

Earth's Ecological Debt

What Is Earth's Ecological Debt?

Earth's ecological debt is equal to total biocapacity minus ecological footprint. When biocapacity is larger than the ecological footprint of an area, then an area is truly sustainable - living within the means of the environment. However, when the ecological footprint is larger than the total biocapacity then a given area is consuming more than they are producing.

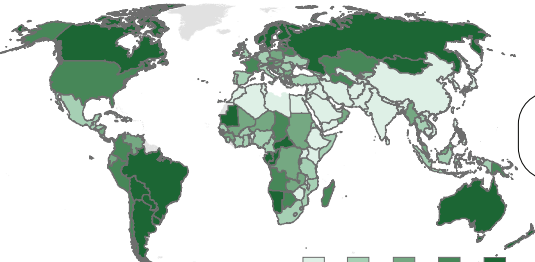
Where is the World's Wealth?

High Income Countries
- Where Per capita income is 12,196\$ or more per year

How many Earths are needed to bring high income countries out of ecological debt?



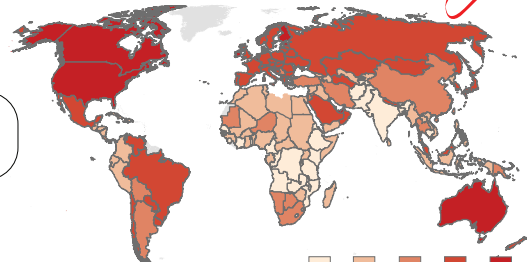
Biocapacity



Biocapacity is the ability for an ecosystem to produce and absorb biological materials used by humans - measured in hectares per person

0-1 1-2 2-3 3-6 6-12
Hectares / Person

Footprint



Footprint is a measure of the amount of land and water area required by a human population to produce their resources and absorb their wastes

0-1 1-2 2-3 3-6 6-12
Hectares / Person

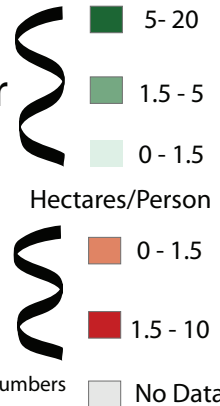
Ecological Debt



Biocapacity is larger



Footprint is larger



Source: UBC Geography, Global Footprint Network 2007
Projection: Robinson
Classification: Standard deviation - manually adjusted for even numbers
Jason Ammerlaan - April 2011