



Expert Group Meeting: Population Dynamics and Climate Change

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Population Dynamics and Policies in the Context of Global Climate Change

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Abstract

Intensified concern with global climate change (GCC) has brought a resurgence of interest in the role of population dynamics in environmental outcomes. Clarity as to the actual influence of population change is often diminished by an undifferentiated treatment of “population” and by a simplified understanding of its relation to development processes. Improved understanding of demographic dynamics and greater disaggregation of population components would help refine future emission scenarios. The impacts of population size and rate of growth are crucial but variable by country and not subject to quick fixes. Urbanization is a driving force for GCC but its impact is over-estimated and its positive potential generally ignored. Scant attention is paid to the possible impacts of different population compositions that affect consumption patterns and ecological footprints of different social groups. This paper reviews the demographic processes that necessitate more explicit consideration and discusses their implications for policy.