

Carrying Capacity

In all of human history, the growth of the human population has been almost continuous with occasional precipitous drops. In recent times the human population is so large that even catastrophic losses of life such as the tsunamis in Indonesia and Japan cannot counter the steady increase in global population for even a few days. Unless we do it ourselves, it will take a major deadly pandemic or the total collapse of a civilization to counteract the relentless growth of the human population toward the edge of catastrophic starvation, misery, and oblivion.

Population increase, climate change, pollution, waning energy supplies, and water and soil depletion are beginning to substantially decrease our available arable land. Our ability to feed ourselves is in immediate jeopardy.

In the past we see the rise and fall of a multitude of civilizations that outstripped the carrying capacity of their environment and perished. Each time, the remnant population either regrouped or picked up the pieces and moved on till they found fertile ground upon which to build a new civilization. Or not.

Suddenly we find ourselves facing the imminent collapse of humanity's first global civilization and there's no place to move on to. Our chances of stopping the momentum of consumption in time to avert catastrophe have long passed. I see no attainable way of averting the drastic reduction in human population coming soon, but there is much that we can do to mitigate the damage and prepare for the rise of a new civilization. It's no longer a question of whether the shit's gonna hit the fan. It's a question of what to do with the fertilizer on the other side. The time for talk is just about over. Let's get to work.