



CARBON FOOTPRINT INVENTORY: NWU'S BENCHMARK FOR FUTURE ALTERNATIVES

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Climate change is already a reality. It affects the present and even the future generations. It is caused primarily by the production and introduction of carbon dioxide into the earth's atmosphere. Therefore, a logical step towards addressing the problem is to minimize carbon dioxide emissions.

Footprints offer clues about where one came from and where they are headed. The impressions tell something about the animals that leave them. But while actual footprints offer details on size, weight and speed, carbon footprints measure how much carbon dioxide (CO₂) is produced just by going about daily lives.

The study aims to calculate the carbon footprint of Northwestern University that would serve as a benchmark in planning for future alternatives for a sustainable eco-friendly school. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions: 1) How many units of CO₂ does NWU generate from vehicles, transportation, energy, and waste?; 2) What is the estimated annual carbon dioxide gas emissions (also known as carbon footprint) of NWU?; 3) Based from the estimated annual carbon footprint of NWU, what is the level of carbon footprint, in metric tons, per person?; 4) What alternatives can be done by NWU to reduce its annual carbon emissions?

This is basically a descriptive design where data would be taken from the documents from concerned offices and employees of Northwestern University. The study included the common sources of CO₂ emission identified in the problem such as the vehicles, transportation, annual energy consumption, and waste generated by the university for the AY 2012-2013. The data on transportation were gathered from the employees and students using a questionnaire patterned after the WWF Philippines Footprint Calculator (www.wwf.org.ph/wwf3/climate/footprint). Items were revised to suit the setting of the study.

Based from the computations, the carbon footprint of NWU for school year 2012 to 2013 is 4.03 metric tons per person with a verbal description of high in a scale of 4 from 0 (Low) to 12.41+ (very high)].

Actions to reduce the CO₂ emission has to be done as contribution of NWU in mitigating climate change.

