



## Ecological Footprint

*The footprint used in this exercise is attached, it is one that we developed using the "Living More Lightly Profile" developed by The Institute for Earth Education and first published in Earth Education...A New Beginning by Steve Van Matre. This footprint is designed to ask questions that are most relevant to college freshman who live in residence halls. The actual score does not equate to anything specific but can be used as comparison and the purpose of the footprint is to spark conversation.*

Here is an "ecological footprint" so you can see what your individual impact on resource use is. It will ask you questions about habits in your daily lives that have an impact on the earth. Keep in mind that this isn't a test, it asks a variety of questions, these questions aren't the only things important in assessing your impact but they should raise some interesting issues.

(let them fill it out, it takes approximately 10 minutes....wait until everybody is done to continue)

The lower the score the more environmentally conscious you are in your attitudes and actions. Remember, the idea isn't to be graded; it is to get you to think about some of these things. How many people scored below 50? (show hands) That's really good. How about below 100? That's good too. The maximum is 275 (FYI: most people score around 150ish).

Does anybody have any questions about the footprint? Any questions stick out in your mind?

\*\*\*The rest of the presentation is meant for discussion. If they bring up topics, that is great; if not, you can lead the discussion by asking some of the questions below. You don't have to get through all (or any) of the topics below, just so that there is a good exchange of ideas.\*\*\*

### Questions

Did you answer that you took showers longer than five minutes or that you turned the water off when you brushed your teeth? (Questions 19 & 20)

How many gallons of water do you think you use to shower and get ready in the morning?  
100 gallons, so every minute you have the faucet off saves that much more water<sup>1</sup>

Diving your car, (Questions 25-27), did anyone answer that they bike or walk instead or car pool: Automobiles contribute to air pollution, carbon dioxide emissions and depletion of non-renewable natural resources (the gas and oil).

And where do you think those cars are from?

60% are from Europe and North America (which make up only 10% of population)<sup>2</sup>

Did you answer that you use paper towels and napkins (Question 1)? Paper is made from trees... and tropical rainforests are a valuable asset to the earth to preserve biodiversity and cutting of trees is thought to increase Global Warming

How many acres of tropical rainforest are lost everyday?

214,000 acres (area larger than New York City)<sup>3</sup>, USC campus is approx. 240 acres.

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<sup>1</sup> Biodiversity and Your Water Supply. A guide to Living with Biodiveristy produced by the Center for Biodiveristy and Conservation, American Museum of Natural History, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Database for Use in Schools Project

<http://www.soton.ac.uk/~engenvir/environment/transport/effects8.htm>

<sup>3</sup> The Rainforest Action Network

[http://www.ran.org/info\\_center/factsheets/04b.html](http://www.ran.org/info_center/factsheets/04b.html)

## NOTES:

(These notes are intended you help you answer possible questions, or to lead discussion)

### U.S. Stat

The US makes up only 5% of the world's population<sup>4</sup> but:  
consumes approximately 33% of the world's paper<sup>5</sup>  
consumes almost 25% of the world's total energy<sup>6</sup>  
produces 24% of green house gas emissions (cause of Global Warming)<sup>7</sup>  
consumes 47 million barrels of oil a day (worldwide production is approximately 51 million barrels a day)<sup>8</sup>

### Water

Treating water for our use requires energy and energy is money. Energy for heating/pumping/purification, actually sewers cost more than water.

### Paper:

Suggest things like cutting back on paper towel use, using towels etc. at home instead of paper

Imprinted, scented paper products- the issue is that it takes more energy and chemicals to produce it and to treat it as waste.

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<sup>4</sup> Energy Information Administration

<http://www.eis.doe.gov/emeu/tablee1.html>

<sup>5</sup> International Institute for Environment and Development

<http://www.oneworld.org/iicd/scati/pub/rethink3.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Energy Information Administration

<http://www.eis.doe.gov/emeu/tablee1.html>

<sup>7</sup> Energy Information Administration

<http://www.eis.doe.gov/emeu/tablee1.html>

<sup>8</sup> Consumer FAQ: Oil and Gasoline

<http://www.dnet.com/zdy2k/1998/09/4723.html>

## YOUR ECO-FOOTPRINT

Key: R/N=rarely or never; S=sometimes; U=usually or always

\*If a question is not applicable to you, leave it blank.

\*Please note that answers switch order throughout the questionnaire.

1	I use paper towels and/or napkins	R/N	S	U
2	I eat at fast-food restaurants	R/N	S	U
3	I eat red meat (high on the food chain) more than twice a week	R/N	S	U
4	I use Styrofoam products	R/N	S	U
5	I bring my own reusable drinking cup (eco-mug) whenever possible	U	S	R/N
6	I purchase food and other items in bulk quantities and containers	U	S	R/N
7	I grow or buy organically produced foodstuffs	U	S	R/N
8	I avoid snacks and other foodstuffs with lots of packaging	U	S	R/N
9	I take my own paper sacks (or other containers) to the grocery store	U	S	R/N
10	I avoid purchasing things in containers that can't be recycled	U	S	R/N
11	I turn off electric lights and appliances when no one is in a room	U	S	R/N
12	I decide what I want from a refrigerator before opening it	U	S	R/N
13	I avoid using non-essential electrical appliances (hair dryer, shaver, curling iron, can opener, toothbrush, etc.)	U	S	R/N
14	I avoid washing clothes before they really need it	U	S	R/N
15	I wash my clothes in cold water	U	S	R/N
16	I let my washing drip dry	U	S	R/N
17	I use low wattage and/or energy saving light bulbs wherever I can	U	S	R/N
18	I avoid purchasing a daily newspaper (I use Internet/TV instead)	U	S	R/N
19	I limit my showers to five minutes or less	U	S	R/N
20	I turn off the water when brushing my teeth or shaving	U	S	R/N
21	I use disposable razors	R/N	S	U
22	I purchase scented, imprinted paper products (tissues, paper towels etc.)	R/N	S	U
23	I use facial tissues	R/N	S	U
24	I bathe/shower more than once a day	R/N	S	U
25	I drive a vehicle that achieves 25 miles or more per gallon	U	S	R/N
26	I regularly walk or ride a bicycle somewhere rather than driving	U	S	R/N
27	I car pool or use mass transit	U	S	R/N
28	I keep my vehicle properly tuned and serviced for the best energy efficiency	U	S	R/N
29	I keep my tires properly inflated	U	S	R/N

30	I recycle aluminum	U	S	R/N
31	I recycle paper	U	S	R/N
32	I recycle glass bottles	U	S	R/N
33	I recycle metal cans	U	S	R/N
34	I reuse envelopes	U	S	R/N
35	I use both sides of a sheet of paper when printing or writing drafts	U	S	R/N
36	I do not throw away items which could be repaired or reused	U	S	R/N
37	I give unnecessary clothing and furnishings to charity	U	S	R/N
38	I reuse plastic and paper bags	U	S	R/N
39	I refuse paper or plastic sacks for my purchases	U	S	R/N
40	I buy throw-away pens	R/N	S	U
41	I visit or take a walk in a natural area each week	U	S	R/N
42	I pay attention to the natural changes in the seasons	U	S	R/N
43	I make an extended visit to a natural setting at least once each year	U	S	R/N
44	I notice the color of the sky	U	S	R/N
45	I treat all living things with respect	U	S	R/N
46	I practice minimum-impact techniques when I go camping	U	S	R/N
47	I am interested in knowing how the food and other items I purchase are produced (i.e. ethical labor standards, treatment of animals)	U	S	R/N
48	I purchase products made from wild animals	R/N	S	U
49	I discuss pending environmental legislation with people around me	U	S	R/N
50	I ask my workplace to engage in more environmentally-sound practices	U	S	R/N
51	I help restore natural areas	U	S	R/N
52	I keep abreast of current environmental issues	U	S	R/N
53	I actively support an environmental action group	U	S	R/N
54	I inform my elected officials about my environmental concerns and recommend	U	S	R/N
55	I contribute 1% or more of my annual income to environmental causes	U	S	R/N

SCORING: Answers in the left column are worth 0 points, those in the middle column are worth 2 points, and those in the right column are worth 5 points. Answers left blank are worth zero points.

This is an abbreviated and condensed version (with no penalties for reproduction) of the "Living More Lightly Profile" developed by The Institute for Earth Education and first published in Earth Education...A New Beginning by Steve Van Matre. You can access the full profile on the Institute's website: [http:// www.eartheducation.org](http://www.eartheducation.org)