

Natural Capital Day



FEBRUARY 19th 2022

The day the Netherlands consumed its annual ecological resources.



Biocapacity

Biocapacity is the ecosystems' capacity to regenerate biological materials used by people and to absorb waste material generated by humans, under current management schemes and extraction technologies.



Ecological Footprint

The Ecological Footprint adds up all the competing demands on biologically productive areas. They include areas to produce the food, fibre, and timber, to accommodate houses and roads, and to absorb CO₂ from burning fossil fuels.

Living off depletion is not a long-term strategy. Depletion or overuse will end. The question is only whether by design or disaster. Since the 1970 however, humanity's footprint is bigger than what Earth can replenish. In 2021, humanity lived as if we had 1.75 Earths.

The ecological footprint of the Netherlands is 7.3 times bigger than its own biocapacity, and 3 times larger than what is available per person worldwide.

The Netherlands consumes in 50 day the same amount as its own ecosystems regenerate in one year. Therefore the Dutch Natural Capital Day is on the 19th of February in 2022.

$$\text{Dutch Natural Capital Day} = \frac{\text{Biocapacity of the country}}{\text{Footprint of its residents}} \times 365 = 50$$

The Netherlands' Biocapacity



- Crops
- Forest / Forest Products
- Fishing Grounds
- Built up Land
- Grazing
- Carbon Footprint

The biocapacity of the Netherlands mainly consists of fishing grounds (54%) and cropland (23%).

Ecological Footprint



The carbon footprint makes up over 60% of the Dutch ecological footprint. It corresponds to almost 4.5x the size of the country. This is the area needed to sequester the CO₂ from burning fossil fuels. Food accounts for 29% of the ecological footprint, or 50% more than the entire biocapacity of the country.

Food4Future

Food accounts for about 33% of the ecological footprint of the Netherlands.

- To feed its residents, requires twice the biocapacity of the country
- A successful future depends on a far better food system that fits within the planet's constraints
- Wageningen University & Research, FiBL - Research Institute for Organic Agriculture and Global Footprint Network joined forces to develop pathways for sustainable food systems. This research project is supported by AVINA Stiftung.

www.footprintnetwork.org/food4future

Together we can #MoveTheDate

Moving the date increases our resource security. We can achieve it if we recognize it as an economic priority.

- Assets that use fewer resources will become more valuable (energy efficient housing)
- People-powered mobility will out-crowd the one depending on fossil fuel (take the bike!)
- Investments in clean energy have a future
- Learn to shift from meat to plant rich diets



The Netherlands was in ecological deficit already in 1961. In the last years, the deficit has been shrinking, but only slowly.

For more data on the Netherlands and all countries from around the world: data.footprintnetwork.org