

myclimate

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Introduction

Everything started in school where I had to choose a topic for my environment-project. I got interested in environmental changes and the CO₂-footprint. This is the reason why I chose to portray the company „myclimate“. With the survey I wanted to find out what people know about the topics "environment" and "CO₂-footprint". I performed an interview and on-site-research which helped me analyse the company in detail.

General Information

myclimate emerged in 2002 from a project by students and professors at the ETH Zurich. The organisation quickly grew into a professional and global climate protection foundation. The management is based in Zurich with a team of more than 50 staff members.

The mission of myclimate is the following: *"We want to shape the future of our world with you through consulting, education and climate protection projects."* Primary goal is to develop a low carbon society, and to help companies, institutions and private persons on their way to a maximum 1 - 2 ton CO₂ annual footprint.

Explanation of the CO₂-footprint

A carbon footprint or CO₂-footprint is defined as the total emissions caused by an individual, organisation, event or product, expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent over a certain period of time.

In other words it is the total of greenhouse gases directly or indirectly produced by human activities, usually expressed in tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per year.

My CO₂-footprint

To answer my main project-question, "How big is my carbon footprint?", I calculated it online with the help of myclimate.



The emission is separated



Footprint:	
Mobility	6.9 t
Food	3.1 t
Household	1.7 t

If I imagine that the average in Switzerland is around 5 tons of CO₂-emissions per year, my result of 11.7 tons surprised me very much. Upon closer analysis, I realize that my hobby mainly leads to this result. The weekly car trips to Kloten or to various ice hockey-games throughout Switzerland add up quickly.

In order to achieve the vision of myclimate (1-2 tons per year and person) I would have to totally change my lifestyle: only use public transports and no more flights, no meat and less energy consumption in the house. The individual needs of our society almost make it impossible to achieve the ideal CO₂-footprint.

Short analysis of my ecological footprint

First a short video to explain the ecological footprint: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fACkb2u1ULY>

The ecological footprint almost the same as the CO₂-footprint, but it adds additional environmental impact factors:

- Raw materials and production of clothes and food
- Usage of all energies
- Removal of waste

As well as my CO₂-footprint, my ecological one is higher than the Swiss average:

- Mine (16.55 tons CO₂-emissions)
- Swiss average (13.51 tons CO₂-emissions)
- Worldwide (7.41 tons CO₂-emissions)

myclimate

Customers

myclimate has different kinds of clients like companies and private persons. Although the company offers services in different kinds of areas, its main focus lies on the food, agricultural, printing, construction, textiles, travel, event and energy sectors. As myclimate was originally (2002) established to compensate flight emissions in high-quality gold-standard projects, the company also counts on numerous private customers who support one of the close to 100 climate protection initiatives in South-America, Africa, Asia or in Switzerland.

The following chart shows a selection of myclimate customers:



Procedure for judging a company

myclimate first talks to the company to figure out what the company is mostly interested in. Very often, customer companies want to either compensate the CO₂ emissions of their products or their company to sell climate-neutral products. Apparently, customer companies also want a comparison between their product and other similar goods found on the market. Once the company's needs are identified, myclimate makes an offer of their services. The emissions of a company are calculated by a standard tool called "smart3" for Life Cycle Assessment. After generating the results, myclimate implement these into a report, which is normally concluded with a section on how the company could reduce its CO₂-emissions.

Myclimate don't "judge" a company as such, but try to make suggestions on how the company's footprint or environmental performance could be improved. For this matter, myclimate carefully look at what materials a customer company manufactures, what transport means it uses, what energy it buys or produces and what kind of waste streams exist.

On-site-research

During my visit to Zurich I gathered a lot of interesting information. My uncle, Martin Lehmann, who is a co-worker of myclimate, led me through the offices. I noticed that all the workplaces around the stairwell are openly set in blocks of four. In total, around 50 employees work on one floor. The high noise level caused by telephone calls as well as internal discussions was remarkable.

The five sections myclimate is divided into (Climate Education, Consulting and Solutions, Climate Protection Projects, Sales and Marketing, Administration) were visually indistinguishable. Martin explained his work area (life cycle assessment) and showed me his main tasks in a short PowerPoint-presentation. In addition, I was allowed to work with various tools and softwares, which was very demanding (technical terms and procedures).

On site I asked the following questions:

- *How can you achieve your company aims?*

Climate Education: Through our educational programmes, we encourage everyone to make a contribution towards our future.

Consulting and Solutions: analysis, IT solutions, labels and resource management (CO₂-footprint, energy- and resource efficiency, industry solutions)

Climate Protection Projects: With our projects of the highest quality, we promote climate protection and development worldwide.

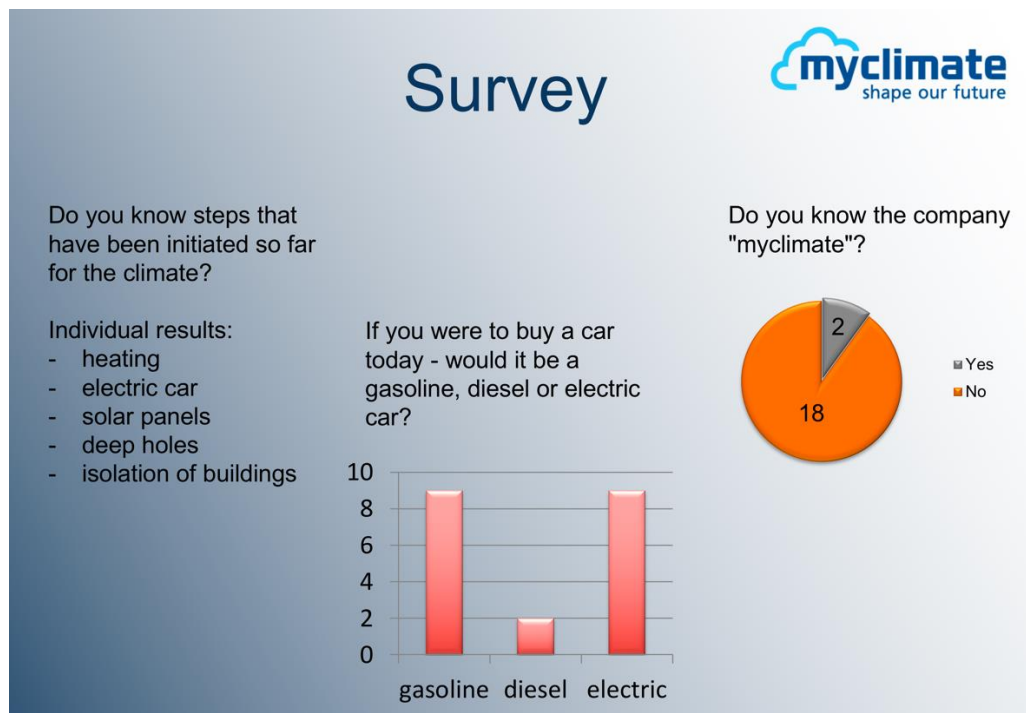
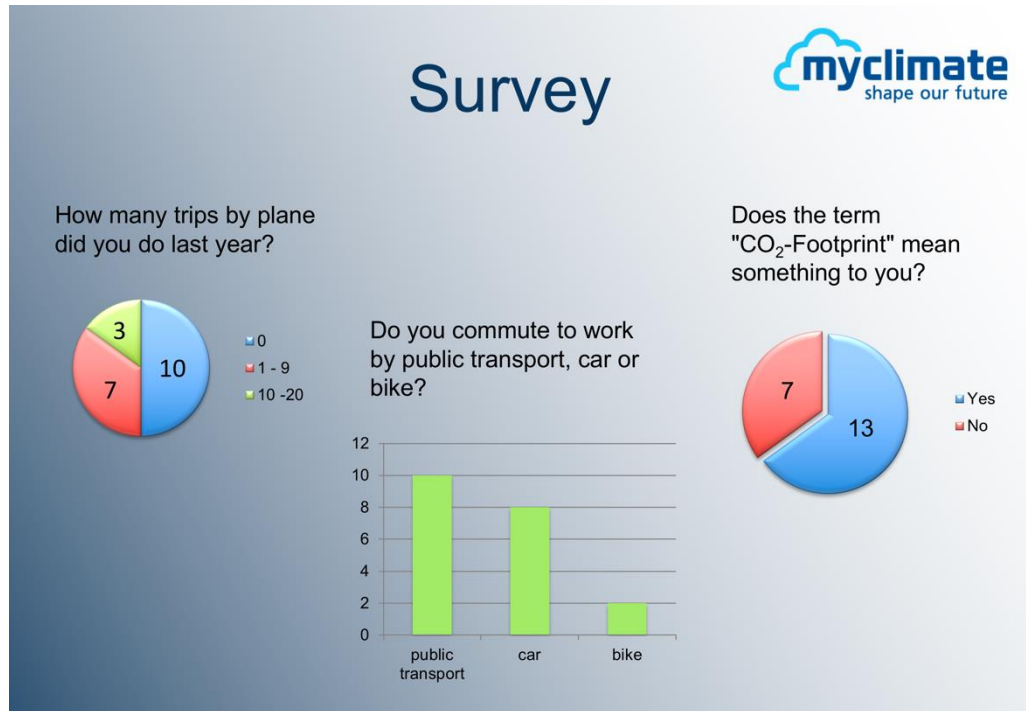
- *Do you see progress in your work?*

Yes, we see a lot of progress in terms of climate protection, but the short-term thinking mentality in companies is often the cause of a slow progress.

In general, I'm pleased with my visit, because I think that the company makes an important contribution to the environment. However, I wouldn't want to want to work in a big room because it's too loud.

Results of my survey

1. How many trips by plane did you do last year?
2. Do you commute to work by public transport, car or bike?
3. Does the term "CO₂-Footprint" mean something to you?
4. Do you know steps that have been initiated so far for the climate?
5. If you were to buy a car today - would it be a gasoline, diesel or electric car?
6. Do you know the company "myclimate"?



Interview

I did the interview with my uncle, Martin Lehmann.



1. Tell me something about you.

Martin Lehmann, 49 years old, family (wife, 2 daughters), lives in Bertschikon, works for myclimate, singing and sport

2. Which professional way did you choose and why?

high-school, University of Zurich (geography & geology), Finland Futures Research Center, Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology, myclimate

3. Can you describe the aims of "myclimate"?

"We want to shape the future of our world with you through consulting, education and climate protection projects." (myclimate)

4. Who are your customers?

companies & private persons (e.g. Migros, Coop, Swiss, UBS ...)

5. What is the procedure for judging a company?

talk first, then compensate & calculate CO₂ emissions, also compare with products on the market, at least make suggestions as to what could be improved

6. If the results are available - is the company obliged to convert your recommendations?

companies aren't obliged ... maybe soon there will be a law (prediction of Martin)

7. What does a typical daily routine look like?

team coordination, sales request, project work, project meetings, team meetings, e-mail traffic, company visits

8. What is a "CO₂-Footprint"?

total emissions caused by an individual, organization, product, expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent

9. How do you rate your "CO₂-Footprint"?

a bit lower than the Swiss average ... but not proud at all

10. What do you do personally for environmental protection?

collection of plastics to be recycled, separate aluminum, glass and newspaper, switch off all the lights to save electricity, small car with low fuel consumption, shower at half pressure, own vegetables in the garden

11. If you were to buy a car today - would it be a gasoline, diesel or electric car?

electric car ... they perform 20 - 40% better than diesel or gasoline cars

12. Tell me a special experience from your company.

myclimate agreed with a company to calculate the CO₂-footprint of their food products. During the project the persons of the company changed, but the boss was still somehow involved. After all the calculations the boss freaked because he didn't know about the contract and he isn't going to pay anything. myclimate sent a message back and left it at that.

My planning / Discussion

In general, I think I planned my project quite well. The start was a bit strange, because the output wasn't so clear for me. But with the time and the preparations in Wetzikon, I have received a better overview. From then on I could stick to schedule.

During the lessons in Wetzikon I put together a rough plan for my project. Because of my uncle it didn't take long to search for an interview partner and I could save a lot of time.

I wanted to analyze the possible changes of the environment, but this was very demanding. After my first FaceTime-meeting with Ms. Waiblinger and Mr. A I changed my main question and I focused on my CO₂-footprint.

In the last two weeks, I realized that almost all human activities have a negative impact on the environment. In order to do something good for the environment, things have to be left out and that would change a person's life.

When I look back, it was a good exercise and challenge for our knowledge of the English language, although this project was time consuming.

Sources / Links

<https://www.myclimate.org/>

<https://www.wwf.ch/de/nachhaltig-leben/footprintrechner>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fACkb2u1ULY>

Pictures

