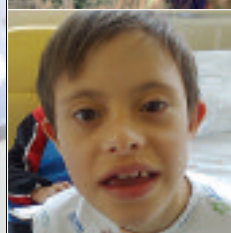
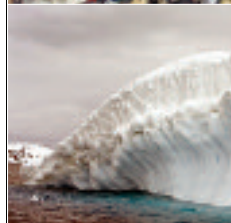


MERCY GLOBAL CONCERN



Mercy Global Concern  
777 UN Plaza 6H  
New York  
NY 10017, USA  
Tel: +1 646 227 1878  
Fax: +1 646 227 1879  
Email: [mercyun@aol.com](mailto:mercyun@aol.com)  
[www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)  
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# Meeting the Global Citizen in you

Front cover images in order  
UN Photo/Martine Perret  
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*UN Photo/John Isaac*



The background of the image is a close-up photograph of parched, cracked earth. The cracks are deep and irregular, creating a mosaic of light brown and tan patches. The overall tone is arid and somber, suggesting a lack of water and environmental hardship.

*Meeting the  
Global Citizen in*

**you**

# Foreword

Close to my home in Soweto, the Sisters of Mercy are a community of religious women who, like their many confreres worldwide, aspire to ‘walk the talk’ and who daily try to bridge the gap between policy and practice.

As the retired Archbishop of Southern Africa, I am happy to endorse this little pocket book on *Meeting the Global Citizen in You* and hope that it will go a long way in helping students, teachers and, indeed, all of us, to become *Ubuntu* persons – that is, persons who are welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous. Human beings who are open and available to others and willing to be vulnerable. An *Ubuntu* person is affirming of others and knows that he or she is oppressed when others are humiliated, oppressed or treated as less than their common humanity deserves.

These attitudes work because they operate at multiple levels and are about transfiguring the whole world. When you meet the Global Citizen in You, you are about the work of God. As I have said

many times, when we share God's love with our brothers and sisters, God's other children, there is no tyrant who can resist us, no oppression that cannot be ended, no hunger that cannot be fed, no wounds that cannot be healed, no hatred that cannot be turned to love, no dream that cannot be fulfilled.

This same approach informs the work of the Sisters of Mercy who work worldwide to bring about change.

I am pleased to endorse this pocket booklet and hope that many lives will be changed when they take on the challenge of becoming the Global Citizen who resides in each of us.

Desmond Tutu  
Anglican Archbishop Emeritus  
South Africa



## *A World Out of Balance*



# *Our World*

If we are all ‘citizens of planet earth’, it is because some people imagine ‘one world’, a vulnerable globe in a wider cosmos.<sup>1</sup>

How different our world is today from the one we inherited from our parents and grandparents. In 1929, when the Great Depression struck, many people still lived in relative isolation, steeped in ancient cultural traditions and drawing on local resources for much of the food, water and shelter they required. Today, the world is bound together with cargo ships and jetliners, advertising campaigns and television re-runs, and we fill our homes and minds with goods and ideas from around the globe. The human population has nearly quadrupled since the 1930s. Millions now enjoy greater wealth, security and nutrition than ever before, while others have been pushed to the margins.

And what of the planet itself? Our footprint can be seen everywhere – in the deserts we’ve caused to bloom and in the many cities, roadways and verdant suburbs we’ve built, but also in the

greenhouse gases we've pumped into the air, the seas we've emptied of fish, and the forests we've cut, burned and bulldozed into oblivion... We have created an entirely new geologic era: the Anthropocene, or the age of humans.<sup>2</sup> **But at what cost?**

## *The State of Our World*

- ➔ At least 963 million people go to bed hungry every night.
- ➔ 1 billion people live in slums.
- ➔ 1.1 billion people in developing countries lack adequate access to water.<sup>3</sup>
- ➔ There have been 250 major wars in the world since World War II.
- ➔ There are over 35 major conflicts ongoing in the world today. In armed conflicts since 1945, 90% of the casualties have been civilians. Three out of four fatalities of war are women and children.
- ➔ There are more than 200 million estimated international migrants in the world today.
- ➔ There are 300,000 child soldiers in the world.

- ➔ Women account for 70% of the world's people who live in absolute poverty.
- ➔ Women hold 12% of parliamentary seats worldwide and account for 2/3rds of the world's illiterate adults. Girls account for 2/3rds of the world's children without access to school.<sup>4</sup>

Today, more than ever before, the global is part of our everyday local lives. We are linked to others on every single continent:

- ➔ socially through the media and telecommunications
- ➔ culturally through movements of people
- ➔ economically through trade
- ➔ environmentally through sharing one planet
- ➔ politically through international relations and systems of regulations.<sup>5</sup>

Because we now live in this interconnected way, we must face up to what we have done in the past and shoulder our responsibilities for the future.



Mary Robinson, former High Commissioner for Human Rights, asserts that, “As a global community, we need to act together. Efforts to ensure respect for human rights in the 21st century should include protecting the habitat in which human beings coexist. Ultimately, shared concern and commitment to the planet we inhabit and to our neighbours both near and far should be a unifying force.”<sup>6</sup>

But as Archbishop Desmond Tutu reminds us, “We have tended to treat the weak, the poor, the unemployed, the failures with disdain because success and power have become the gods at whose altars we have burned incense and bowed the knee.”<sup>7</sup>

No one can question the fact that our world is increasingly out of balance. As the following statistics show, there is both GLOBAL APARTHEID and GLOBAL INEQUALITY.<sup>8</sup>

- ➔ The richest 10% of the world’s current population collect 50% of the world’s income.
- ➔ Roughly 40% of people live on less than \$2 a day.

We live in a world with obscene disparity, where a privileged few reap disproportionate benefits while many more suffer very real deprivations.<sup>9</sup>

## *What does this mean for the Sisters of Mercy?*

What does this global imbalance mean for the Sisters of Mercy, and for all those who see the need to right it?

As Sister Angela reported from Kenya, “The economic downturn has increased the numbers living below the poverty line in Africa by 1.02 billion. The cost of food has increased beyond the ability of people to pay. There is migration and relocation of peoples, leading to a severe brain drain and the loss of highly qualified people to countries which pay higher salaries.”

### **But why is our world so out of balance?**

Perhaps if we look at *The Seven Deadly Sins in Today's World* identified by Mahatma Gandhi, we might get a glimpse of what is happening.

- ✓ Wealth without Work
- ✓ Enjoyment without Conscience

- ✓ Knowledge without Character
- ✓ Business without Morality
- ✓ Science without Humanity
- ✓ Worship without Sacrifice
- ✓ Politics without Principles<sup>10</sup>

As Archbishop Desmond Tutu urged, we need to move in a new direction. We need to become “*Ubuntu* People.”<sup>11</sup> What does this mean? *Ubuntu* recognizes that:

- ➔ A person is a person through other persons.
- ➔ None of us comes into the world fully formed.
- ➔ We need other human beings in order to become fully human.



UN Photo/Martine Perret

We also need help to **change our angle of vision. We need to look around us with new eyes.**



“The most important change that people can make is to change their way of looking at the world. We can change studies, jobs, neighborhoods, even countries and continents, and still remain much as we always were. But change our fundamental angle of vision and everything changes – our priorities, our values, our judgments, our pursuits... People have to see with new eyes and understand with new minds so that they can truly turn to new ways of living.”<sup>12</sup>

We have a real responsibility to change our angle of vision. Human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi reminds us that “the fate of humanity is so intertwined that we can no longer consider the blessings of this world one’s own and deprive others of them at the same time.” Globalization, she explains, would be positive if it increased the prospects for international peace and reduced poverty and inequality in the world... **But the challenge facing us today is to think like dreamers yet act in a pragmatic way.**<sup>13</sup>

The challenges of our world today do indeed require both dreamers and pragmatists – in fact, just like our Sister of Mercy founder, Catherine McAuley! The only way that humanity can cope

*“The fate of humanity is so intertwined that we can no longer consider the blessings of this world one’s own and deprive others of them at the same time.”*

Shirin Ebadi



with the truly life-and-death problems that we face is by building a global community, and the only way to build a global community is by developing global citizenship.<sup>14</sup>

This call to **Global Citizenship** is also the call to living in an interdependent way. As the dreamer Martin Luther King once reminded the American public:

“Right here in our country we spend millions of dollars every day to store surplus food; and I said to myself, ‘I know where we can store the food free of charge – in the wrinkled stomachs of the millions of God’s children in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and even in our own nation, who go to bed hungry at night.’”<sup>15</sup>



UN Photo/Clement

*“Right here in our country we spend millions of dollars every day to store surplus food; and I said to myself, ‘I know where we can store the food free of charge – in the wrinkled stomachs of the millions of God’s children in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and even in our own nation, who go to bed hungry at night.’”*

Martin Luther King

## Education for Global Citizenship

17

### *A Global Citizen is someone who:*

- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of his or her own role as a world citizen;
- respects and values diversity;
- has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally;
- is outraged by social injustice;
- participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from the local to the global;
- is willing to act and live in such a way as to make the world a more sustainable place;
- takes responsibility for his or her actions.<sup>16</sup>

## What Keeps a Global Citizen Awake at Night?

- ✓ The growing gap between the rich and the poor<sup>17</sup>
- ✓ The social hierarchy, discrimination and hatred based on gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation<sup>18</sup>
- ✓ The knowledge that human activities are exceeding the earth's capacity<sup>19</sup>
- ✓ The epic number of conflicts worldwide
- ✓ The level of corruption and lack of transparency in governments
- ✓ The reality that children all over the world are dying every minute. They are also going to bed hungry at night, being deprived of an education and endangered by their environments.

A **Global Citizen** is someone who takes seriously the challenges posed by the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. Such a

citizen opts to *know*, because not to know is to be in a state of “preferred ignorance”. As Mercy Sister Helen Marie Burns reminds us,

“Many of us prefer not to know because knowledge brings demands for a response and action. A global perspective suggests that we view all our endeavors in the broadest possible context with a view to the world and cosmos in which these works take place.”<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps a good starting point on the road to Global Citizenship would be to ask ourselves the following questions:

How can I expand my world view?

*What do I need to do in order to think in a more global way?*

How can I help myself to respect and value diversity?

Meeting the Global Citizen in YOU

### *A Global Citizen is someone who:*

- takes an interest in world affairs and is conscious of the part he or she plays as a world citizen.

### *A Global Citizen imbued with the Spirit of Mercy:*

- makes an effort to understand the world's global systems – economic, political, social, religious, cultural, technological and environmental.

Like Catherine McAuley, a Global Citizen is someone who is:

- “outraged by social injustice”
- acts locally while always having an eye on the global.

### *A Mercy Global Citizen:*

- is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place. In other words a Mercy Global Citizen walks the talk!

*Meeting the  
Global Citizen in You*

- ➔ believes in the idea of inclusivity and is open to exploring the possibilities of the **compassionate imagination**. Such an imagination has the potential to transcend divisions created by distance, cultural difference and mistrust.<sup>21</sup>
- ➔ is part of a movement that believes that people cannot think well on the basis of factual knowledge alone, and so cultivates the **narrative imagination**, that is, the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself.

- ➔ believes that inspiration is not garnered from the recitation of what is flawed: it resides, rather, in humanity's willingness to **restore, redress, reform, rebuild, recover, re-imagine, and reconsider**.<sup>23</sup>
- ➔ is willing to explore our geographical world and the way in which we represent it to ourselves and to others. Then through the lens of geographical imagination, people and societies try to understand their places in the world and the place, too, of other people and other societies.<sup>24</sup>



Those who have engaged their imaginations in this way have made a difference in our world. Such worldwide groups as Amnesty International, The Red Cross, Doctors Beyond Borders, The Green Belt Movement, Oxfam, to name but a few, began in this way because they knew another approach was possible in our world today.

## *A Platform for Imaginative Action means:*

- ✓ We must utilize economic and political power for the service of humanity *and all creation* instead of misusing it in ruthless battles for domination.<sup>25</sup>
- ✓ We must develop a spirit of compassion with those who suffer, with special care for children, the aged, the poor, the disabled, the refugees and the lonely.<sup>26</sup>
- ✓ We must cultivate mutual respect and consideration, so as to reach a reasonable balance of interests, instead of thinking only of unlimited power and unavoidable competitive struggles.<sup>27</sup>
- ✓ We must value a sense of moderation and modesty instead of unquenchable greed for money, prestige and consumption! In greed humans lose their soul, their freedom, their composure, their inner peace, and thus that which makes them human.<sup>28</sup>

How will  
YOU  
Exercise  
your  
Imagination?

# Conversion to Global Citizenship

## Questions for Personal Reflection *What do I care about in this world?*

1. Does it affirm human existence and development, as well as ecological diversity and survival?
2. Does it help ensure that everyone has the necessities for living and is allowed to fulfil his or her potential?
3. Does it affirm fairness, especially in the distribution of resources?
4. Does it promote personal responsibility and a thriving future for the *cosmos* and its inhabitants?



5. What is the extent of my commitment to acting *in this way*?<sup>29</sup>
6. Is there a gap between what I really care about and how I spend my time?<sup>30</sup>

### *How do I relate to people?*

7. How do my nationality, gender, call, religion, sexual orientation and physical ability facilitate my connection with some people and separate me from others?
8. What can I do to understand and appreciate people who are different from me?<sup>31</sup>
9. How do I offer “just care” in an unjust situation?<sup>32</sup>

As Tariq Adwan, former Mercy Student from Misericordia University, says, “Global Citizenship and living in an interdependent way represent the end of mental barriers among nations and individuals in the world; it becomes real when people think beyond geographical borders – as citizens of the earth, not only of a particular county.”<sup>33</sup>

“As a science major in a pre-med course, my future responsibility is to help improve the quality

of life and health for humans worldwide; therefore I feel it’s my duty to have a broad understanding of health-related issues, not only in my country but also in the rest of the world.”<sup>34</sup>

### *Are there some signs of hope in our global world today?*

Can YOU see them? Can YOU name them?

In our Mercy tradition, Catherine McAuley said in the 1800s:

*“Never speak with contempt of any nation, profession or class of people.”<sup>35</sup>*

Catherine McAuley

In this spirit, let us move towards three practices which will help us become truly **Global in our Citizenship**.

1. **Awareness:** Thinking beyond one’s imagined physical boundaries and recognizing



interdependence among countries, cultures, economies, ecosystems, and all life on the planet.

2. **Responsibility:** Making informed and responsible decisions standing in solidarity *with all of creation*.
3. **Participation:** *Eradicating injustices; righting the imbalance in this world.* Having a say in public life... using your voice within communities and governments at home and abroad...expanding channels in which public debate can proceed.<sup>36</sup>

Catherine McAuley was **aware** of the plight of the poor in the Dublin of her day and she refused to accept their plight as the norm.

She took on the **responsibility** to stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable and acted to right the imbalance in the world of her day.

She **participated** and began the movement of Mercy, which today works all over the globe.

### *Why did she do this?*

In ancient Ireland, there is a series of laws called the Brehon Laws, and among them one law known as

the *Crime of the Eye*. Those who see a crime and do not act are held to be as guilty as the perpetrators.

### *What must we see today?*

As Global Citizens and in the spirit of the Brehon laws, we must see and act in response to the greatest challenges that face us today.

For example,

The devastation and destruction of the environment cannot be denied.

- Half the forests that originally covered 46% of the earth's land surface are gone.
- Between 10-20% of all species will be driven to extinction in the next 20-25 years.
- 60% of the world's coral reefs, which contain up to one-fourth of all marine species, could be lost in the next 20-40 years.
- Desertification and land degradation threaten nearly one quarter of the land surface of the globe.
- Global warming is expected to increase the earth's temperature by 3C (5.4F) in the next 100 years, resulting in multiple adverse

effects on the environment and human society, including widespread species loss, ecosystem damage, flooding of polluted human settlements and increased natural disasters.

- ➔ An estimated 40-80 million people have been forcibly evicted and displaced from their lands to make way for the construction of large dams, resulting in economic and social devastation.<sup>37</sup>

### *What will we choose to do?*

“Not too many years from now, a new generation will look back at us in this hour of choosing and ask one of two questions. Either they will ask,

‘What were you thinking? Didn’t you see the entire North Polar ice cap melting before your eyes? Did you not care?’

Or they will ask instead, ‘How did you find the moral courage to rise up and solve a crisis so many said was impossible to solve?’

We must choose which of these questions we want to answer, and we must give our answer now – not in words but in actions.”<sup>38</sup>

Either they will ask

*“What were you thinking? Didn’t you see the entire North Polar ice cap melting before your eyes? Did you not care?”*

Or they will ask instead

*“How did you find the moral courage to rise up and solve a crisis so many said was impossible to solve?”*

If we LOOK, we can see that a new threat is upon us – that of **Climate Apartheid**. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu admonishes:

For most people in rich countries adaptation [to the negative effects of climate change] has so far been a relatively pain-free process. Cushioned by heating and cooling systems, they can adapt to extreme weather with the flick of a thermostat. Confronted with the threat of floods, governments can protect the residents of London, Los Angeles and Tokyo with elaborate climate defence systems. In some countries, climate change has brought benign effects, such as longer growing seasons for farmers.

Now consider what adaptation means for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people – the 2.6 billion living on less than US\$2 dollars a day. How does an impoverished woman farmer in Malawi adapt when more frequent droughts and less rainfall cut production? Perhaps by cutting already inadequate household nutrition, or by taking her children out of





school. How does a slum dweller living beneath plastic sheets and corrugated tin in a slum in Manila or Port-au-Prince adapt to the threat posed by more intense cyclones?

... Leaving the world's poor to sink or swim with their own meager resources in the face of the threat posed by climate change is morally wrong... We are drifting into the world of 'climate apartheid'.<sup>39</sup>

### *Global Citizens who are aware:*

- recognize the interdependence of all of creation and become outraged at the earth's degradation and the scenario of climate apartheid;
- acknowledge the immediate burden of climate change on the lives of the poor;
- educate themselves on the causes and consequences of the environmental crisis, including industrialization, land ownership abuses, the negative consequences of trade barrier agreements, overconsumption, and the violations of the most basic human rights.

## *Global Citizens who are responsible:*

- ➔ understand that the personal and global choices made today in response to the environmental crisis will impact on the life and survival of this planet. They participate relentlessly in the promotion of climate justice, urging governments and leaders to:
  - ✓ develop a multilateral framework for avoiding dangerous climate change;<sup>40</sup>
  - ✓ strengthen the framework for international cooperation.<sup>41</sup>

## *Aware Global Citizens insist on:*

- ➔ challenging the unregulated and detrimental acts of multinational and transnational companies in polluting the environment, and abusing the basic human rights of the people;
- ➔ exposing the inequities and negative impact of free trade, unsustainable development and agribusiness on the livelihoods of local

farmers and land owners, particularly in developing countries;

- ➔ protesting against the moral thievery of biopiracy.

## *Aware Global Citizens educate one another:*

- ➔ on basic human rights and insist on participating in decision-making processes and in finding a solution to the environmental crisis.

## *Aware Global Citizens act locally:*

- ➔ simplifying lifestyles and curbing the carbon footprint;
- ➔ promoting sustainable and alternative environmental, human and social developments at local level.





**Meeting the Global Citizen in You** invites us all to cultivate an attitude of Mercifulness. The *Ubuntu* phrase expresses what it means to be merciful. It captures the quality of mercy that is core to being a global citizen. Archbishop Tutu's seminal description of *Ubuntu*<sup>42</sup> facilitates our understanding of this quality:

A person with *Mercifulness* is  
welcoming,  
hospitable,  
warm,  
generous,  
willing to share.

A person with *Mercifulness* is  
open and available to  
others,  
willing to be  
vulnerable,  
affirming to others,  
does not feel  
threatened that  
others are able  
and good.



UN Photo/Luke Powell

A person with *Mercifulness* knows that he or she is diminished when others are  
humiliated,  
oppressed,  
treated as if they were less than who they are.

### ***Why do we need to cultivate this attitude of Mercifulness?***

Mercy Sister Margaret Farley, RSM, advises us,

***“In the end we shall be asked only one thing: ‘Were you merciful?’... Mercy... is not reducible to any of its works, for ‘Were you merciful?’ will be a question of the heart.”***<sup>43</sup>

Sister Margaret Farley, RSM

## *Creating Positive Globalization*

How might our world look if globalization – and this attitude of Mercifulness – were working positively for all of us? In an address given in March 2004, Mary Robinson created a snapshot of this world with connections, bridges of understanding and shared responsibility:

- ➔ It is a world where our governments, operating independently and through the framework of international organizations, are held accountable for implementing their legal commitments under human rights treaties.
- ➔ It is a world where women are fully involved in decision-making at all levels, and where minorities are protected. It is a world where the richest nations see it as part of their responsibility to provide assistance needed for those most in need. Equally it is a world where those resources are used for the betterment of societies for which they are intended, and not instead to enrich the few.

➔ Finally, it is a world in which we recognize our fellow men and women not simply as South African or Sudanese, Share Cropper or Senator, Sikh or Sunni, but as equal individuals, entitled to a life of dignity.<sup>44</sup>

**And the question remains for us to answer:**

*Are we  
up to the  
challenge?*



*UN Photo/Martine Perret*

# Acknowledgements

It would be impossible to thank sufficiently all the people who have enabled this pocket guide to come to fruition, but we would like to try. First and foremost, we would like to acknowledge that this guide is primarily a compilation of the work of the authors cited in our reference section. Second, we would like to thank Mercy International Association for their continued vision and support of Mercy Global Concern at the United Nations. We would like to thank, Marie Elena Dio, DC, Joan Burke, SND-N, Mary Corbett, CND, Joseph Foley, Sr. Caroljean Willie, DC, Winifred Doherty, RGS, Claire vonRinteln, RSM, Angela Hartigan, RSM, Kevin Dance, CP, and Don Mullan for sharing reference material and their own thoughts with us on the meaning of Global Citizenship, and Carol Rittner, RSM, for her usual graciousness in providing space and for her support of all things MGC! We acknowledge the *National Geographic*, UNICEF, Fiona and Ben Reynolds and the United Nations photographic units for permission to use photographs. We thank copy-editor Wendy Whitworth for her help with the text, and Glen Powell,

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Deirdre Mullan, RSM  
and Áine O'Connor, RSM  
Mercy Global Concern  
777 UN Plaza 6H, New York  
NY 10017, USA  
Tel: +1 646 227 1878  
Fax: +1 646 227 1879  
Email: [mercyun@aol.com](mailto:mercyun@aol.com)  
[www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)  
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# Afterword

When Catherine McAuley exhorted her Sisters to be good educators, she simply advised them to fit those in their care for earth, without unfitting them for heaven. In our interdependent world, that advice is as relevant as it was in her day and ever more *challenging*. To fit people for earth is in fact to educate them for Global Citizenship; to develop in them the knowledge, understanding, skills and values that they need if they are to contribute to a just and sustainable world.

As Executive Director of Mercy International Association, whose Mission Statement declares its intent to respond to issues of global poverty, I welcome and endorse this booklet *Meeting the Global Citizen in You*. It is a valuable resource for all those who seek to nurture an attitude of mercifulness in themselves and in others, and it will contribute not only to promoting Catherine's vision of fitting children for earth but also to creating a world fit for our children and our children's children.

Mary Reynolds, RSM

*Meeting the Global Citizen in* **YOU**

## Notes

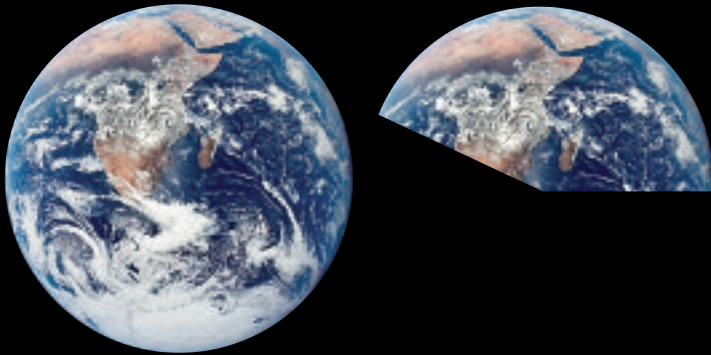
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# There are now **6.8 billion** people on the planet.

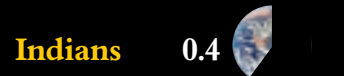
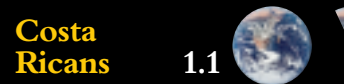
Together we consume  
1.4 Earth's worth of  
resources per year.



If everyone consumed like  
Americans, we'd need  
5.4 Earths to sustain us.



If Americans consumed like the:



Source: Global Footprint Network

Meeting the Global Citizen in **YOU**