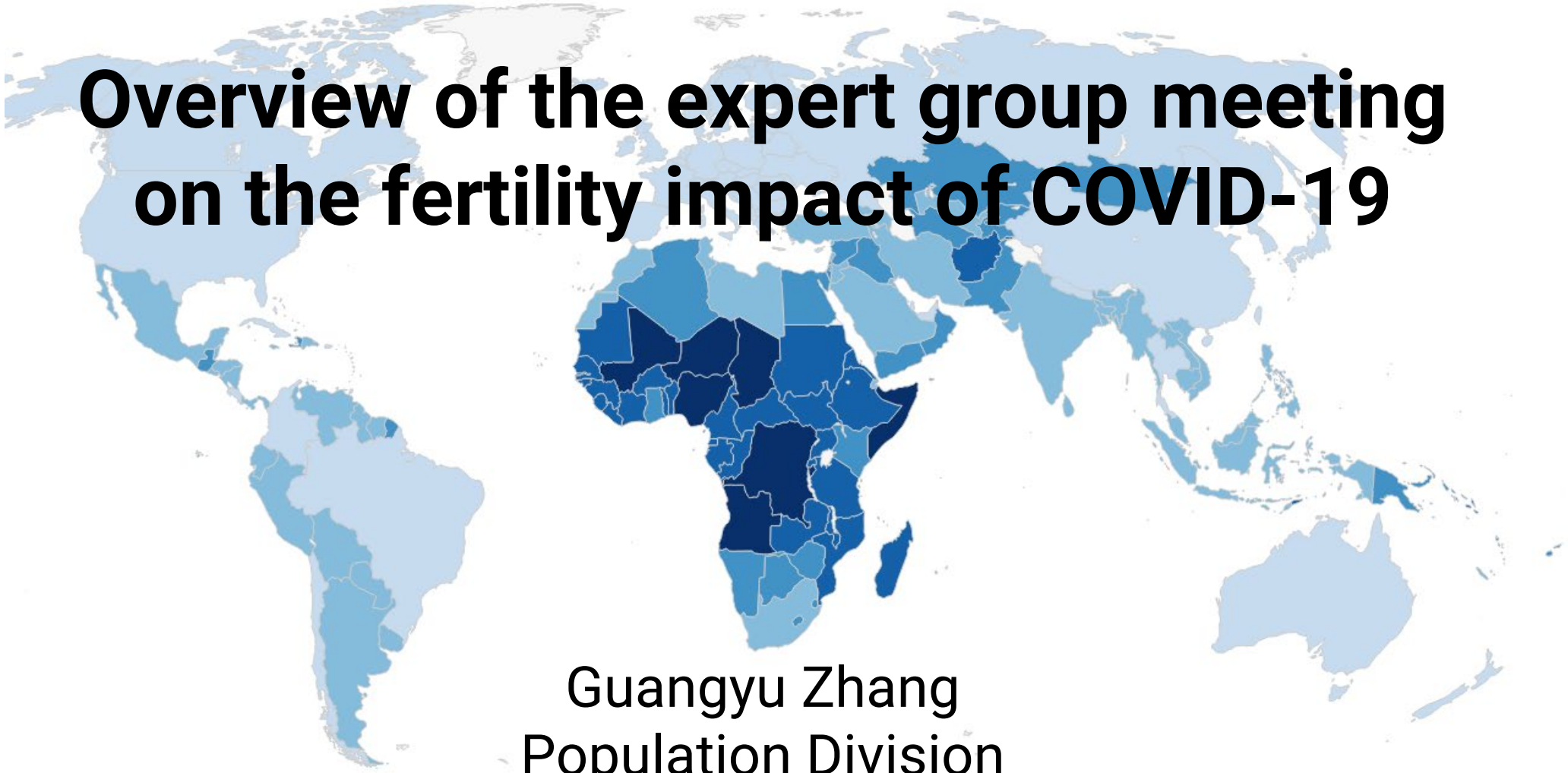
United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Expert group meeting on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on fertility (virtual meeting)
Population Division
10 and 11 May 2021

Overview of the expert group meeting on the fertility impact of COVID-19



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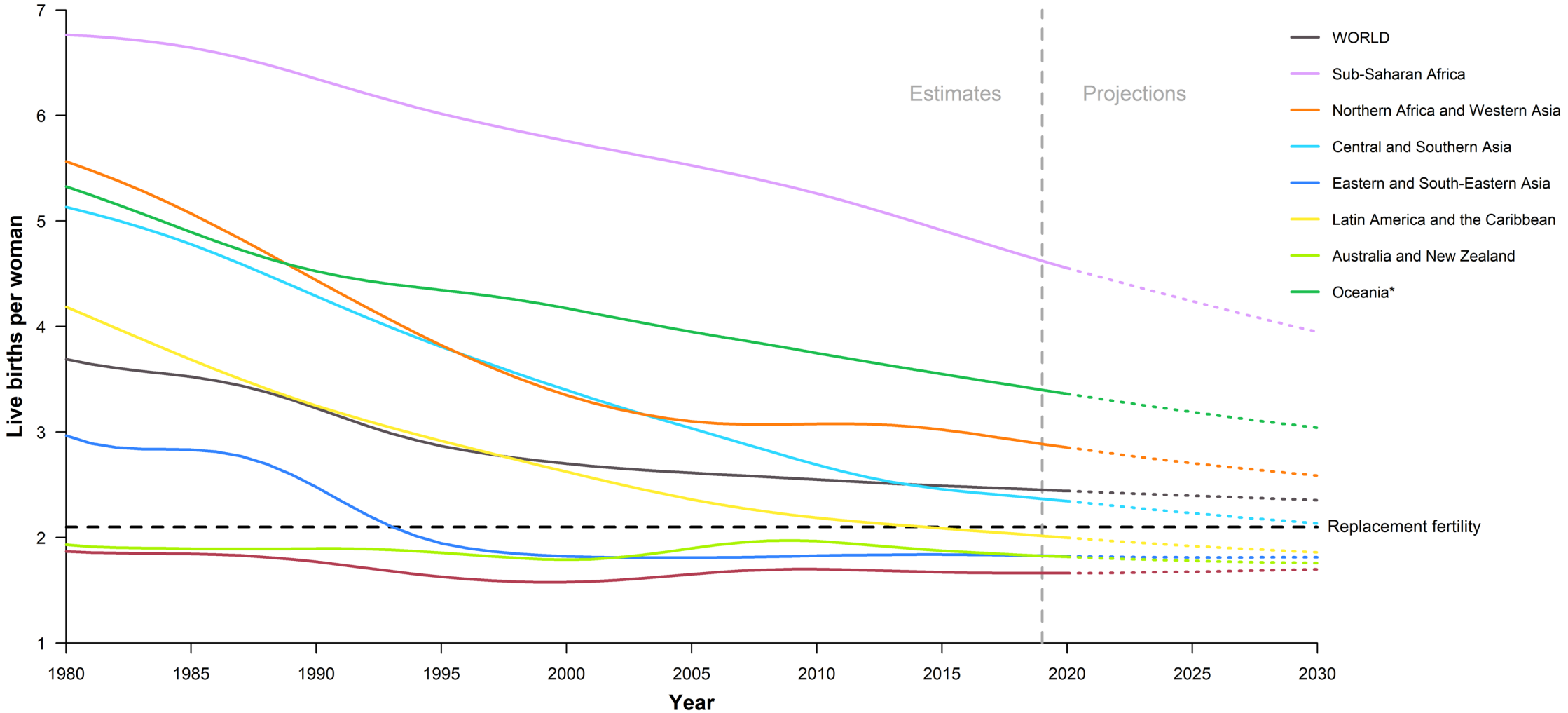
Population Division

Outline

- Pre-pandemic global and regional fertility
- COVID-19 infections and deaths by region
- World economic trends
- Overview of the expert group meeting

Global and regional fertility, estimates and projections, 1980-2030

By United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) region



* Excluding Australia and New Zealand

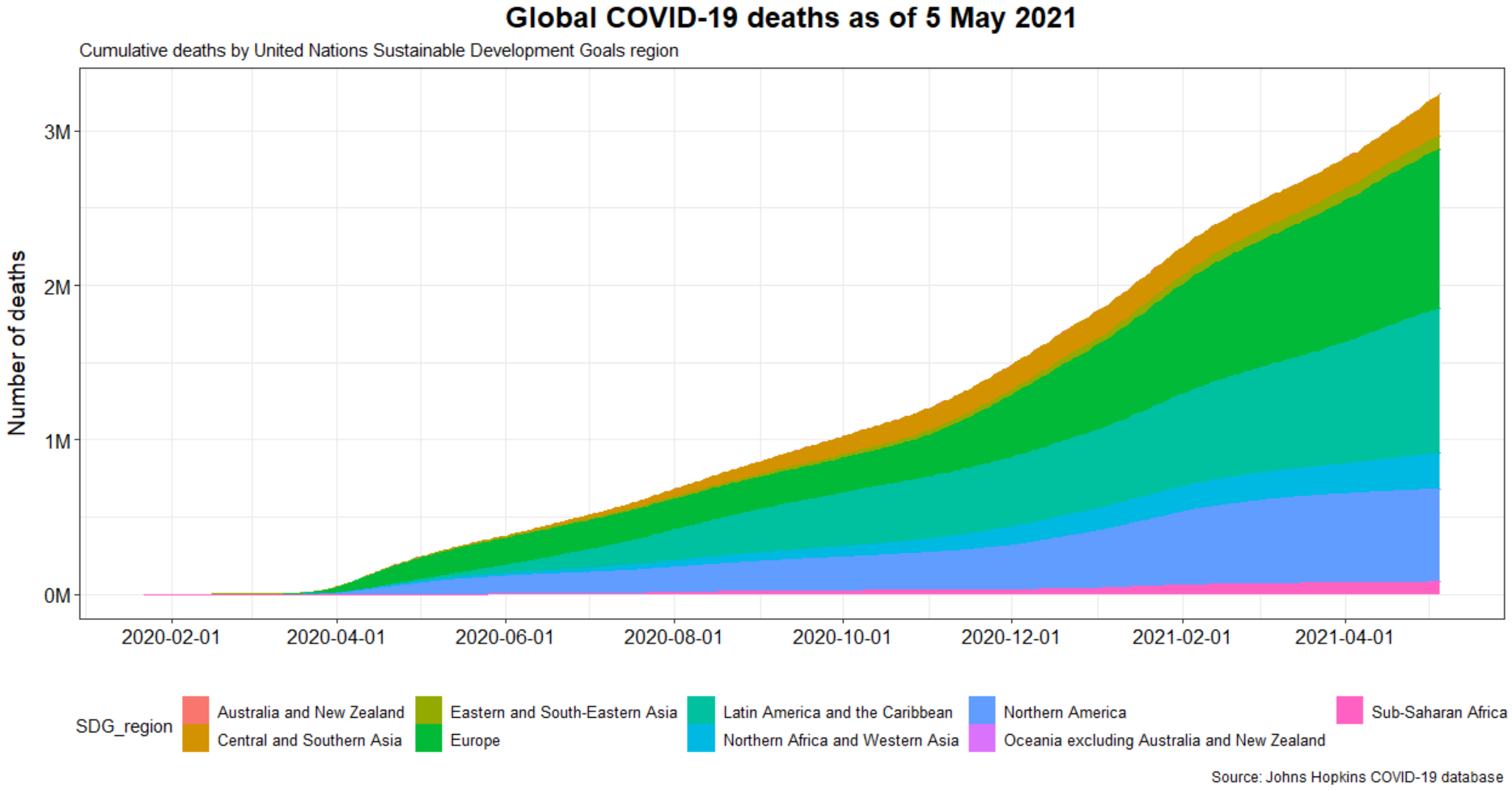
Source: World Population Prospects 2019.

Pre-pandemic fertility at global and regional levels

- In 2019, the average global fertility reached just over 2.4 births per woman
- For regions classified by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, five had below replacement fertility, including Europe, Northern America, Australia and New Zealand, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean
- Fertility in sub-Saharan Africa was on average about 4.7 births per woman
- Fertility in other regions remained at the intermediate level between 2.1 and 5.0 births

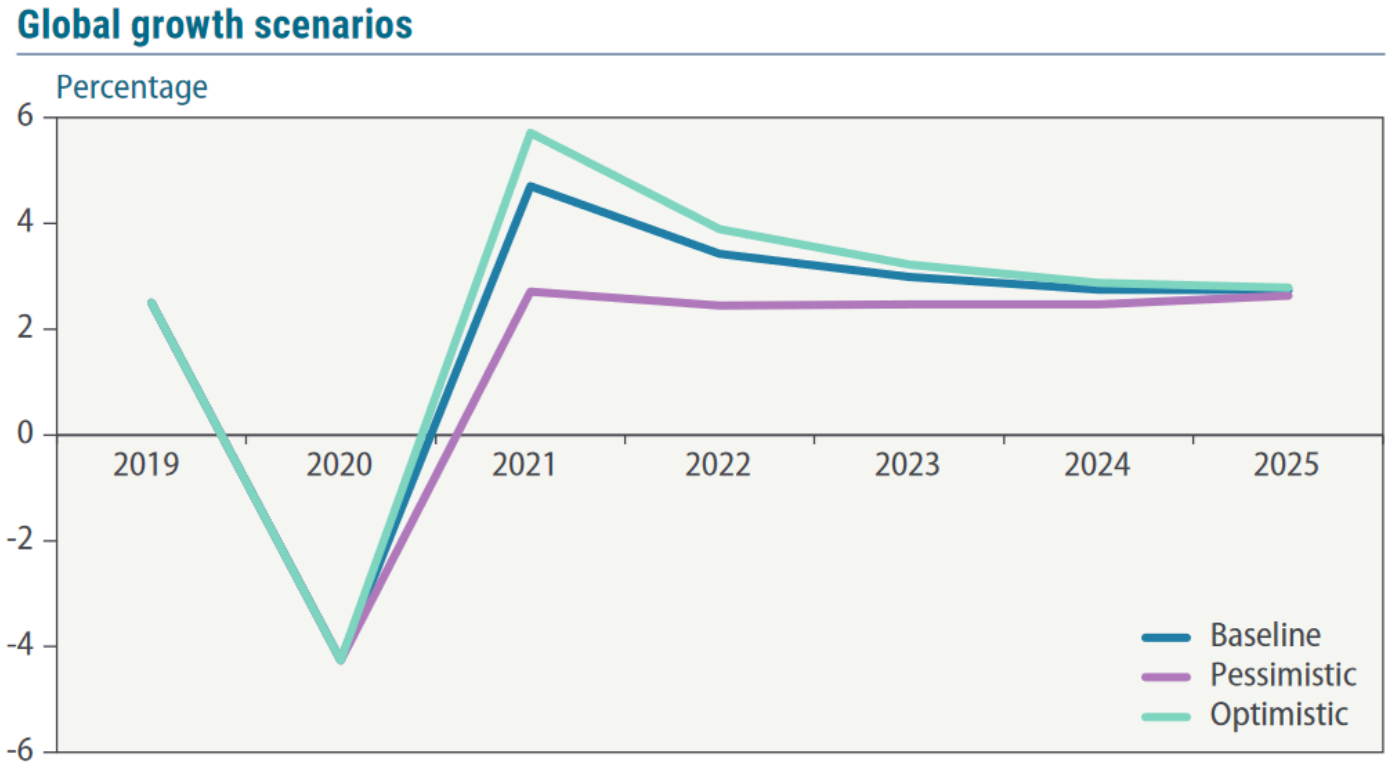
Current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Globally, as of 5:00pm CEST 9 May 2021, there had been over 157 million confirmed cases of COVID-19, including over 3.27 million deaths, reported to WHO



World Economic Trends

- Global GDP dropped by 4.3 per cent in 2020, compared to 1.7 per cent in 2009, with contraction of 5.6 vs 2.5 per cent in developed and developing countries, respectively
- COVID-19 impact and recovery prospect differed by region



Source: UN DESA, based on projections and scenarios generated by the World Economic Forecasting Model (WEFM).

Source: UN DESA (2021). *World Economic Prospects and Situation 2021*, released on 25 Jan 2021

Potential impact of COVID-19 on fertility

- The once-in-a-century pandemic has caused triple crises on a global scale:

  - public health crisis

  - economic downturns, and

  - social disruptions

- There could be a fertility dip, followed by a rebound in many countries, based on historical experiences, but impacts likely differ, due to

  - severity and duration of COVID-19

  - economic performance, and

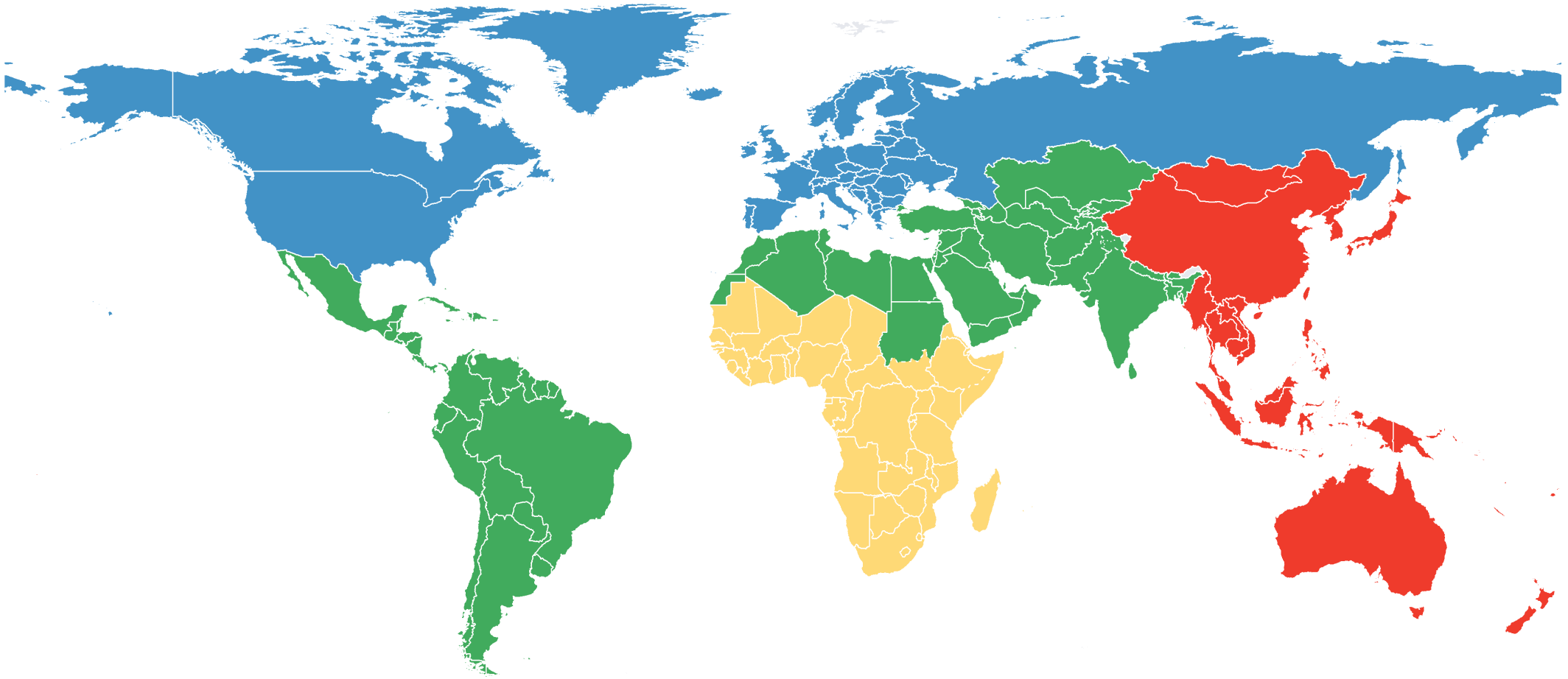
  - pre-pandemic fertility trend

- Important to understand how COVID-19 could potentially impact fertility levels and trends in the short term (1-2 years) and medium term (3-5 years)

Organization of this meeting

- Session I setting the stage, and Session II on historical lessons
- Session III on sub-Saharan Africa
- Session IV on Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and Oceania
- Session V on Central and Southern Asia, Northern Africa and Western Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean
- Session VI on Europe and Northern America
- Session VII an open interactive discussion

Four groups of regions covered in sessions III-VI



Expected outcomes of the meeting

- A better understanding of the mechanisms on how the COVID-19 could impact fertility
- A better understanding of potential differential outcomes in countries or regions
- Recommendations for developing assumptions for fertility projections

  - at the global and regional levels

  - in the short and medium term

Thank you!

For further information about the work of the Population Division, please visit www.un.org/development/desa/pd/ or www.unpopulation.org