



## **The Ecological Creditor Initiative**

A partnership between Global Footprint Network and the Community of Andean Nations (CAN)

The Ecological Creditor Initiative will bring the significance of ecological limits to the centre of decision-making, broadening the climate change discussions to include marine, forest, food, and fiber in addition to carbon emissions. Since the ultimate goal is to capitalize on the value of each nation's natural resources in establishing global agreements and opportunities, ignoring increasing biological resource scarcity will undermine economic success. The initiative shifts sustainability thinking away from moral debate, and toward a system that tangibly rewards early adopters.

Oakland, California, and Brussels, Belgium-based Global Footprint Network advances the Ecological Footprint: a science-driven accounting tool that tracks and records the planet's ecological resources and human demand on them. Globally, we now require the equivalent of 1.4 planets to support our lifestyles – and can continue to live in Overshoot as long as there remain resources to deplete. However, the farther into Overshoot we go, the more difficult—or impossible—it will be to help restore the Earth's resources. The Ecological Creditor Initiative, a partnership with the Community of Andean Nations (CAN), aims to foster an understanding among Ecological Creditor countries that their ecological assets will strengthen their future world economic standing and competitiveness. Therefore it is in the interest of all countries – both those with ecological remainders and those with deficits – to begin a dialogue about how to negotiate resources, and find ways to effectively value and preserve these assets.

The Ecological Creditor Initiative proposes to convene Creditor Nations (with more ecological capacity than they consume) to initiate a dialogue on the implications of their resource trends on their economic competitiveness, as well as the resulting human impacts, including greenhouse gas emissions. Our goal is to encourage these countries to reveal their development strategies and natural resource management practices, and work together to find solutions that meet the increasing resource demands of our global society. Through collaboration, Ecological Creditor countries can better secure the value of their natural reserves and build incentive for preserving those assets; a benefit to their own citizens and the global economy that relies on these resources for development and human well-being.

Resource scarcity will be reshaping our world map. While the 20th century distinction between “developing and developed” countries will vanish, the 21st century division will be between Ecological Creditor countries and Ecological Debtor countries (with less biocapacity than Footprint). Understanding this new distinction of wealth can help lead climate negotiations down a more productive path, engaging countries to implement aggressive sustainability policies as it is in their direct self-interest to do so. We will not only be influencing climate negotiations, but we'll also be building momentum toward recognizing the significance of natural capital to support human well-being.

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