

Our Ecological Footprint

Real World Ecosystems
Learner Worksheet Answer Key
Grade Level: 5-8



Name:

1. Predict how many hectares your ecological footprint might be.

Will be different for each learner.

2. What does an ecological footprint measure?

The number of hectares of biologically sustainable land needed to sustain a lifestyle.

3. What are the major categories that the ecological footprint measures?

Food, mobility, shelter, goods, and services.

4. What was your total footprint?

Will be different for each learner.

5. List the categories of your ecological footprint and record what you consumed a lot of and what you consumed the least. For example: My food footprint is the highest and my mobility footprint is the lowest. In each case, specify the numbers involved.

Will be different for each learner.

6. List ways that your ecological footprint can be reduced.

Buying locally grown food, not wasting uneaten food, driving less, finding ways to car-pool, using public transportation -buying green power, using energy efficient light bulbs, cutting down shower time, not running the water while brushing your teeth, wearing your clothes more than once before doing laundry, eating less junk food, recycling what you can, composting your food or yard material, and/or avoiding the purchase of products with excess packaging.

Option:

- Although the main focus of this online activity is a calculation of each learner's ecological footprint, there are a number of different instruments available for the same purpose. Some are more detailed than others.
- An alternative, *non-computer* based form has been provided within this activity in case computer access for every class member is not possible within a reasonable time frame.
- Keep in mind, however, that it is an extremely important goal in science classes to have learners become comfortable with an online calculation tool such as this activity provides. It is, therefore, best if at all possible to have learners use the online computer to calculate the size of their personal footprint on Earth.