Turkey’s Ecological Balance Sheet is Out!

Press Release

March 6th, 2012

Ecological Footprint which measures human pressure on natural resources is calculated for Turkey for the first time. Result: Turkey’s resource use is 50% above the global biocapacity per capita.

(Istanbul, Turkey) – WWF-Turkey prepared Turkey’s Ecological Footprint Report with the view that what is not measured, can not be managed. The report, prepared in collaboration with the Global Footprint Network and with support from the MAVA Foundation and Garanti Bank, was shared with decision makers, opinion leaders, private sector representatives and the public at a high level meeting with the participation of Mathis Wackernagel, the president of Global Footprint Network, on the 6th of March 2012, in SALT Galata, Istanbul.

Turkey’s Ecological Footprint Report examines the relationship between Ecological Footprint that indicates the amount of resources consumed and the biocapacity. While the report analyzes this relationship on multiple land-use types, consumption categories and income levels, it also presents scenarios with projections for 2050. Following an analysis of the global and regional trends, the report also offers concrete recommendations to tackle ecological overshoot and provides scientific background for further strategic decisions on natural resource management.

The President of Global Footprint Network, Mathis Wackernagel said “Measuring how much nature we have, how much we use and who uses what is a fundamental step for tackling the ecological overshoot. Like the rest of the world, Turkey has been in a growing biocapacity deficit since the 1970s. The risks for Turkey’s stability and prosperity are difficult to overstate. The pioneers, who choose to understand their resource situation, including limits and dependence, can better guarantee their people’s well-being and their nation’s prosperity. Turkey could be one of them.”

WWF-International’s Director of Conservation Communications, Richard McLellan said “WWF is committed to achieving two goals: reducing humanity’s footprint and conserving our planet’s diversity of species and their habitats. We live in a world where our footprint has doubled in the last 40 years. We need to act collectively to achieve “One Planet” sustainable levels.”

CEO of WWF-Turkey, Ugur Bayar said “Ecological Footprint calculations which present ecological balance sheets of the countries, can helps us achieve a sustainable future. With this report, we present recommendations to balance Turkey’s biocapacity with its Ecological Footprint. We hope that the decision makers and the business sector leaders will take the necessary steps to ensure that our consumption stays within the ecological limits. We believe that the Ecological Footprint concept, which is directly connected to
the current economic transactions as well as the goods and services provided by nature, needs to be accepted by the opinion leaders and the general public as a sustainable development indicator and be integrated into the decision making processes.”

WWF-Turkey’s Conservation Director, Sedat Kalem stated, “Ecological overshoot has increased by eight times in the past 50 years in the Mediterranean Basin. Turkey’s Ecological Footprint is twice the available national biocapacity, and nearly half of the footprint is caused by carbon emissions. This indicates that unless Turkey reduces the carbon intensity of its economy, it will not be possible to live within the national biocapacity limits.”

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Notes to the Editor:

About WWF-Turkey:
Established in 1966 by The Society for the Protection of Nature, WWF Turkey (Foundation for the Protection of Nature) became the national office of WWF in 2001. WWF Turkey is an independent non-governmental organization where its works are supported by donations and corporate sponsorships. Having an experience of more than 30 years, WWF Turkey executes its work on three pillars: “protecting our nature”, “changing our lifestyle” and “combating with climate change”. www.wwf.org.tr

About Global Footprint Network
Global Footprint Network is an international think tank working to advance sustainability through use of the ecological footprint, a resource accounting tool that measures how much nature we have, how much we use and who uses what. By setting ecological limits central to decision-making, Global Footprint Network is working with its partners to end overshoot and create a society where all people can live well, within the means of one planet. www.footprintnetwork.org