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The New York Times
Wednesday, August 5, 2009

Science

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DOT EARTH

Nine Billion People. One Planet.

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A Push to Stop Crimes Against the Future

Do future generations need protection under current law?

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[51.](#) Danny Bloom
Cyberspace
June 2nd, 2009
9:47 am

CARTOON ALERT:

Mary MacDonald, a Canadian cartoonist who often posts comments here and is a regular reader of Dot Earth, has just done a nice interview about her work as an environmentalist/cartoonist. Read it here:

<http://northwardho.blogspot.com...>

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[52.](#) Joe
Miami
June 2nd, 2009
9:47 am

The problem is how far into the future should one look? People have proposed environmental rules that account for the greatest good for the greatest number integrated over the life cycle of the human race. We know the human race is not immortal, that it will come to an end one day. That day could be next year, if an asteroid wipes us out. Or it could be in 4 billion years, when the sun goes nova. The answer is unknown. If humanity survives for thousands or millions of years, future generations will vastly outnumber today's 6 billion people. Does that mean that we should all live impoverished lives to protect the standard of living enjoyed by 100 billion unborn future people? Why should we care if humanity survives 1000 years or 10,000 years?

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NY Environmental Crimes

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About Dot Earth

By 2050 or so, the world population is expected to reach nine billion,

