Population and Settlement Scale

Duskara supports approximately 40 million inhabitants across the twilight belt and cave systems. This population density reflects the planet's severe resource constraints, particularly water scarcity and limited arable land. The largest settlements, cities like Aetherion, house between 500,000 and 2 million people, sustained by extensive vertical farming, hydroponics, and carefully managed water distribution networks. These urban centers anchor the twilight belt, with approximately 80% of the total population residing in surface settlements.

Mid-sized communities, numbering in the dozens across the habitable zone, range from 30,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. These settlements often specialize in specific resources or industries: agricultural hubs, mining outposts, or weatherworking academies. The remaining 20% of Duskara's population dwells in cave systems on the night side, with about forty major communities clustered around geothermal vents. These range from 50,000 to 150,000 residents, with several dozen smaller outposts serving as way-stations or mining camps. Their populations is constrained by available geothermal warmth and subsurface water access.

Population growth is tightly regulated through birth quotas, a necessary response to the planet's carrying capacity. The original landing population—likely no more than a few thousand survivors from the Stellar Horizon—has grown steadily but sustainably over eight centuries. Environmental disasters, resource wars, and periodic die-offs from superstorms or auroral disruptions have prevented unchecked expansion, maintaining a precarious balance between survival and prosperity.

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