**What is the Ecological Footprint?**

**What is a footprint?**

The **Ecological Footprint** is a resource accounting tool.

* It measures how much biologically productive land and sea is used by a given population or activity
* and it compares this to how much land and sea is available
* productive land and sea areas support human demands for food, fiber, timber, energy, and space for infrastructure
* these areas also absorb the waste products from the human economy

**What does the Ecological Footprint measure?**

* The Ecological Footprint answers a specific research question: how much of the biological capacity of the planet is demanded by a given human activity or population?
* To answer this question, the Ecological Footprint measures the amount of biologically productive land and water area an individual, a city, a country, a region, or all of humanity uses to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb the waste it generates with today’s technology and resource management practices.

**What can Ecological Footprint Analysis tell us about the future of the planet? Are we all doomed?**

* The Ecological Footprint highlights the reality of ecological scarcity, which can be disconcerting and frightening information.