

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINTING

Contact

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The Council has agreed to participate in an exciting scheme to assess the Ecological Footprint of two sub-regions in Wales (Gwynedd and Cardiff). A number of partners are involved in the scheme, namely the Assembly Government, World Wildlife Fund, Welsh Development Agency, Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency, Bangor and Cardiff Universities and Gwynedd and Cardiff Councils.

A footprint measures the area of land needed by each citizen in terms of their annual consumption (i.e., products, resources) and production (i.e., waste, gas emissions, pollution). The footprint is calculated in global hectares of 'earth portions'.

The first stage in the process will be to gather the data needed to measure the County's footprint, which will probably take around a year and a half to collect and interpret. Once this work has been completed, the Council will have basic information about how the environment in Gwynedd is affected by the way in which we work and live.

It is envisaged that the Council will utilise this information in various ways, for example: to assess long-term trends; policy guidance and development; environmental performance assessment; to evaluate the success of similar strategies; to model scenarios and for the purposes of education and raising awareness.

Footprint projects are likely to form part of the Assembly's commitment to meet its statutory obligations on sustainable development. By participating in this pilot study, we hope that Gwynedd (together with Cardiff) Council will be at the cutting edge of developments in Wales.