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"Vulnerable Populations: The Role of Population Dynamics in Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation in Africa"

Samways, David

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It is intuitively appealing to read the simultaneous growth in population and CO_2 emissions shown in Figure 1 as a simple causative relationship. However, the connections between population and climate change are complex. The massive increase in the human impact on the global environment since 1950, dubbed "The Great Acceleration," is correlated with rapid global population and economic growth. However, while the former was greatest in the Global South, the latter was concentrated in the Global North. Areas with presently high rates of population growth are amongst the lowest emitters of greenhouse gases (GHGs). According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), while the richest ten per cent of the global population, two thirds of whom live in developed countries, contribute between 36–45 per cent of global GHG emissions, the emissions of poorer residents of emerging countries are between five and fifty times lower. (From the article)

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