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The world's population

W: Today I would like to talk about demography. Did you know that population scientists predict that world population will peak at nine billion in 2070?

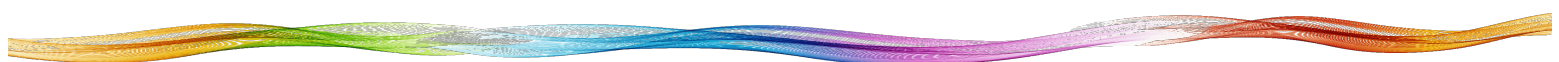
Sarah: Yes, I knew it. But whether Earth will be able to put up with an extra three billion is anyone's guess. Demographers say that at last the planet will be getting a little less crowded by the end of the twenty first century.

W: Well, there will be fewer Chinese, Europeans and Japanese, and more Africans, Indians and Americans. I read that India is poised to surpass China and become the world's most populous country by 2050.

Sarah: I must have read the same article, because I remember this UN report which points to a growing imbalance between the developed and developing world. Apparently world population growth will be concentrated overwhelmingly in the countries least able to support it.

W: Exactly and the forty eight least developed countries are expected to nearly triple their population by 2050, which will increase the demand for food and water. And the price to pay for the fall in the world's population will be a very significant ageing of the population in Western Europe and Japan. Do you know that one in three people will be elderly by 2050?

Sarah: Yes, it's scary. Anyway, world population projections need to be treated with caution. There is nothing more unpredictable than human behaviour.





GLOSSARY:

The world's population	An article
To predict	UN : Union Nations
To peak	Report
To know/knew/known	a growing imbalance
To be able	Developed world
To put up	Developing world
To be poised	Growth
To surpass	The demand
To point	Food
To grow	Water
To develop	the price to pay
To be concentrated	The fall
To support	A significant ageing
To expect	Western
To triple	Elderly
To increase	Projections
To be treated	Caution
Demography	Human behaviour
Population scientists	Whether
Earth	Less crowded
An extra	Fewer
Anyone's guess	Between
Demographers	Overwhelmingly
The planet	Least
The end of	One in three
most populous country	Unpredictable



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