

Carbon Budget Monopoly: Instructions for Volunteers

Overview

You will give the guest a set amount of money (carbon emission budget) based on different outputs (tons carbon dioxide/year) for the average American, or you can challenge them to play based on the global average.

Can You Afford Your Carbon Footprint?



American average

The annual carbon emissions of the average American is ~ 20 tons CO₂/year, with a lifetime amount (carbon legacy) of 1,644 tons CO₂ released. Having one child adds 9,441 ton CO₂ to the parent's carbon legacy. The average life expectancy in the United States is 80 years, so dividing 9,441 tons CO₂/lifetime by 80 years gives us the annual impact of having a child (118 tons CO₂/year). For ease of translating these amounts into money the budget will be tons CO₂/year multiplied by 10. Amounts will be rounded accordingly to work with lowest currency denominations we have (\$5).

(~20 tons CO₂/year) (1,644 tons CO₂/lifetime) (Child adds 9,441 tons CO₂/lifetime)
9,441 tons CO₂/lifetime / 80 years (life expectancy) = 118 tons CO₂/year
(~20 tons CO₂/year = \$200/year)
Each person gets 4x \$5, 3x \$10, 5x \$20, 1x \$50 = \$200

Paris Agreement goals

In 2016 the United States ratified the Paris Agreement, which aims to keep global temperature increases "well below" 2 degrees Celsius. Under the agreement the Obama administration pledged to reduce U.S. emissions by 26 percent to 28 percent of 2005 levels by 2025.

20 tons CO₂/year x 0.26=5.2 20-5.2= 14.8 tons CO₂/year
20 tons CO₂/year x 0.28=5.6 20-5.6= 14.4 tons CO₂/year = \$145/year
Each person gets 3x \$5, 3x \$10, 5x \$20, = \$145

Global average

(~4 tons CO₂/year = \$40/year)
Each person gets 2x \$5, 1x \$10, 1x \$20 = \$40



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Instructions

- You will go through the chart and have the guest select which option in each category applies to them.
- For each category have them pay you the amount for the option.
 - * Note: This should be fun and conversational, so if people have things that fall outside the chart, improvise to make them feel that it really applies to their lives.
 - * For example, if someone says they only eat local meat, then charge them \$20 with the explanation that more greenhouse gases are saved by eating less meat than are saved through eating local. If someone says they telecommute for work and use their car for errands, then charge \$10-30 depending on how often they run errands.
- Most likely the guest will run out of money or get very close to it and realize their choices are not sustainable.
- Suggest that they try out changes in their budget and see if they can commit to those changes when they get closer to a balanced budget. You can also challenge them to play based on the global average budget to see how much harder it is.

Cost Breakdown

Diet	Meat lover = \$35	Average = \$30	No beef = \$20	Vegetarian = \$15	Vegan = \$10
Commute	Heavy commute = \$40	Light commute = \$30	Heavy public transit = \$30	Light public transit = \$20	Walk or bike = \$0
Waste	Trash = \$40	Recycle at home = \$30	Compost, recycle, conscious about waste = \$20		
Energy	Grid = \$55	Renewable energy = \$30			
Flying	More than 2 flights/year = \$55	Up to 2 flights/year = \$40	Zero flights = \$0		
Kids	More than 1 = additional \$120 per kid	1 kid = \$120	0 = \$0		



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Key Questions/Talking Points

- Different choices are responsible for different impacts on your carbon footprint. Which were your most expensive? Are there ways you can lower your costs in those areas? Did those costs surprise you?
- Did you have money left over? Remember, this list is not 100 percent comprehensive; there are many other actions that contribute to your CO₂ output. For example: type of car, energy-efficient appliances, etc. What kinds of actions do you think are important that were not included on this list?
- What can you do to balance your carbon budget? Reducing the amount of meat you eat by even one-third will help reduce our country's dependence on meat and dairy production. Rather than swearing off using your car, you can commit to carpooling or walking/riding your bike to work once a week, taking public transportation when possible, and looking into more fuel-efficient transportation. And practice safe sex. With nearly half of all pregnancies in the United States unintended, simply finding the right contraception for you is a great way to green up your lifestyle. Starting or expanding your family should be a decision you and your partner make if, and when, you're ready.
- How much does family size affect your other lifestyle decisions? What if you were also responsible for your child's choices? In effect, you are — your family is part of your carbon legacy. In order to reduce our climate impact and maintain a livable planet, we need to consider how many people — especially Americans — are out there spending their carbon budgets in the atmosphere.



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