

Earth Overshoot Day 2026 Falls on July 30

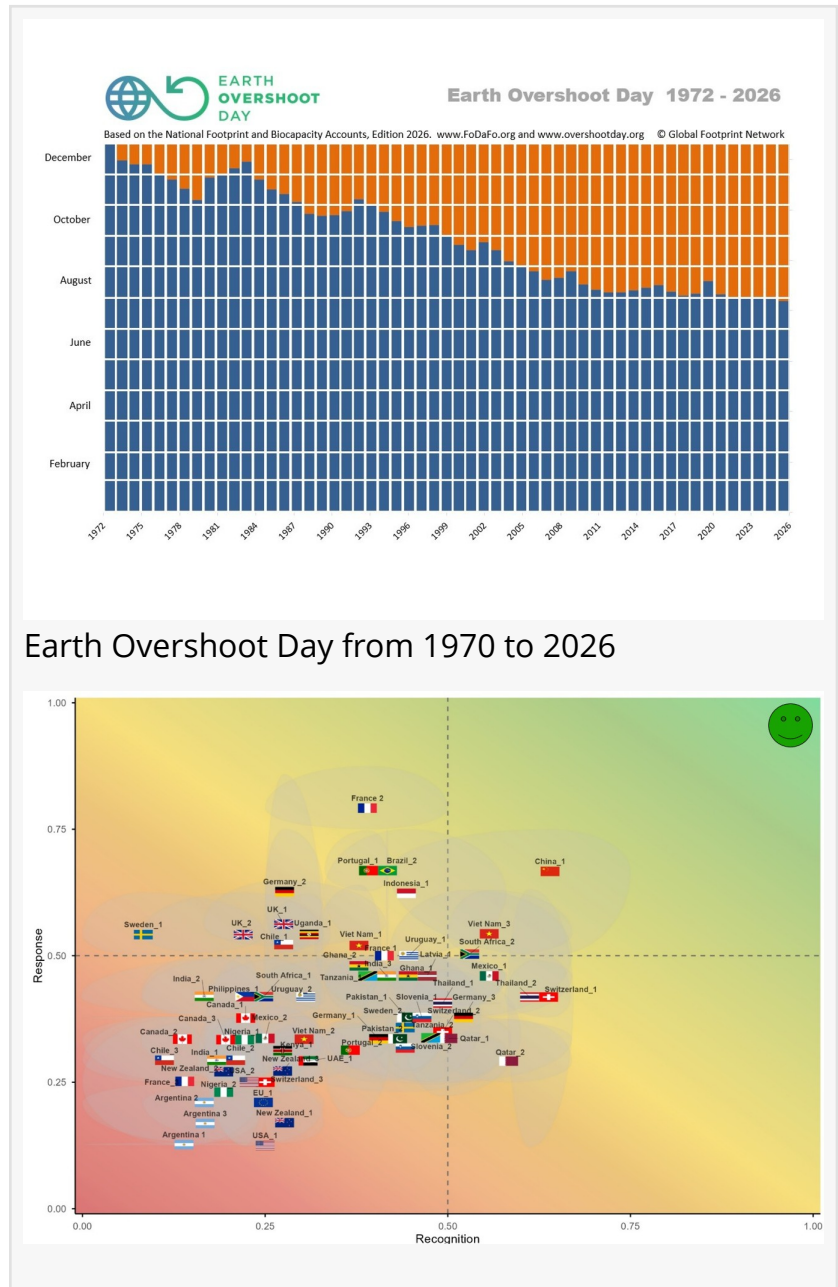
The Largest Overshoot Ever Recorded, Yet Most Countries Remain Unprepared

GENEVA, CALIFORNIA, SWITZERLAND, July 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This year's [Earth Overshoot Day](#) falls on July 30, the date when humanity's demand on nature exceeds what Earth's ecosystems can regenerate in that year, according to [Global Footprint Network](#). Humanity is currently using nature 73% faster than ecosystems can regenerate, the equivalent of living off 1.73 Earths.

This year's later date is the result of revised data rather than any easing of resource use. An upward revision of the ocean's capacity to absorb carbon, along with smaller adjustments, moved the date eight days later. Real growth in overshoot over the past year moved it two days earlier. The net result is six days later than in 2025. On a consistent data set, this year's overshoot is the largest ever recorded.

A variety of factors contribute to overshoot, such as cars, power plants and factories emitting more CO₂ than the biosphere can absorb, more freshwater being consumed than is replenished, more trees being harvested than can regrow, and more fish being caught than stocks can replenish. Overuse depletes natural capital and threatens long-term economic security worldwide.

OVERSHOOT OVER TIME



Although this year's overshoot is the largest ever, the date has remained within a narrow window for over 15 years. The orange section of the graph shows the portion of the year humanity lives by further depleting our planet. Damage from overshoot is cumulative, which means that even as the date holds steady, the pressure on the planet intensifies. Every year's overshoot adds to the already existing ecological debt. (figure credit: Global Footprint Network www.overshootday.org)

THE OVERSHOOT BLIND SPOT OF GOVERNMENTS

Despite this overshoot, hardly any national governments treat resource security as a central part of their economic planning, even as ecological overshoot fuels stagflation, food and energy insecurity, health crises, and conflict, according to the special report "[Prepared for the Predictable?](#) Overshoot and the Failure of Countries to Ready Themselves" which Global Footprint Network and Greenings produced for Earth Overshoot Day.

This analysis applied an evaluation framework across four leading large language models, with outputs verified against published policy documents. With this research, Global Footprint Network and Greenings identified which countries recognize overshoot as an economic threat and how far their policies actually go to prepare for it. They found that most countries treat sustainability as a side issue rather than a structural risk to growth, fiscal stability, and long-term competitiveness, and no country fully connects economic planning to physical resource limits.

KEY FINDINGS

The findings suggest that even when sustainability is acknowledged in public discourse, it is not consistently reflected in the structural decisions that shape national economies.

More specifically:

- None of the national strategies analyzed meaningfully address overshoot risks.
- China's current five-year plan scored highest, though it still falls short of a commensurate response.
- Argentina's national strategy documents ranked lowest across all documents reviewed.
- The European Union scored lower than its sustainability reporting record might suggest, indicating a gap between public commitments and economic planning.

The findings suggest that even when sustainability is acknowledged in public discourse, it is not consistently reflected in the structural decisions that shape national economies.

"Resource security has profound implications for a nation's health, economic resilience and security. What surprised me most is that governments are still largely focused on treating symptoms instead of diagnosing and responding to the underlying condition of ecological overshoot," commented Dr. Kristin Kostka, board member of Greenings.

The report's figure with the country flags included here shows the extent to which countries' strategy documents recognize (x-axis) and respond to (y-axis) overshoot. The green smiley face in

the upper right corner indicates where strategies need to be, according to our rubric, to meaningfully recognize and respond to overshoot. The grey ellipsoid clouds represent the range of scores produced for each analyzed strategy document.

“Overshoot is not a distant environmental concern. It is already producing economic impacts,” says Dr. David Lin, one of the lead authors of the study and Chief Scientist at Global Footprint Network. “Countries that plan for a resource-constrained future will be the ones best positioned to withstand it. Right now, almost none are.”

“Resource security shapes transition pathways. Who’s flying blind, and who’s correcting course?” added Dennis West, founding chair of Greenings.

Since the early 1970s, humanity’s demand has consistently outstripped biocapacity, the planet’s ability to regenerate the resources and critical ecological services that sustain our economies. The report’s authors recommend every country establish a task force or a parliamentary commission to map their resource dependencies, financial exposure, and options for building resilience before the next resource shock hits.

The full report, including detailed country findings and methodology, is available at <https://footprintnetwork.org/prepared-for-the-predictable>

OPPORTUNITIES TO RESPOND TO OVERSHOOT

There are many ways to respond to overshoot. If effective, overshoot will end by design, rather than by disaster. The Power of Possibility highlights 100+ options that are already available and financially advantageous in five key areas: Cities, Energy, Food, Population, and Planet. For example, a 50% reduction in CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel burning would #MoveTheDate by three months. There are also businesses that #MoveTheDate as they expand. Such businesses are best positioned to gain value in a future of climate change and resource constraints. Regions, cities, companies, and countries that have not prepared for this predictable reality face significantly higher risks.

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ABOUT GLOBAL FOOTPRINT NETWORK

Global Footprint Network is an international research organization that develops and applies the concepts of ecological footprint and biocapacity, helping governments, businesses, and individuals meaningfully respond to global resource depletion driven by ecological overshoot. It also coordinates Earth Overshoot Day, marking the date each year when humanity’s demand on nature exceeds what Earth can regenerate. www.footprintnetwork.org

ABOUT THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

The Ecological Footprint is the most comprehensive biological resource accounting metric available. Based on 15,000 data points per country per year, it adds up all of people’s competing

demands for biologically productive areas – food, timber, fibers, carbon sequestration, and accommodation of infrastructure. Currently, the carbon footprint, i.e., the carbon emissions from burning fossil fuel, makes up 60 percent of humanity's Ecological Footprint. The National Footprint and Biocapacity Accounts are now produced by York University in Toronto and governed by FoDaFo.

MEDIA CONTACTS

media@footprintnetwork.org

Download visuals at <https://overshoot.footprintnetwork.org/newsroom/visuals/>

With advance notice, media interviews are possible in English, French, Spanish, and German.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- “Prepared for the Predictable?”, including supplementary data and tools.
<https://footprintnetwork.org/prepared-for-the-predictable/>
- How Earth Overshoot Day 2026 was calculated <https://overshoot.footprintnetwork.org/2026-calculation/>
- How to compare the date of Earth Overshoot Day to previous years
<https://overshoot.footprintnetwork.org/newsroom/past-earth-overshoot-days/>
- Ecological Footprint data for nearly 200 countries and regions
<https://data.footprintnetwork.org>
- Infographics and videos available for social media and traditional media
<https://overshoot.footprintnetwork.org/newsroom/visuals/>
- Solutions to reverse ecological overshoot and bolster biological regeneration
<https://www.overshootday.org/pop>

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