

How do you calculate a carbon footprint?

A carbon footprint represents the volume of greenhouse gas emitted by...

a country, an industry, a business, a means of transportation, a product or a person.

The main greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide (CO₂).

This carbon footprint can be expressed in different ways depending on what it measures.

Example: in tons, kilos and grams of CO₂ emitted when manufacturing a product...

...but also, in grams of CO₂/km when referring to a vehicle's energy consumption.

But how do you calculate it for a product, for example?

There are different rules and methods.

What do they have in common?

Many take into account the overall life cycle of a product for a more realistic and accurate calculation.

Example: For a car, the calculation is made by taking into account the extraction of raw materials and the energy needed to manufacture its components, its assembly, shipping, the production of fuel to run the car, and its use before being recycled.

Calculating the carbon footprint allows you to compare different lifestyles or different countries, for example, according to their ecological impact.

In doing so, it allows eco-conscious people to limit the environmental impact of their activities or their consumption.

Summary:

- A carbon footprint represents **the volume of greenhouse gas emitted**.
- For a product, it is most often calculated by taking into account all stages of the product's life cycle.
- For a car: extraction of raw materials, energy for manufacturing, shipping, use and recycling.