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What's your water footprint?

By Faith Attaguile

Thinking about water footprints the other day, I looked up the term in Wikipedia.

Here's what I found:

“The **water footprint** of an individual, community or business is defined as the total volume of freshwater used to produce the goods and services consumed by the individual or community or produced by the business.”

Here's a more engaging visual look at what this means:

VIDEO: [What's your water footprint?](#)

Oh, that chocolate!

Let's consider a sweet something many of us admit an addiction to. Lovely, luscious, creamy ... chocolate.

Check this out. According to [National Geographic](#), it takes 3,170 gallons of water to make just one pound of chocolate.

Can this be true? Absolutely.

Because it's not just about growing the cacao tree that produces the pods that produce the seeds that eventually become the different forms of chocolate we all know and love.

It's also about growing the sugar cane for the sugar that makes chocolate sweet. And it's about maintaining cows that produce the milk used to give chocolate that velvety milk chocolate texture!

Not to mention a few other things along the way from tree to mouth.

Here's a great little video that tells you the fascinating backstory of chocolate.

VIDEO: [How chocolate is made](#)

Water, water everywhere?

When you begin thinking about water footprints, it's pretty amazing how much we depend upon water in all aspects of our lives.

We've talked a little about chocolate. Let's take a look at the water footprint embedded in other products we use every day:



If you'd like to explore this more, check out National Geographic's "How much H₂O is embedded in everyday life?"... [right here](#)

Change is coming ...

Think about it. Every single product you use every day embodies a certain water footprint. Water used to give that product its final form. Water we don't see but is there all the same.

Remember that only about 1% of all the Earth's water is available for us to drink and use.

Everything we use ... every day ... has a water footprint. When you begin to see water in everything you use – then you'll begin thinking of water in a different way.

We can easily repair leaky faucets (or turn off the water when we brush our teeth), but the change must go deeper than that.

Businesses, farmers, governments must also change the way they think about and use water. We can no longer make decisions based on economic costs alone. We must also consider social and environmental costs.

What changes do you think these groups can make to help conserve – rather than deplete – our precious freshwater resources?

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