



Invasive Species  
Council of BC

HOW TO TAKE ACTION

# What is Your Ecological Footprint?



## WHAT IS AN ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT?

An 'Ecological Footprint' is a measurement of resources that are required to sustain our current lifestyle and meet our demands as consumers in today's world. The resources required for our lifestyle can vary from space used for growing food, fiber production, timber regeneration, building infrastructure and the absorption of carbon dioxide emissions to name a few! The rate we consume these resources is then compared to the Earth's ability to naturally replenish these resources.

Currently, humans are using resources as if we lived on 1.7 Earths. In other words, we are using resources faster than the Earth can replenish them and if we kept going on our current trajectory, we would need the resources from almost two entire Earths! Visit [www.footprintnetwork.org](http://www.footprintnetwork.org) to learn more about how Canada and other countries compare in their ecological footprint.

## HOW DOES AN ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT RELATE TO INVASIVE SPECIES?

The larger a person's Ecological Footprint, the more resources are being consumed to sustain their lifestyle. Higher consumption of resources can lead to land degradation and accelerate climate change. In turn, changing climates can create optimal conditions to further the spread of current invasive populations and allow for new invasive species to become established. It is important to note, that everyone has an ecological footprint of some sort, but it is our responsibility to control how large that footprint is to avoid catastrophic ecosystem changes.

## HOW DO I CALCULATE MY ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT?

Calculating your ecological footprint is quick and easy to do!

1. Visit [www.footprintnetwork.org](http://www.footprintnetwork.org) and explore the Global Footprint Network's website. If you have time, check out what they have been working on and read more about the organization before moving on to calculating your footprint.
2. When ready, return to the home screen and click on 'Calculate Your Footprint' in the top right-hand corner. Ensure you are taking the quiz in your preferred language. If you wish to change your language you can change it in the top right-hand corner of the screen.
3. Start the quiz. For certain questions, you have the option to add more details to your answers to better customize your result. The quiz should take between 5-10 minutes to complete.
4. At the end of the quiz, it is optional to provide your name and email address. If you wish, you can choose "Skip to View My Results" and bypass this page.
5. Review your results! Is there anything about your results that surprises you? Hover over the small orange 'i' icon next to see how your results compare against citizens from other countries. When you're ready, you can click on 'See Details' and explore the facts and figures of your consumption.
6. Reflect! How do you feel? Are you shocked? Confused? Inspired? Take the time to reflect how you feel and think about some changes you can make in your everyday routine.

## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Need some further inspiration on how to inspire change in your daily routine? Here is how you can take what you've learned today and go one step further!

- » Do some research and see what sustainable policies your region is implementing. Is there anything you can do as a volunteer to support these measures?
  - » Be a smarter shopper and try to buy locally-grown fruits and vegetables that are in season.
  - » Look for some new recipes! Is there a new veggie-based dish you have been wanting to try? Why not invite some friends over and make it a vegetarian-based dinner party?
- » Be mindful how much energy you are using. Make sure appliances are unplugged if not in use and to turn off lights once you leave a room. You'd be surprised the difference these small changes can make!
  - » Learn about some of our other sustainability themed volunteer initiatives like 'How to Pull the Plug on Plastic' or 'How to Lead a Shoreline and Trail Cleanup' to take meaningful action in your community!