

# Reducing our Carbon Footprint...

## 1. We often hear about ways to “reduce our carbon footprints”.

## 2. What does this mean?

Reducing your carbon footprint means that you reduce the amount of carbon dioxide that is emitted due to your daily activities such as driving your car, buying products that are shipped from overseas, etc.

## 3. Why would we want to do this?

Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas. Greenhouse gases play an important role in helping the earth trap and retain heat for life as we know it, however, an increase in the amount of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere could lead to overall warming of our climate. Reducing our carbon footprints will reduce the amount of carbon dioxide that is emitted into the atmosphere as a result of our activities.

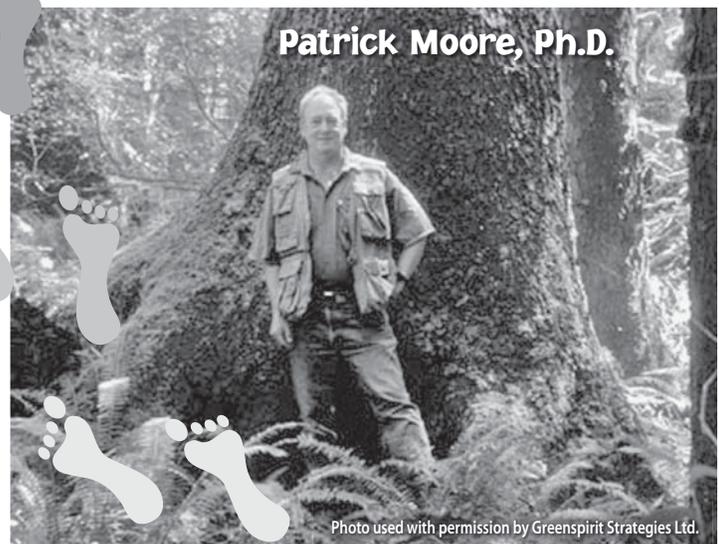
## 4. How can we reduce our carbon footprints?

Have your class calculate their carbon footprints using this website: [http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind\\_calculator.html](http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator.html)  
Discuss class results. What activities seem to heavily impact the carbon footprints?  
Instruct students to work with a partner to come up with a list of ways to reduce their carbon footprints.

- Plant trees to help store more carbon.
- Use wood products that store carbon from sustainably managed forests.

- Using public transportation, riding a bike or walking when possible rather than driving a car.
- Manage forests to grow healthy trees because healthy trees store more carbon.
- Recycling materials that can be recycled.
- Manage forests to prevent large forest fires that release a lot of carbon into the atmosphere.
- Use renewable energy sources and support development of new renewable energy sources such as biomass energy.
- Decrease use of fossil fuels which release high levels of carbon into the atmosphere.
- Reduce the amount of trash that the family produces.
- Conserving electricity and heating fuels.
  - Use energy-efficient appliances and turn them off when not in use.
  - Use energy-efficient bulbs.
  - Set house temperatures lower in the winter and higher in the summer.
- Use renewable resources which generally release less carbon than nonrenewable resources.

Now show students the graphic: **Forestry Never Looked So Cool** to explore how forests can play a very important role in reducing our carbon footprints. Read the excerpt by Patrick Moore, Ph.D. as a class to help understand the graphic and to facilitate discussion on forestry’s role in mitigating climate change.



Patrick Moore, Ph.D.

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