Ecological footprint

Literature, Russian Literature

Having participated in the footprint quiz, I can define ecological footprint as the collective measure of human demand on the ecosystem, that is, the interdependence of both the living (animals, plants and microbes) and the nonliving component consisting of natural resources like air, water and the earth’s crust. Ecological footprint seeks to critically evaluate how the interactions of these living things impact on the nonliving component; for instance, how the energy that flows throughout the ecosystem is primarily derived from the sun, directed to the plants through photosynthesis, how the plants provide the oxygen and carbon component, how the plants feeds the humans and how the resulting effects of humans depending on the interactions try to mitigate pollution and over exploration and sustain effective ecological interactions (Bueren 6). After using the metric measurement system with a household of four, a household income of $30000-$59000, the resulting were that with kind of lifestyle I would demand 66. 97 metric units and 4. 59 units for the country. Living in the United States, much travelling in train and personal car, dependent on electricity and natural gas of which less than 10% are generated from renewable sources and living in a home of 70 square meters, my demand is 19. 13 global hectares while the country demands 37. 02 metric units of global hectares. In my carbon footprint, I would need 0. 66 global hectares and demanding 1. 10 global hectares from my country. With my omnivore dietary habits consisting of two large meals and three light meal snacks with outsourcing from supermarkets, as a household, we would demand 2. 69 global hectares and 2. 69 on the country’s average demand. On the housing footprint of the housing of four units with construction not dependent on the

green recycled materials, a few recycled furnishing materials and applying the efficient water saving methods, I would require 1. 01 of global hectares and demand of 1. 09 on the country’s global hectares. On the goods and services footprint, when generally spending within my limits, an average use of products before replacement and a fair recycling of products and purchase of recycled products, the footprint showed a 1. 87 demand of global hectares and a country demand of 2. 31 metric units of global hectares. From the results of the quiz, it is surprising how a single homestead lifestyle, not accommodating the demand of other living things like plants and microbes, would demand 4. 59 earths to survive. From the quiz and results, recycling of renewable energy resources, dependence on non-processed foods, efficient water saving methods reduction of meals in terms of size and sources would help reduce the overwhelming demand. Also reducing the travels in a year to 5km by air, 20 km by road while driving a low fuel consuming car and reduce train travels to 50 km per year, would help reduce the demand on the ecosystem. Considering the earth’s population of “ billions”, and assume there are five million homesteads matching with my lifestyle, it would translate to 18250000 earths which is impractical. This figure is not only unimaginable but impractical considering that we only have a single earth, and that being the interaction of humans only, if we incorporate the interactions of other living things with the nonliving component then the resulting demand is unimaginable. From the evaluation, which considered a homestead of four, the results have showed much more is needed to save the ecosystem. For instance, if others in the ecosystem embark on recycling of renewable energy and customize the use of recycled inputs in

construction, it would reduce the demand to a tune of 10 metric units on average demand per household. For instance, buying recycled clothes, plastics, electronics, glass and paper, maximizing on saving rather than spending and taming their eating frequencies and volumes would help mitigate the problem (Mitch 12). Changes in consumption levels are directly proportional to the footprint size. For instance, an increase in number of meals from two large meals in a day and three light meals or medium sized snacks to three large meals and several hefty snacks pushes the footprint size from 5. 95 to 10. 47 units. Also the change in the source of the consumed meals and whether some are outsourced from the supermarkets or farms, and choice of organically proved or sustainably produced foods, directly pushes the figures up. Two most significant categories of my ecological footprint are the carbon and the food footprints. Their overall size in relation to demand on the ecosystem and share by BIOME on marine fisheries, pastureland, crop land and forestland are high and considering that consumption is more of a daily activity much significant change to reduce the figures need to be done to save the ecosystem. On the carbon footprint, which depicts a much higher figures of demand, it would mean that if the demand is not met, the overexploitation would lead to pollution which would not only endanger the lives of humans but also other living things in the long run which would mean ecosystem degradation and the end of life (Doyle and Atkins 21). Conclusion From the analysis, it is curious how much a single household can demand from the ecosystem. Footprint as a measure of our demand on the ecosystem is more systematic and structured to factor different perspectives of individuals in the ecosystem which even from the

metric and/or U. S measure, the figures are still high, thus, the need to cut our consumption and practice sustainable methods. The structuring enables one to ascertain his personal and household demands, and with diversified parameters within the consumption model, analysis is cheaper and straightforward. Works Cited Bueren, Ellen. Sustainable Urban Environments: An Ecosystem Approach. Dordrecht: Springer, 2012. Internet resource. Doyle, Mary and Cynthia Atkins. Large-scale Ecosystem Restoration: Five Case Studies from the United States. Washington: Island Press, 2008. Internet resource. Mitch, William. Ecological Engineering and Ecosystem Restoration. Hoboken, N. J: Wiley, 2004. Print.