# Shadow Empire dev blog #1 : Planet generation

I am going to take you along on a visit to Shadow Empire. Shadow Empire is my upcoming new game. It is a hardcore turn-based 4X game. It mixes 4X elements, role-playing, sci-fi, post-apocalyptic with traditional hex&counter wargames. Honestly there is nothing else like it on the market.

It is a tough cookie of a game to win, but it is immersive, deep and full of promise.

In this first blog we’ll start at the beginning. Before you can start playing you’ll have to generate a new Planet.

Shadow Empire is a game that has a lot of procedural content. And since you’ll be playing on a planet this planet will of course be procedurally generated as well.

That is the topic for this first dev blog.

## Rolling a new Planet

Rolling? Yes.. rolling. I use this word because there is a lot of similarity with rolling a character (with dice) in a role-playing game.

The reroll button will be prominently present during planet generation. During almost all phases of generation you’ll be able to use it.

## Picking a planet class

The first thing to do when generating a planet is picking a planet class.

<pic2>

*A true aficionado of random will of course chose the Unclassified class.*

Here you can choose if you want a true random planet or one that is sure to have certain features. The Seth Class for example always ensures a desert planet, much like Mars. The Cerberus planet ensures volcanos, magma lakes and rivers. The Siwa Class ensures a biosphere and atmosphere that is (mostly) compatible with humans.

## Planetology phase

After a class has been selected the astrophysical planet characteristics will be rolled.

<pic3>

*This one looks almost like Earth except that it is 8 degrees hotter and has less gravity.*

If you do not like these characteristics just press the reroll button.

This planet is 3.7 billion years old, that is enough time for evolution to take place. Furthermore, I think it will have enough gravity to not have lost all its water.

## Geology phase

After the planetology data has been confirmed the map will be generated.

<pic4>

*Some oceans and a nice mild climate. What more could I want?*

If you do not like the map generated just press the reroll button.

The numbers shown on the map in this phase correspond with the annual rainfall in millimetres.

## Biosphere phase

After the geology data has been confirmed evolution (if any) will be simulated.

<pic5>

*Plenty of life! And big land dwelling predators on top of that.*

If you do not like the evolution results just press the reroll button.

Note that the atmospheric composition has been impacted by the emergence of life. Almost 15% oxygen in the atmosphere will help humans living here. Though I am afraid the Sulphur Dioxide is going to require the people living here to wear some sort of breathing masks.

<pic6>

*Note that this planet has some sizeable deserts as well. And the high mountains seem to be covered in eternal snow.*

## Colonization phase

After the evolution and biosphere data has been confirmed the Colonization of the Planet will be simulated.

You will be playing about 6000 years in the future. The by that time defunct Galactic Republic has been colonizing innumerable planets. The planet shown in this blog, Zosira C, is one of them.

<pic7>

*It must have been a happy place for miners.*

If you do not like the colonization results just press the reroll button.

Note that the larger the initial population is before the Dissolution War is simulated, the more chance you’ll have to have more numerous survivors.

## Apocalypse phase

After the colonization data has been confirmed the Dissolution War will be simulated.

Around the start of the 9th millennium the Galactic Republic was torn in parts and completely obliterated. This phase simulates the impact of this war on our planet.

<pic8>

*That is quite a population drop.*

Note that a lot of people managed to survive by becoming hunters. Remember those big animals from the Biosphere phase? They must have helped the poor miners of Sozira C to sustain themselves. Do not expect to see the same results on a desert world.

## Final Review

After the apocalypse data has been confirmed you’ll get a chance to play on this planet or to throw it in the garbage bin and roll another one.

<pic9>

*Looks good to me! Let’s start a game!*

Note that since the colonization phase the map has been shrouded. This is because during game setup I chose to generate it with partial shrouding. It is also possible to generate a planet using full shroud so you will have no clue of the planets map once the game starts.

## Your history

After you have started a game from the final review screen you’ll be able to customize your Regime a bit.

<pic10>

*Of course my people wrote a book of law. Raising one of my 9 regime profiles.*

Note that there are multiple options to generate a planet. One of them called ‘drop me in game’ will skip all of the above steps and immediately drop you into the start of a game.

## Game start

After your regime has been customized and your history has been determined the game will actually start.

<pic11>

*I am playing the Driftpeak Empire.*

So there my game starts. With a small militia force and a tiny empire. Planetary conquest will be my goal, but it won’t be easy…

More in the next dev blog.