

The Modern World

The 20th Century since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes (1945–Present)



Economics and integration

Population and resources

A global society

Contemporary conflicts

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Religion and thought



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page

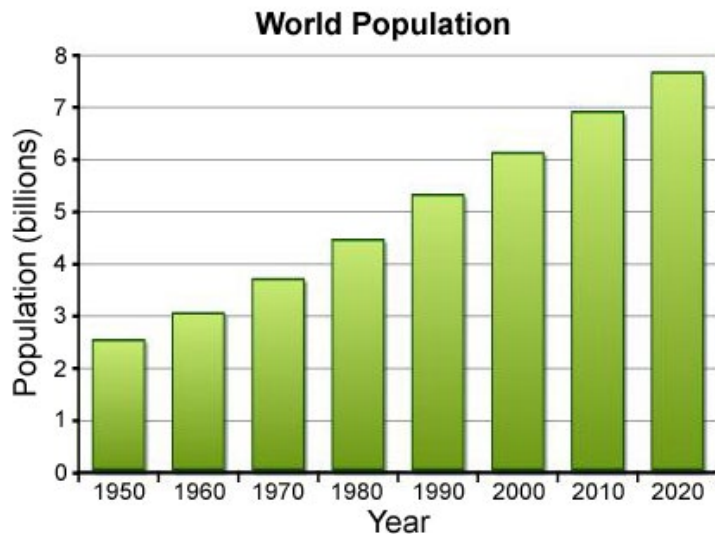


By the end of this section, you will have learned about the changes to the postwar world and the challenges associated with population and resources:

- Population growth, change and distribution
- Energy resources and problems
- Food and water supply
- The role of the United Nations.



In the postwar decades, the world population has grown enormously, from 2.5 to 7 billion. Better healthcare and food production are the key reasons for such huge growth.



This increase in population began to put a tremendous strain on the world's resources. Lack of space, food, resources and the impact of human encroachment have become major global issues.

Countries such as China and India set policies to limit family size. Population growth and pressure on resources has also caused poverty levels to rise in some areas around the world.

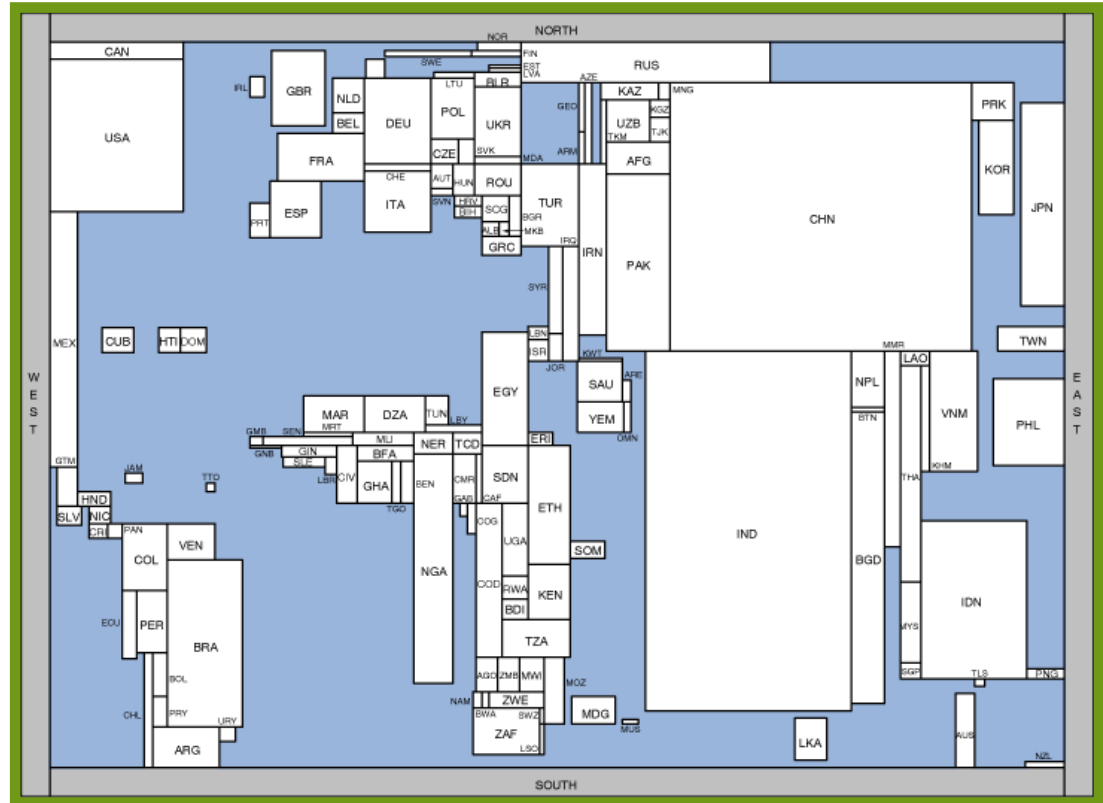


Population distribution

The global population is not spread evenly. Some countries are much more densely populated than others.

This map of the world represents each country in terms of its population rather than its area.

Although the map is clearly recognizable, there are also some obvious differences.



What does this map show about the distribution of the global population?



Population change



Population changes and shifts continued to take place after World War II for a variety of reasons, including urbanization, immigration, forced migration and disease. Press on the buttons to find out more about key factors that led to population changes in the postwar era.

Press **start** to begin.

start





By the 1970s, public debates began to take place frequently concerning the ethics of economic expansion. Since World War II, the demand for electricity had increased dramatically. It is this dependence on electricity in our day-to-day lives that makes the issue of energy sources so significant.

Following the oil embargo in 1973, people saw the danger of relying on limited natural resources and foreign nations, and worked to lower usage.

This led to an increased interest in nuclear power, though it remains a controversial topic. A large number of nuclear power plants were built in Europe and the U.S. in the 1970s.



What are the pros and cons of nuclear power?



The distribution of finite energy resources is spread around the world. This distribution is not even, with some countries having large reserves of different resources.

Watch this animation to find out about the global distribution of finite energy sources and the top ten producers of each.

Press **start** to begin.

start



Which countries consume the most energy?



Solving energy issues has grown in importance. In 1974, the **International Energy Agency** was set up to create a sensible energy policy while maintaining environmental standards.

New sources of **renewable** energy gained interest, including geothermal, wind, solar, wave and hydroelectric power. However, there has been a limited uptake of these in many countries due to lack of government support or funding.



In the 21st century, fossil fuels and nuclear power are still the dominant energy sources. Worldwide energy consumption continues to increase every year.

What challenges are there to meet energy demand?



Food and water are crucial resources that are coming under increasing pressure as the worldwide population has grown and continues to do so.

Watch this animation to find out about the global food and water supply and the problems surrounding them.

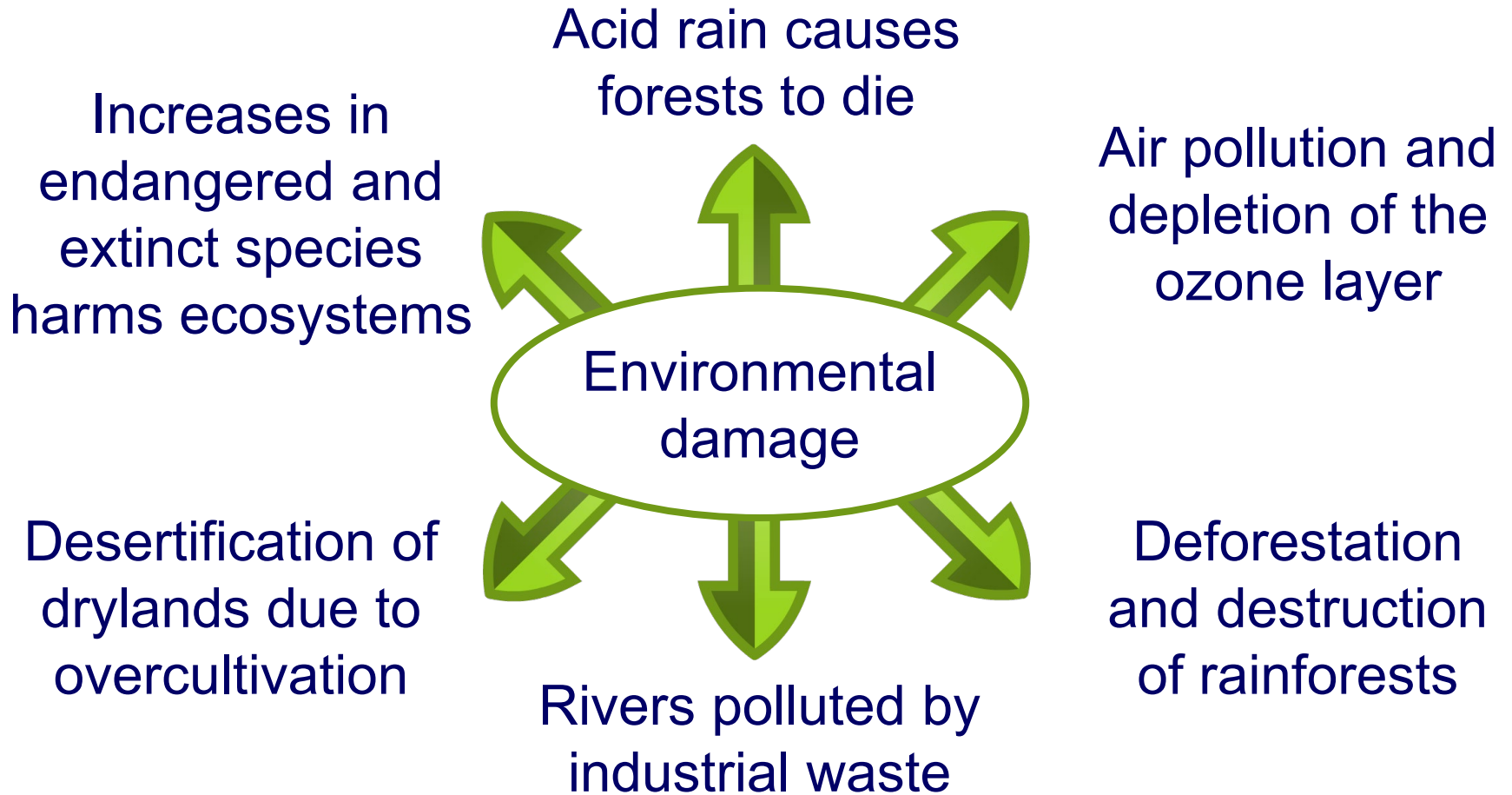
Press **start** to begin.

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Human expansion has caused a lot of environmental damage:



What action has been taken to prevent these things?



Human rights are the universal fundamental rights that all humans are entitled to. Following the atrocities of World War II and the **Holocaust**, international efforts were made to protect human rights, though postwar violations have still occurred.

Political and economic unrest as a result of decolonization caused the rise of **dictatorships** in many areas of the world. This often led to the denial and abuse of basic human rights.



Severe human rights violations have occurred in countries including El Salvador, Guatemala, Russia, Iraq, Argentina, Iran, Uganda, North Korea, Cambodia and Yugoslavia.

What efforts have been taken to protect human rights around the world?





Since its inception in 1945, the **United Nations (UN)** has been addressing some of the biggest problems facing the planet.

Can you match each UN organization to the correct description?

Press **start** to begin.

start

