

AQA Geography A-level

Population and the Environment

Glossary of Definitions



Agricultural Productivity - The ratio of useful output (yield) to input, showing the efficiency of a farm.

Arable Farming - Growing crops and plant-based foods.

Asylum Seekers - People fleeing their country of residence for international protection by another government.

Biologically Transmitted Disease - A disease that is passed on by a pathogen (e.g. a bacterium or virus), causing illness, e.g. malaria

Boserup's Theory - No matter how large the population grows, we will discover new ways to sustain food supplies.

Commercial Farming - Agriculture with the intention of providing yields that can be sold commercially, making a profit.

Cover Crop - A crop with a large surface area, used to cover a bare field to reduce soil erosion and maintain the structure of the topsoil.

Crop Yield - The amount of grains, vegetables or fruits produced from a unit area of land (units = kilograms per hectare).

Demographic Transition Model - A model describing overall population change, mortality and fertility rates over time.

Density - The number of people per unit area (often per km²).

Desertification - Fertile land becomes dry and desert-like, reducing in productivity and vulnerable to erosion.

Development Process - The process of a society advancing over time through technological improvements, changes in knowledge and attitudes or improving the efficiency of industrial processes.

Ecological Footprint - The amount of resources used in relation to the available resources on Earth. A footprint larger than 1 means consumption is greater than the available resources on Earth, making it unsustainable living.

Economic Migrants - The movement of an individual to improve their financial wealth and quality of living.

Epidemiological Transition Model - A model describing how morbidity varies - as a society develops over time, infectious diseases will decrease but non-communicable diseases will increase.



Extensive Farming - Low inputs in relation to the amount of land farmed, i.e. low amounts of labour, capital investment or stock needed to produce a sufficient yield, but without too much investment.

Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) - An IGO which aims to improve global health by reducing hunger.

Food Insecurity - An individual does not consume healthy food or the necessary energy input in calories each day.

The Green Revolution - During the 1950s and 60s, more technology and efficient farming practices were adopted to improve crop yield.

Gullies - Rills that grow in size over time into much larger ravines.

The Industrial Revolution - During the mid-1700s, manufacturing became increasingly mechanised, reducing labour costs and accelerating economic growth, urbanisation of some villages and towns and improving the speed of transportation with steam engines.

Infectious Disease - A disease caused by pathogens (bacteria or virus) entering and multiplying within the body, e.g. flu, norovirus, Athlete's foot.

Intensive Farming - High inputs in relation to the amount of land farmed, i.e. large amounts of labour, capital investment or stock needed to maximise yield.

Irrigation - The process of regularly watering crops, rather than relying on precipitation for water.

Malthusian Perspective - Population will increase exponentially, but resources available can only increase linearly. Hence, the population will eventually run out of resources (food, water, etc.)

Mortality Rate - The number of deaths per 1000 over time.

Morbidity - The occurrence of diseases within a population over time.

Neolithic Revolution - A shift in mobile hunter-gatherer populations to agricultural communities approximately 12,000 years ago.

Non-Communicable Diseases - Disease that can't be spread by bacteria or virus, often due to lifestyle and working environment e.g. cancer, cardiovascular disease.

Pastoral Farming - Tending to livestock and cattle-rearing to produce meat, poultry or dairy food products.

Population - The number of people within a defined area.



Population Parameter - Different measurable factors to describe population: density, distribution, rate of change, etc.

Population, Resources and Pollution Model (PRP) - A model that describes the positive and negative feedback loops between population, resources and pollution.

Refugees - An individual fleeing natural disaster, conflict or persecution.

Rills - Small streams that develop over time as water erodes a small path on a slope.

Riverbank Erosion - The degradation of riverbanks, causing large sections of the bank to erode and become waterlogged.

Salinisation - An increase in the salt content of the soil, due to saline water rising within soils, poor drainage of irrigation water or groundwater levels rise.

Sheet Erosion - The widespread removal of topsoil, washed away uniformly due to heavy rainfall and flooding.

Simon's Theory - Humans are the ultimate resource, and we will invent new ways to sustain life and resources.

Structural Deterioration - The loss of the structure of the soil, especially pores within the soil that contain air.

Subsidence Farming - Self-sufficient farming, where crops are grown only to support those growing the crops family or community, with little or no profit.

Topsoil - The upper layer of soil, responsible for providing the majority of nutrients and structure for agricultural activities.

Vector-borne Diseases (VBD) - Diseases that can be passed between individuals by parasites or through hosts, e.g. Chagas Disease, Malaria, Lyme Disease.

Water Erosion - The degradation and wearing away of soil due to water.

Waterlogging - Soil becomes oversaturated with water or a lack of oxygen within the soil, meaning plants cannot respire aerobically and are vulnerable to rot.

Wind Erosion - High winds and dry climates transport soil particles and rocks across land, through creeping, saltation and suspension.

World Food Programme - An IGO aiming to eradicate world hunger across the globe by providing aid in emergencies or improve nutrition within developing communities.



World Health Organisation (WHO) - A branch of the United Nations, aiming to improve global health and eradicate disease.

