



Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update

By Donella H. Meadows

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In 1972 four young scientists at MIT wrote *The Limits to Growth*, which shocked the world and became an international best-seller. Using the World3 computer model, the authors looked toward the future, for the first time showing the consequences of unchecked growth on a finite planet. Now, armed with 30 additional years of data, these authors sound the alarm on humanity's devastating effects on climate, water quality, fisheries, forests, and other imperiled resources.

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- Sales Rank: #132617 in eBooks
- Published on: 2012-02-27
- Released on: 2012-02-27
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Updated for the second time since 1992, this book, by a trio of professors and systems analysts, offers a pessimistic view of the natural resources available for the world's population. Using extensive computer models based on population, food production, pollution and other data, the authors demonstrate why the world is in a potentially dangerous "overshoot" situation. Put simply, overshoot means people have been steadily using up more of the Earth's resources without replenishing its supplies. The consequences, according to the authors, may be catastrophic: "We... believe that if a profound correction is not made soon, a crash of some sort is certain. And it will occur within the lifetimes of many who are alive today." After explaining overshoot, the book discusses population and industrial growth, the limits on available resources, pollution, technology and, importantly, ways to avoid overshoot. The authors do an excellent job of summarizing their extensive research with clear writing and helpful charts illustrating trends in food consumption, population increases, grain production, etc., in a serious tome likely to appeal to environmentalists, government employees and public policy experts.

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Review

'If you only read one book... make this it!' Hunter Lovins, co-author of Natural Capitalism; 'An impressive sequel... [that] shuns gloom and doom to be boldly pragmatic about the future' Kirkus Reviews

From the Publisher

In 1972, three scientists from MIT created a computer model that analyzed global resource consumption and production. Their results shocked the world and created stirring conversation about global 'overshoot,' or resource use beyond the carrying capacity of the planet. Now, preeminent environmental scientists Donella Meadows, Jorgen Randers, and Dennis Meadows have teamed up again to update and expand their original findings in *The Limits to Growth: The 30 Year Update*.

Meadows, Randers, and Meadows are international environmental leaders recognized for their groundbreaking research early signs of wear on the planet. Citing global warming as the most tangible example of our current overshoot, the scientists now provide us with an updated scenario and a plan to reduce our needs to meet the carrying capacity of the planet.

In the past decades, population growth and global warming have forged on with a striking semblance to the scenarios laid out by the World3 computer model in the original *Limits to Growth*. While Meadows, Randers, and Meadows do not make a practice of predicting future environmental degradation, they offer an analysis of present and future trends in resource use, and assess a variety of possible outcomes.

In many ways, the message contained in *Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update* is a warning. Overshoot cannot be sustained without collapse. But, as the authors are careful to point out, there is reason to believe that humanity can still reverse some of its damage to Earth if it takes appropriate measures to reduce inefficiency and waste.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christopher Patton:

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Hayden Roberts:

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Nathan Wilson:

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Allison Sala:

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