**Introduction.**

A useful tool for evaluating the impact of a person or group of people (i.e. community or country) on the planet is the Ecological Footprint. Here, you will calculate your personal ecological footprint and conduct an analysis to determine how different actions affect your personal footprint.

This lab requires that you read a few websites and then work through a couple of different footprint calculators. Instead of a quiz, ***for this lab, you’ll hand in a word document which answers the below questions***. Like the In The News articles, they will need to be submitted online in word format.

Please note: This Ecological Footprint Calculator requires Abobe Flash Player Version 9 or higher. Try different browsers (e.g. Chrome, Internet Explorer, Safari, Firefox, etc.) or install the Flash Player if needed.

**Instructions.**

Please follow this 5-step process:

1. read <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/footprint_basics_overview/> and <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/frequently_asked_technical_questions/> to understand the analysis.
2. For additional context please watch the 4-minute video at <https://youtu.be/PCAx3TG8LkI>.
3. Determine your own Ecological Footprint. Use this website (link at the top right next to the donate button): <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/>
4. Work through the questions below.
5. Turn in your answers on Canvas (upload a word document) to the following 7 questions..

**Questions.**

**Question 1.** What is the Ecological Footprint, how is it calculated, and what does it actually measure? (the answer to this will come from what you read/viewed in steps 1 and 2)

**Question 2.** Describe how your own Ecological Footprint breaks down. What components of your lifestyle have the largest and smallest impacts on your overall Ecological Footprint? Why? Discuss and explain a few reasons. (when you’ve finished the calculator, hit the see details button. Then hit the Explore Solutions button on that next page.)

**Question 3.** How many Planet Earths would it take to provide enough resources if everyone on Earth lived like you? To place that values into context: How many Planet Earths for the average American? How many Planet Earths is the global average value? Why are these values a problem for us?

**Question 4.** *Now: Please re-do your Ecological Footprint. Try to reduce your footprint by 30 percent.*  List and explain some of the actions that gave you the largest reductions in your Ecological Footprint. Did you achieve a 30 percent reduction?

**Question 5.** Discuss your Ecological Footprint analysis: Were you surprised with the results? Do you think these results will change your lifestyle at all? What actions (if any) are you going to implement? Try to be realistic!

**Question 6.** Here is an additional Ecological Footprint Calculator:  
<http://footprint.wwf.org.uk/> Work through this one as well and compare the results from the two footprint calculations. How different are the calculated values? Which calculator do you think is the best and why?

**Question 7.** There are other ways of looking at how things are going. Google is your friend here. Look up the United Nations Human Development Index (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Development_Index> ) and the World Happiness Index: <https://countryeconomy.com/demography/world-happiness-index> (sort by rankings, and be sure to read how it’s calculated – at the bottom of the list). Compare and contrast these two indices with global carbon footprint data (see this website, and especially the map: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_carbon_dioxide_emissions_per_capita> ). Basically, tell me how these three things are both similar and different in examining how peoples lives are tied to their environment and consumption.

A note on grading. As there are no right or wrong answers to these questions, you will be graded based upon the thought and research that you put into them. Blast through the lab and you probably won’t do well. Take some time, do some reading, and then think a bit, and you’ll do fine.

*Note, this lab developed by Dr. Carsten Braun at Westfield State University – and subsequently modified by Dr. Bob Hickey for use at CWU.*