

9 Billion People + 1 Planet = ?

The planet's human population — after centuries of explosive growth — is widely seen as cresting within the next couple of generations. A mid-range best guess for the [peak](#) remains roughly 9 billion people. There are even signs that resource-sapping activities will hit a peak, as well. Lee [Schipper](#)'s work on "[peak travel](#)" offers one glimpse. But there are a host of unanswered questions about how the cresting of the centuries-long wave of growth in human numbers and appetites will play out. Will we overheat or innovate, conserve or despoil, crash or round the curve with a few scrapes? Can we manage our way to "peak us" before we're hit with "peak everything"?

In an illustrated talk, Andrew Revkin, the prize-winning New York Times Dot Earth blogger, will reveal paths toward progress that can work even in the face of deep complexity and uncertainty.