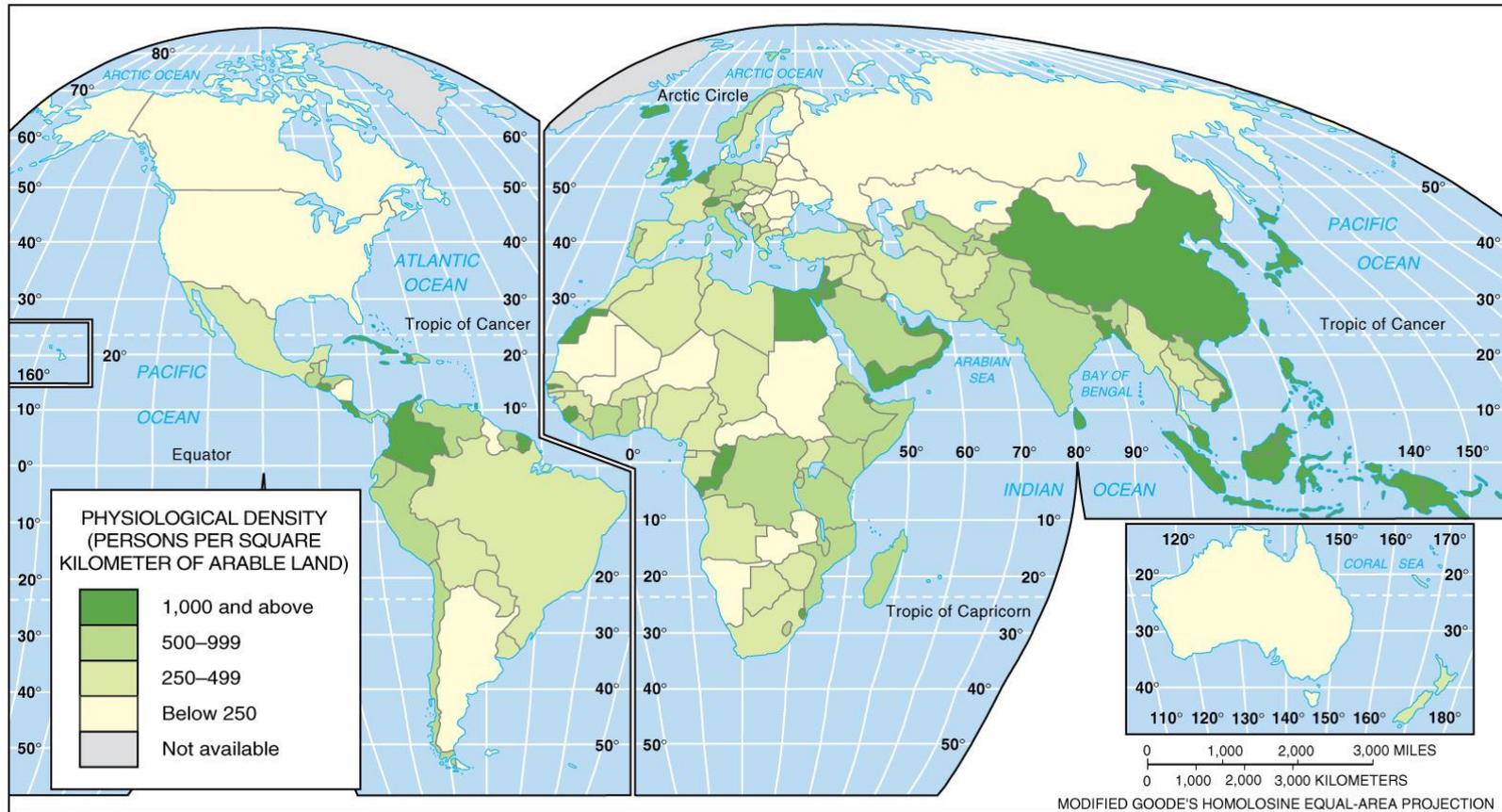
Arithmetic Population Density



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Fig. 2-4: Arithmetic population density is the number of people per total land area. The highest densities are found in parts of Asia and Europe.

Physiological Density



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Fig. 2-5: Physiological density is the number of people per arable land area. This is a good measure of the relation between population and agricultural resources in a society.

Agricultural Density

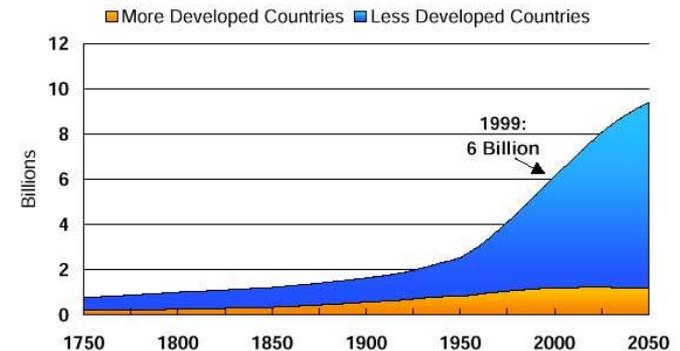
- Two countries can have similar physiological densities, but they may produce significantly different amounts of food because of different economic conditions.
- Agricultural density is the ratio of the number of farmers to the amount of arable land.
- To understand the relationship between population and resources in a country, geographers examine its physiological and agricultural densities together.
- The Netherlands has a much higher physiological density than does India but a much lower agricultural density.

Key Issue 2: Where Has the World's Population Increased?

- The Main Points of this issue are:
 - Distribution of World Population Growth
 - Natural Increase
 - Fertility
 - Mortality

World Population Growth

Population growth, 1750-2050



Sources: Before 1950: PRB estimates; 1950-2050: UN, *World Population Projections to 2150, 1998* (medium scenario).

