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How Green is Your Contraceptive? - Earth911.com

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July 11 is World Population Day, a day to raise awareness about contraception and the connection between human population growth and biodiversity loss, climate change, and decreasing natural resources. This year, on World Population Day, the UN is focusing on a theme, “Family Planning Is a Human Right,” because so many people in the world lack access to family planning.

Those of us lucky enough to have our choice of effective contraceptive methods can enjoy the luxury of considering the environmental impacts of the methods we choose. It should go without saying, but: Effective contraception always benefits the environment. No one should choose a less effective contraceptive or go without based on environmental considerations.

So how does your method stack up? Can you make it greener?

Hormonal Methods

Reports of intersex fish resulting from synthetic hormones in wastewater naturally — and rightly — alarmed environmentalists.

It is true that one type of synthetic estrogen found in some oral contraceptives can cause reproductive imbalances in aquatic species. However, birth control’s contribution to testosterone-blocking water pollution is minimal compared to that of other agricultural, industrial, and municipal sources.

Pill users can breathe a sigh of relief, try to recycle their blister packs, and let manufacturers know they prefer less