



ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

The **ecological footprint** is a measure of human demand on the Earth's ecosystems. It is a standardized measure of demand for natural capital that may be contrasted with the planet's ecological capacity to regenerate. It represents the amount of biologically productive land and sea area necessary to supply the resources a human population consumes, and to assimilate associated waste. Using this assessment, it is possible to estimate how much of the Earth (or how many planet Earths) it would take to support humanity if everybody followed a given lifestyle. In the same framework, a **carbon footprint** has historically been defined as "the total set of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions caused by an organization, event, product or person." You should know that whatever you do has an impact to the environment. Let us present to you our own way of thinking and acting. There are some things that we all may do in order to decrease our impacts. This has to do with your everyday life, but also with your holiday trips. We will do that with the help of some examples.

The carbon footprints are likely to vary greatly between destinations, reflecting climate, culture, energy sources, available technology and activities undertaken, e.g. researches show that the carbon footprint per bed night in Majorca as 5,5kgr CO₂ and for Cyprus as 18kgr CO₂. Thus each destination should be treated individually. Furthermore, in the same destination, according to different activities our carbon footprint could vary greatly. For instance, if you consume locally produced food in the destination instead of imported food where the CO₂ emissions during the food transfer are high.

Energy: Most tourism-related activities require energy directly in the form of fossil fuels or indirectly in the form of electricity often generated from petroleum, coal or gas. This consumption leads to the emission of greenhouse gases, mainly carbon dioxide. With a few exceptions, it is only very recently that researchers have started to study energy consumption from tourist activities and to estimate the resulting greenhouse gases that contribute to the anthropogenic component of global warming. On average, hotels spend £700 per bedroom per year on energy. Through careful energy management, hotels can reduce their energy costs between 10% and 40%, saving up to £300 per room.

Wastes: Savings of approximately 20% to 30% of hotel laundry costs can be realised simply by giving guests the option to reuse their towels and bedding if staying for more than one night. In addition to saving energy, water and staff time, this clearly communicates a positive approach to managing environmental issues within an organisation. However, if the offer is made it is important that it is followed through; there are many informal reports of hotels which make the proposition to customers but still renew towels etc regardless of customer action.

Food: Researches have estimated that a quarter of UK CO₂ emissions come from transporting food from growers, via processors and distributors. While this seems

high, there is undoubtedly a significant effect in holiday destinations as well as in the UK, where imports account for 95% of fruit and 50% of all vegetables consumed in the UK. For example, it has been shown that an apple from a village shop travelled 38 miles before being eaten, a British supermarket apple travelled 220 miles and a New Zealand apple bought in a UK supermarket travelled 11,300 miles. The Travel Foundation and other organisations have already developed programmes to encourage local farmers to produce for tourism consumption. The potential to develop such programme is primarily economic but also brings significant CO2 benefits. Such initiatives could be carried further by development of local cuisine using local ingredients.

The American Hotel and Motel Association (AHMA) has estimated that 25-30% of the total waste stream generated by the hotel industry is food waste. Factors that affect the amount of waste generated by a hotel include size of the hotel, number of guest rooms, rate of occupancy, and purchasing practices of the hotel. Larger hotels, in order to accommodate more guests, typically have more restaurants and guest rooms than smaller hotels; and as a result, generate more total waste per hotel. One study of wastes from 25 hotels showed that, from 1991-1993, the hotel waste consisted of 46% food waste, 25.3% paper, 11.7% cardboard, 6.7% plastics, 5.6% glass, and 4.5% metals. It has been estimated that around 11% of the food produced in the UK is thrown away. This means that on average we throw away 2.7kgs of food per person, per week. Of this food waste around seven million tonnes (40%) is produced by the large scale food manufacturers within the UK. Waste that goes to landfill can produce large amounts of methane, a greenhouse gas with about twenty times the climate impact relative to carbon dioxide. While detailed studies of waste practices in destinations would be required, the opportunity to reduce the impact can be illustrated by reference to the UK where 70 percent of landfill gas is captured or flared. By composting waste, an average UK household would reduce methane emissions by an amount equivalent to a small petrol car driving 1000 miles.

What we do

ALTERNATIVE SAILING tries by all means to reduce its emission and your holiday with us will have the less possible impact to the environment of the destination. Here are some things we do for you and for the environmental protection:

- We use local products as much as possible.
- We travel with the wind energy and we use fuel as less as possible.
- We use solar energy cells to produce the electric energy we need.
- We use as less fresh water as possible.
- We recycle our solid wastes. We separate plastic, metal, paper and glass garbage.
- We use waste holding tank in order to avoid sea pollution.
- We use ecological cleaning products that are biodegradable.
- We use low energy consumption lights.
- We use family and not individual packages to reduce solid wastes.
- We use gas and not electricity for cooking.
- We encourage bicycles and donkeys for your transport in the destination.
- We don't use air conditions.

Energy Saving Tips

The lists below give some ideas on how everyone can contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of tourism:

| Before you go on Holiday | On Holiday |
|--|--|
| Turn down central heating when relevant | Remove packaging of new items before you go |
| If you use an office switch off as much as possible there | Travel as light as you can compatible with comfort |
| Switch off lights | Eat local produce and dishes and drink local drinks |
| Replace light bulbs with low energy equivalents | Bring back light weight souvenirs |
| Switch off computers, TVs | Drink tap water where it is safe |
| Use public transport or car share to get to and from the airport | Use stairs instead of the lift where possible |
| To keep in warmth in winter partially draw curtains and blinds | Walk, cycle, sail rather than use energy consuming transport |
| Disconnect all charging equipment | Look to save energy e.g. use towels for more than one day |
| Offset your holiday flight | Look for recycling opportunities |

For more information on what you can do, please visit WWF:

http://www.wwf.it/UserFiles/File/WWF%20Turismo/Dossier/tourists_climate_footprint.pdf

Thank you