

How do I approach this question?

Up to 2 marks may be awarded for an outline of carrying capacity: 1 mark may be provided for a definition stating that carrying capacity is maximum number of a species/ population/load that can be sustainably supported by a given environment. An additional mark may be provided for further development for the response (for example, carrying capacity continuously changes in any given environment in response to fluctuations in biotic and abiotic factors). Students may use

either Malthus (or neo-Malthusian viewpoints) and Boserup to illustrate the human population has exceeded the Earth's carrying capacity.

1 mark will be awarded for the student stating their viewpoint to the claim that human population has/has not exceeded its carrying capacity. There are up to 5 marks for either and/or both viewpoint and any examples used to illustrate a point made.

What are the key areas of the syllabus?

- Explain the difficulties in applying the concept of carrying capacity to local human populations (3.7.1).

This answer achieved 4/7

1 mark is awarded for the definition of carrying capacity.

The student states their view.

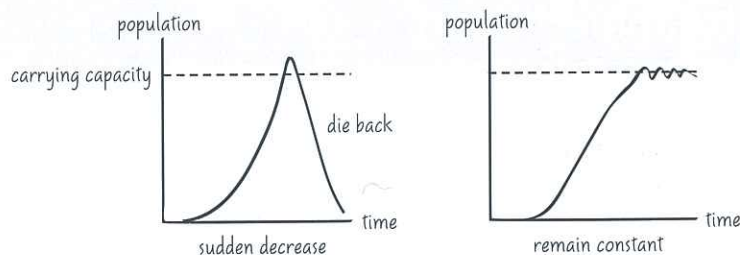
The justification for carrying capacity not yet having been exceeded is provided.

The student has identified ways in which carrying capacity can be increased.

Carrying capacity is the maximum population that can be supported by the given area environment sustainability. [1]

I believe the claim of 'The human population has exceeded the Earth's carrying capacity' is not correct. [1]

If the human population has exceeded the earth's carrying capacity, the population should be either suddenly appear what we called a 'die back' which a sudden decrease of population as there are not enough food resources available or energy sources available, or the population just remains stable once it reach the maximum carrying capacity. [1]



However, now the situation is still having an increasing trend of human population, and no decrease of population happens. As the energy resources are surplus which are still having enough to support the human population. Also, if one resource is used up, we can substitute another resource to replace the old one. And humans can change their lifestyle in order to cope with this situation. [1] So until now, the human population has not yet exceeded the Earth's carrying capacity.

Examiner report

This answer takes a different approach to the last one. The student starts with a clear definition. The student's viewpoint is clearly expressed, then it is justified. However, the student does not add that much to the rest of the answer. The diagrams are not referred to and there is little case study material. The student refers to resource substitution but could have given an example of resource substitution.