

Dear friends,

2008 was disconcerting for climate watchers. Evidence continued to mount that climate change is occurring even faster than predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007 report. Scientists now say we must cut global per capita carbon emissions to 2.2 tons/year to control climate change effectively.

Currently, the per capita “carbon footprint” for persons in the United States is 22 tons/year. In other industrialized nations, the average annual footprint is about 12 tons. The per capita footprint worldwide is around 4.4 tons annually. It seems that wherever we are, we probably have some work to do to reach the 2.2 ton target. Here are a few simple things to try.

- Eat one less pound of beef per week and save 546 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> annually; reduce your meat consumption by half and save 1600 lbs per year. Eliminate meat and meat products entirely from your diet and save about 4,000 lbs annually.
- Reduce driving, carpool, and use other driving efficiencies (like staying within the speed limit) and save up to 10,000 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> yearly.
- Unplug electronics when not in use and save up to 600 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub>. Replace your desktop computer with an energy-efficient laptop and save an additional 495 lbs.
- Cut your shower time 3 minutes to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> up to 715 lbs each year.
- Eat only locally/regionally-produced food to save 5,000 lbs of CO<sub>2</sub> annually.

For more dramatic cuts in your carbon footprint, try travelling less.

- Eliminate a round trip from Montreal to Edmonton and save about 1.5 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- Cancel a round trip flight from Dhaka to Chicago to save 6.3 tons.
- Eliminate a round trip flight from New Orleans to Paris and save 3.8 tons.

As one of your 2009 resolutions, do your part in cutting emissions. Calculate your current footprint; then commit to reducing it at least 2 percent every year. Visit [www.carbonfootprint.com](http://www.carbonfootprint.com) for a user-friendly, reliable calculator (be sure to include “radiative forcing” for the most accurate flight calculations) and get started today! And please let us know about *your* “carbon diet” at [dtaylor@cscsisters.org](mailto:dtaylor@cscsisters.org).

Thanks for all you are doing to restore Earth our home,  
Mary