

Earth overshoot day: MOVE THE DATE!

Vocabulary

Earth overshoot day - the date when the demand of humans exceeds what the planet can produce in a year

to consume - to use fuel, energy, water or other resources especially in large amounts

landfill - a place where rubbish is buried

impact - an influence or an effect of something/someone on something/someone else

sustainable - made to last for a long time, to be maintained at a certain level for a long period of time

renewable energy - energy from a source that is unlimited (example: wind, sun, water)

carbon dioxide - polluting gas we find in the atmosphere. It can be created by humans when they exhale, but also by industries who burn carbon or organic waste (CO₂)

Watch the video and answer the questions:

- 1) What is an ecological footprint? How can it be calculated?
- 2) Explain what the overshoot day is. What does it mean when the date has passed?
- 3) How can we change the date of the overshoot day to make it later this year? What can you do as an individual and what can your school do?

The video online: <https://bellona.ru/eco-prosvet/english1/>

Transcript

My name is Hanna and I'm doing my internship here at Bellona. We want to film this video to talk with you about the ecological challenges we facing right now.

For more than fifty years, we have been overusing Earth's resources, and the speed is getting faster and faster. We are consuming more and more of non-renewable resources, and most of our waste is not being recycled but ending up in landfills. In addition to that, one of the big problems is the fact that we are letting record-breaking amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere which is speeding up climate change.

Ecological footprint

The impact we have on nature can be calculated and this measurement is called the ecological footprint. It shows the area that is needed to produce all the resources we need for a year. This ecological footprint can be calculated for a person or a country. It can also be calculated for the whole world. And at the moment, humanity's ecological footprint is so big that we would actually need 1.7 earths to keep life sustainable. And if we keep up with this lifestyle, by 2050 we would need 3 earths altogether. You can calculate your own ecological footprint at Global Footprint Network.

Overshoot day

The overshoot day marks the date when our demand on nature exceeds what Earth can regenerate in a year. So basically, after this day, we are borrowing resources from future generations. Last year Earth's overshoot day was already on the 29th of July. So for almost half a year, we were using the resources we didn't actually have.

Moving the date

What can we do to move the date and stop wasting our precious resources? Well, we need to start reducing our ecological footprint and start living more sustainably. But what are the concrete ways you could start with? Well, there are a lot of little things you can start with and if we all work together, these small things will make a huge difference! These are the things I do to reduce my ecological footprint:

1. Recycle, reuse and reduce!

Firstly: recycle, reuse and reduce. So reduce your consumption, reuse everything that's reusable and recycle everything that's not.

For example, could you start using a reusable water bottle instead of plastic one? In just one year, you would be saving, let's say, 100 plastic bottles, and for the whole class the amount would be thousands of plastic bottles saved. And think about what that number would be for your whole school! This is just one idea, what other ideas could you come up with? Even though we are living in a time of consumer society, it's good to think, what do you actually need and what are the things you just want.

If you haven't yet checked the recycle map of Saint Petersburg, check it now! Here's the link: <https://recyclemap.ru/spb>. Maybe you could start recycling at your school?

2. Eat ecologically

Another easy way to reduce your ecological footprint is to make your eating habits environmentally-friendly. This would mean for example, eating locally produced food and eating less meat and dairy products. And of course producing less food waste!

3. Save energy

Producing energy from non-renewable energy sources creates a lot of carbon dioxide. Lowering the temperature at your apartment, turning off lights when you don't actually need them, using energy saving lamps or led lamps and taking quick showers are good ways to reduce your energy consumption. And even though, using renewable energy sources, such as solar power or wind power would be the best option, just reducing your energy consumption is the second best thing.

Now I challenge you and your whole school to make some ecological changes! How could you reduce your school's ecological footprint and move the overshoot day? Could you for example start recycling? Or could you switch plastic cups to reusable ones? Be creative and share your ideas with the hashtag #Экодолгбеллона.

Let's #movethedate together!