Work out your personal greenhouse gas budget !

It's easy. Just fill in the amounts (in $, kg, km, etc) you consumed during the last twelve months (in the second column), multiply them with the "greenhouse price" (in the first column) and enter the result in the third column. At the end, add up all emissions, fill in the total and compare yourself to the average Australian (see fourth column). You can find some interesting information on climate change on the back side of this sheet.

Item	"Greenhouse Price"	× amount consumed (in $, kg, kWh, MJ, km, etc)	= Personal emissions (in kg of greenhouse gases)	Average Australian (in kg of greenhouse gases)
Food				
Beef products	8.9 per $	_____ $	_____	1450 kg
Dairy and other meat products	2.6 per $	_____ $	_____	800 kg
Fruit and vegetables	1.4 per $	_____ $	_____	230 kg
Bread, flour and cereals	1.5 per $	_____ $	_____	340 kg
Margarine, oils and fats	2.0 per $	_____ $	_____	55 kg
Sugar, confectionary and all other	1.8 per $	_____ $	_____	800 kg
Beverages	0.8 per $	_____ $	_____	230 kg
Meals out	1.4 per $	_____ $	_____	1000 kg
Organic waste to landfill	1.6 per kg	_____ kg	_____	54 kg
Household Electricity and Fuels				
Electricity (conventional)	1.2 per kWh	_____ kWh	_____	3100 kg
Electricity (renewable energy)	0.1 per kWh	_____ kWh	_____	
Natural gas	0.1 per MJ	_____ MJ	_____	460 kg
Transport (other than business)				
Bicycle	0.1 per km	_____ km	_____	5 kg
Bus and coach	0.2 per pass-km	_____ pass-km	_____	250 kg
Train	0.2 per pass-km	_____ pass-km	_____	150 kg
International Air	0.3 per pass-km	_____ pass-km	_____	200 kg
Domestic Air	0.8 per pass-km	_____ pass-km	_____	250 kg
Car (divide by no. of pass. to get your share)	0.48 per veh-km	_____ veh-km	_____	2700 kg
Goods and Services (other than second-hand)				
Goods excl. food (clothing, footwear, TV, books, paper, magazines, HiFi, video, household chemicals, cars, furnishing, appliances, recreational goods, construction materials, etc.)	1.5 per $	_____ $	_____	3300 kg
Services excl. transport (mortgage, rent, council rates, phone, mail, insurance, personal services, banking, accommodation, movies, concerts, sporting events, etc.)	0.7 per $	_____ $	_____	7400 kg
Growing trees you planted	-15.0 per tree	_____ trees	_____	
Government Administration and Defence			6100 kg	6100 kg
Net uptake by our common forests and soils			-4300 kg	-4300 kg
Total			_____	24600 kg

Compare yourself with :

Average Australian	24600 kg
Average world citizen	7000 kg
Average person in India	1000 kg
Environmentally sustainable level	3500 kg

Please note that the estimates given in the table are averages over many different products and producers and thus only indicative for the type of consumption. Nevertheless, the overall total will in general be quite accurate. Abbrev.: pass-km=passenger-kilometer; veh-km=vehicle-kilometer.

What has climate change got to do with me?

Both scientists and politicians now admit that humans are slowly changing the earth's climate. This happens because of the emission of greenhouse gases (mainly carbon dioxide and methane) into the atmosphere, which causes global warming (about 3°C over the next 100 years) and a worldwide rise in the sea level (about ½ m). Climate change means that millions of people living on low-lying islands and in coastal regions will be displaced, water and food supply will deteriorate, floods and droughts will be more frequent and extreme, and some infectuous diseases such as malaria and yellow fever will spread.

In order to keep climate change at bay, emissions have to be reduced. Scientists say that annual emissions of 3500 kg per person worldwide is a level which stabilises the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. About three quarters of the world's population emit less than 3500 kg per year. These are people living in developing countries like India. The average Australian emits about 25000 kg per year. This is too much, and moreover, it is not fair. We have to reduce our emissions for the sake of reducing the threat of climate change, whilst being fair to people in developing countries.

The personal greenhouse gas budget on the other side of this sheet can help you to find the areas where you can start reducing your greenhouse gas emissions most effectively. Here are some ideas that can make a difference:

- share, fix, borrow and swap, rather than buying things
- buy second hand, rather than buying new
- reuse and recycle, rather than throwing out
- consume services, rather than consuming goods
- buy locally grown, organic food, rather than buying conventionally grown or imported food
- eat fruit, vegetables, bread and cereal foods, rather than meat products
- join a renewable electricity scheme
- install a solar hot water system, rather than using an electric system
- use public transport, rather than using your car
- use trains and coaches, rather than flying
- plant trees
- spend creative time, rather than spending money
- increase quality of life, rather than standard of living