

Media Kit



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Carbon 101

How is carbon impacting our climate?

Climate change is one of the most important issues facing the planet. Carbon emissions that are released into the atmosphere from the combustion of fossil fuels are the primary cause for concern about climate change because fossil fuels enable most modern farming, forestry, cement use, industry, and transportation.

Carbon-the numbers

- In Canada, carbon emissions grew 26.2% from 1990 to 2005
- A return flight from Vancouver to Toronto emits 1.4 tonnes of carbon: per person
- A return flight from Vancouver to London, England emits 3.5 tonnes of carbon: per person
- A family of 4 travelling from Chicago to Vancouver for the 2010 Winter Games, going to three events, and staying five nights in a hotel produces 4.75 tonnes of carbon emissions
- Driving 20,000 km in small passenger vehicle emits 3.2 tonnes of carbon
- Including the food we eat, the average Canadian produces 18 tonnes of carbon a year
- The average emissions of a spectator to the 2010 Winter Games is 0.3 tonnes
- Just standing still produces 350 kg of carbon a year
- Carbon produces 44% of the radiative forcing that causes global warming.
- 85% of carbon comes from the burning of fossil fuels

Carbon Offsets are Part of the Solution

When you engage in an activity that emits greenhouse gases, you can balance out that emission by purchasing a carbon offset – an emission reduction credit – that directly supports a project or activity that results in a given amount of greenhouse gas being avoided or reduced.

Emission reductions that are real, additional (they wouldn't have happened without the purchase of offsets), measurable, permanent and verified can generate offset credits.



Carbon offsets are not the solution to climate change but, used properly, they are a tool for advancing the transition to more sustainable energy. Offsets do two important things:

- 1) support the overall reduction of carbon emissions into the atmosphere, and
- 2) invest directly into clean technologies of the future.

While your emissions, from flying or driving for example, have still occurred, the offset credit you purchased has enabled a reduction of greenhouse gases elsewhere.

Offsetting is not a permit to pollute. Every individual and organization has a responsibility to lower their emissions whenever possible: walking or cycling instead of driving; teleconferencing instead of flying; etc. But there are still many activities for which we do not yet have low emissions alternatives. Offsetting is just one way individuals and companies can actively contribute to climate change mitigation, in addition to the reductions they can make in their own activities.

Top tips for lowering your emissions

Save your money

Cut back on your consumption by buying retro clothes or slightly used furniture- you'll save money and prevent the creation of more stuff.

Give more "thoughtful" gifts

Buying presents, wrapping them and shipping them - produces lots of emissions. Giving gifts like a gift certificate for a massage can greatly lower the emissions of your gift.

Drive less, and drive smarter if you do drive

Before you go: Make sure your tires are inflated, change your oil regularly, and keep your car tuned up. While driving: Be gentler on acceleration and braking and stick to the speed limit to save fuel.

Eat Less Meat

You don't have to go vegan, but try cutting back on meat one day per week. Researchers at the University of Chicago calculated that if Americans were to reduce meat consumption by just 20 percent it would be as if everyone switched from a standard sedan to an ultra-efficient hybrid vehicle.



Make simple, smart office decisions

Try installing motion sensitive lights in bathrooms or copy rooms, switching your default to double-sided, black and white printing, using recycled paper and programming computers and monitors to 'sleep' or shut off when not in-use.

Understand your footprint, make reductions, offset

It's easy to go online to understand and measure your footprint and find options for reducing your impact on global warming. If you then choose to offset all or part of your lifestyle, there are lots of things to consider when choosing an offset provider. Some things you might want to think about are:

- Are you enabling local or international projects?
- Are the offsets certified, and to what standard?
- What type of project is it? You may want to pick a project that has special meaning to you.
- Are the offsets real, additional (they wouldn't have happened without the purchase of your offsets), measurable, and permanent?

When you add up all the little and the not so little things that you can do to reduce carbon emissions it equals a significant impact. Together we can take action on climate change.