Title page

Environmental issues

Calculator 1: My carbon footprint is 14.45 tons calculated on conservation.org. This means that it will take 206 trees to offset my carbon footprint.

Calculator 2: My ecological footprint is 6.9, carbon footprint in tons per year is 12.7 and total ecological footprint is 64. These results are calculated via footprintcalculator.org.

Calculator 3: Nature.org is the third calculator used for calculating my carbon footprint. The estimated carbon footprint is 6.7.

1. Carbon numbers obtained from three different sources differ. I think there are many reasons such as each source asked for different questions so that naturally make the results different. I also think the accuracy of each platform for measuring carbon footprint is also different because each relies on a different method. According to conservation.org the price that I need to pay for offsetting my estimated carbon footprint is $14. One reason for difference is that all platforms have considered different characteristics for calculating the carbon footprints. Such as the first scale considered average travelling distance while the second and third scales considered miles of traveling. The answers have varied among websites due to the methodologies used. This could be due to the fact that one calculator has relied on the estimation of fuel consumption while the other one also considered the electricity usage at home. Including extra factors or removing few could result in significant differences. Goods and services are only considered in the second source that makes the resultant figure different from others.
2. It is also important to evaluate the transparency of the calculators. The primary factor that can be considered for assessing the transparency is the time factor. The calculator that takes more time is more reliable and most probably will give the accurate value. Evidence reveals that online carbon footprint calculators are a reliable tool for evaluating carbon footprint at individual and household level. Second and third scales are more reliable because they have considered miles of traveling by car and air. It is more appropriate to include quantities for getting accurate estimation. Normally carbon footprint is calculated not by only estimating the amount of carbon but the activities that causes its generation. The scales that manage to integrate all activities like electricity consumption, traveling and sources of energy are more likely to give reliable measures. The calculators that fail to consider all these factors are not transparent. It is possible to see different factors hidden in the equation by observing the questions and determining what activities they are referring to. Transparency can also be evaluated by considering the indirect factors that are responsible for carbon emission. Nature.org is a transparent calculator because all factors are evaluated in numeric form. Conserrvation.org is also reliable scale because it include most of the factors like such as fuel consumption and number of trips and their nature that make it more authentic. Factors can be identified by assessing the questions.
3. All three calculators are authoritative and taken from the trusted sources. The credibility of the sources can be evaluated by considering the list of factors used for estimating the carbon footprint. The sources have covered all activities that essentially contributes to the generation of carbon emission. Individual activities such as travelling per miles is the most important indicator that relies on the use of fossil fuel, the biggest source of carbon emission. I think that one should use common sense for observing which site makes the most use of factors that leads to more authentic results. I still believe that all three calculators have not included all activities that could lead to carbon emission such as their shopping tends, clothing expenditures and travel for different purposes. I also noticed that no source has included food consumption and other daily activities that have direct impact on carbon emission.
4. I think no particular bias is evident in the calculators because the user’s evaluation depends on the figures that they enter on the site. The site cannot manipulate the calculations because they are solely based on the data entered by users. The sites just use the same basic formula for calculating the carbon footprint for each user which makes bias non-existent. The obtained results lead users to a common conclusion of determining how their carbon footprint can be reduced.
5. The three scales have used some common inputs such as travelling in miles is considered by all sources. However they has used different methods for estimating travelling of the individuals. Such as the first source has used miles according to the nature of the travel. The second source has only considered the miles for car, bike and airplane. The third source has used many other factors like size of household, earning and spending.
6. Each calculator offer some strengths such as the results obtained from the footprint calculations allowed me to identify the issues prevailing at a larger level as every person is responsible for wasting resources. I think nature.org gives the most authentic scale because it has tried to cover the maximum human activities that could directly cause carbon emissions. The other two sources have emphasized only on travel and computing activities that reflects limitations. Nature.org is a superior source compared too the other two sources because it has included distance traveled across all transports including car, train, transit, air and motorbike. I think the maximum factors have been included in this scale that makes it better.

References

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