



ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Sustainability Makes Business Sense

Global competition for resources, new environmental regulations, consumer demand for greener products: the Ecological Footprint can turn these challenges into business opportunities. Internationally recognized as the most comprehensive measure of human demand on the earth's environment, the Ecological Footprint is being used around the world to help corporations improve their market foresight, set strategic direction, manage performance and communicate their strengths.

Business is on the "front line" in making sustainable development. Companies need to take a hard look at how they make their products and deliver their services, and the impact of those products and services.

Craig Barrett, Chairman of the Board,
Intel

What is the Ecological Footprint?

Unlike other impact assessments, Ecological Footprint Analysis is a comprehensive, standardized resource accounting system that links resource use to global limits.

The Footprint not only measures your organization's environmental impact, but it also measures your impact against real ecological limits. Developed over the past fifteen years, the Footprint helps companies find opportunities for innovation, identify potential resource constraints and avoid costly business interruptions.

The Ecological Footprint translates the amount of resources used and the wastes generated into units of biologically productive area. This makes Footprint results easy to understand and communicate to a broad set of stakeholders.

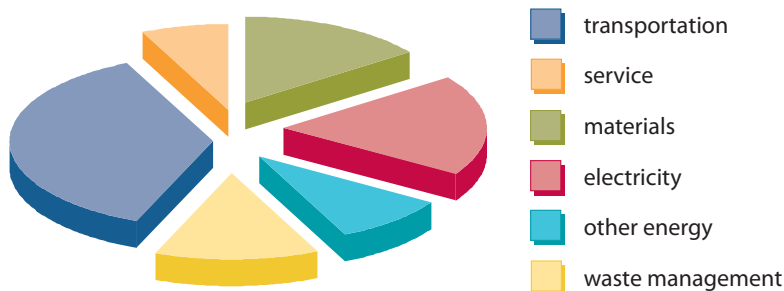
Can the Ecological Footprint help me design better products and facilities?

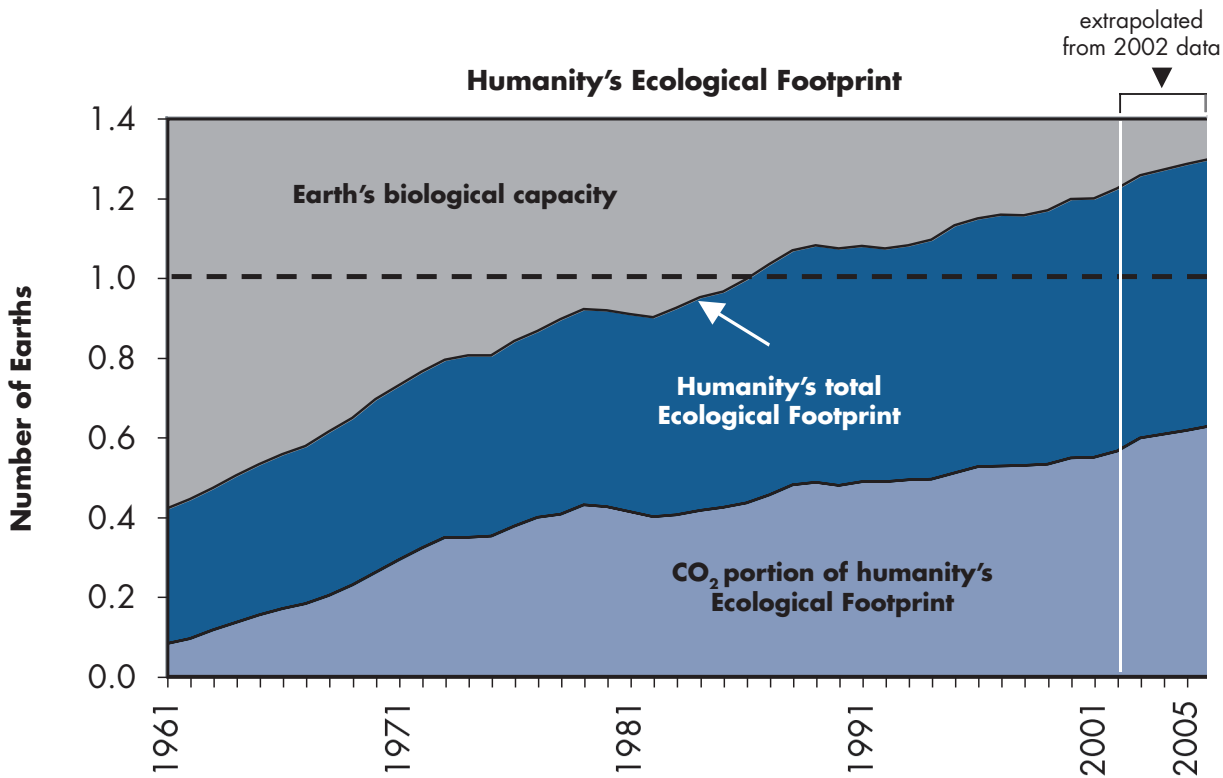
The Footprint helps businesses make strategic choices all the way from R&D to marketing. For example, with the Footprint companies can choose the best designs for products, programs and facilities. Using a common unit, businesses are able to establish benchmarks, set quantitative targets, and evaluate alternatives for future activities. Ecological Footprint Analysis is compatible with all scales of company operations, and provides both aggregated and detailed results.

How can my business use the Ecological Footprint?

Global Footprint Network and its partners offer a variety of tools and services including Global Resource Analysis by sector and by country, Scenario Analysis, and Footprinting of products, facilities, and processes. Applicable to any type of activity, Footprint Analysis can even reveal when a company's products are "Footprint Neutral", i.e. when their use results in a net reduction in humanity's demand on the environment.

Ecological Footprint Breakdown A Business Example





Can the Ecological Footprint help reduce exposure to risk, such as the economic effects of climate change?

Profit margins built on carbon-dioxide emitting fossil fuels are becoming an increasing liability. Analysis of a company's "carbon footprint" will quantify impacts and identify opportunities to move to less carbon-intensive products and processes.

What about other resource constraints?

Even the most conservative projections show demand on global ecological resources dramatically rising. Ecological Footprint Analysis reveals where businesses or regions will be held back by increasingly limited forest, cropland, pasture and fishery resources, and helps identify locations, products, and markets that will succeed in a resource-constrained world. The Footprint can also identify what kind of products and services will be most needed in future markets.

Who else is using the Ecological Footprint?

The Ecological Footprint is a well-known metric that has been endorsed by government bodies ranging from the European Union to state environmental agencies. Consultancies, non-profits, and major corporations across many sectors have benefited from Ecological Footprint Analysis. Please contact us for case studies or further information.

A globalizing economy has an enormous potential of benefiting people around the world. Yet, if not managed carefully, it could also accelerate resource use and lead to a rapid liquidation of our ecological goods. Keeping track of the resources embodied in our trade flows helps monitor whether our course is sustainable or not.

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Global Footprint Network
 Advancing the Science of Sustainability

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