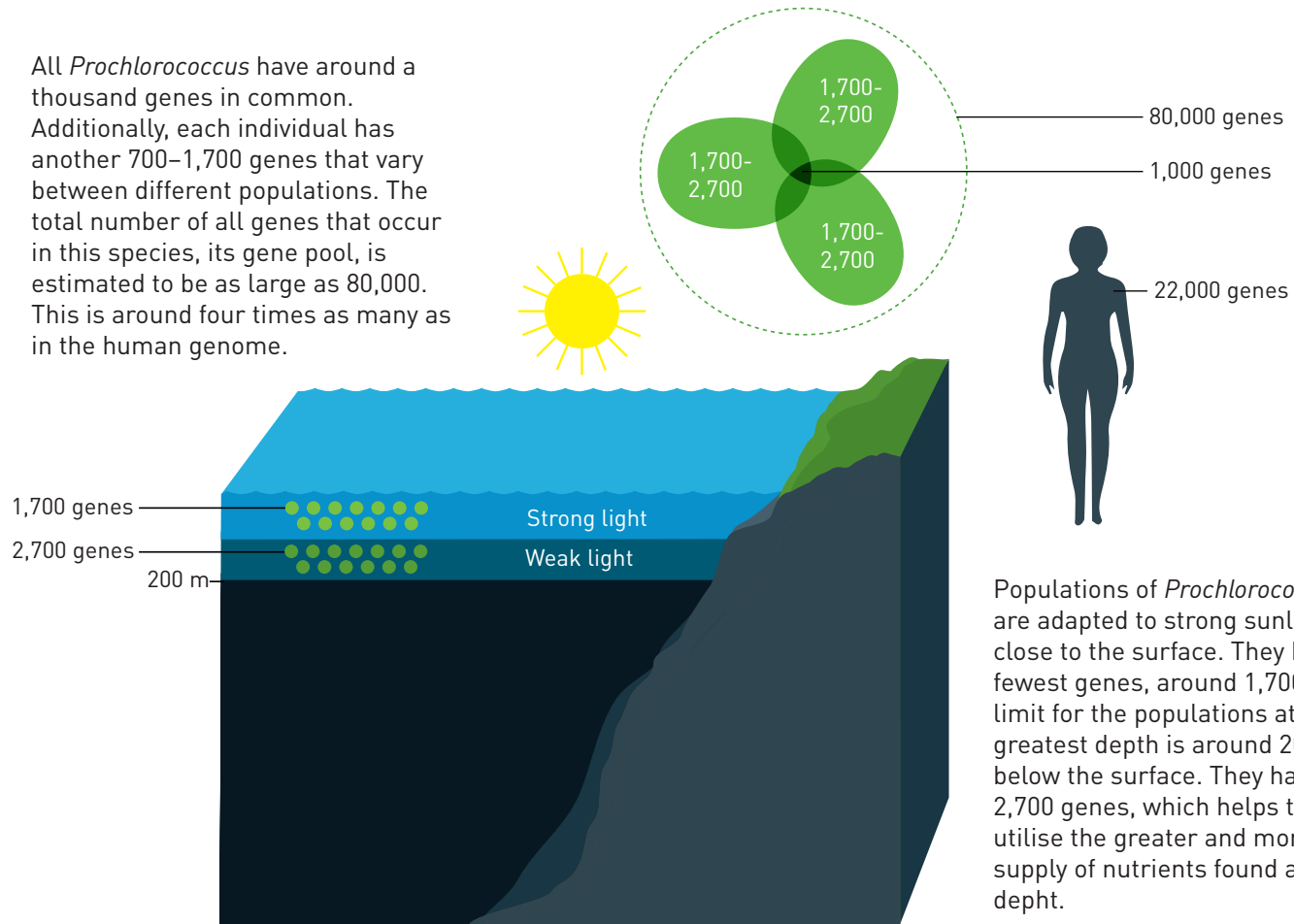


All *Prochlorococcus* have around a thousand genes in common. Additionally, each individual has another 700–1,700 genes that vary between different populations. The total number of all genes that occur in this species, its gene pool, is estimated to be as large as 80,000. This is around four times as many as in the human genome.



Populations of *Prochlorococcus* that are adapted to strong sunlight live close to the surface. They have the fewest genes, around 1,700. The limit for the populations at the greatest depth is around 200 metres below the surface. They have up to 2,700 genes, which helps them utilise the greater and more varied supply of nutrients found at this depth.