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To the point!

Cross-Asset- and Strategy-Research

The Earth is not enough for humanity

From today on, we live on credit

Yesterday was the so-called "[Earth Overshoot Day](#)" (EOD). This was the date on which, since the beginning of the year, humanity has consumed as many resources as our planet is capable of regenerating in the course of the entire year. From today on, we live on credit.

The earth's population acts as if there were 1.8 planets to fall back on (see figure). Humanity is thus living far beyond its means. Planetary boundaries are binding in the long term. For a while we can finance the overexploitation of the planet. Just as a gambling addict can indulge his vice by gradually pawning all his valuables.

But for how long can this go on? Between 1994 and 2014, the availability of natural resources per capita worldwide decreased by a staggering [40%](#). It certainly hasn't gotten any better since then. For the Germans, by the way, the imbalance is even more dramatic. The German Earth Overshoot Day was on May 3. If the entire population of the earth were to live the German life-style, three planets would be needed! The critical date for the U.S. is even earlier at March 13. Americans need the equivalent of around five planets and with the current administration it is bound to get worse.

Earth Overshoot Day has never been this early

Unfortunately, overconsumption of natural resources has actually increased in recent decades. We were still roughly in equilibrium in the early 1970s. The global EOD was just before Christmas.

Since then, it has been getting worse rather than better. The Earth Overshoot Day in 2025 is the earliest in the history of mankind. The last time Earth Overshoot Day was 'pushed back' was

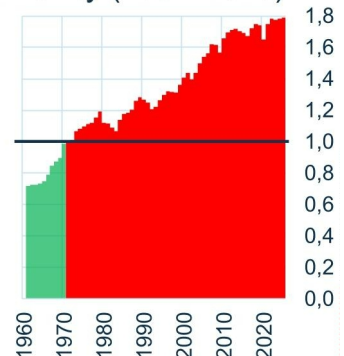
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Mankind
consumes
1.8 earths
every year

Number of Earths
needed to produce the
resources consumed by
humanity (1961-2025)



Source: [Global Footprint Network](#),
LBBW Research

in 2020, driven by the global Covid recession. Year after year, we are taking a loan from the future (which also means from our descendants!) in an amount that no reputable bank would ever approve for a household. We are still miles away from any kind of sustainability, and we are not getting any closer to it either.

What to do?

To counteract the worrying trend of overexploitation of our planet, there are numerous opportunities. A few [examples](#) of how we could make up for the "missing" 160 days:

- Global introduction of a CO₂-price of \$100: 63 days.
- By cutting food waste in half, the EOD can be pushed back 13 days toward the end of the year.
- If half the world implemented a Green Deal with the EU's level of ambition: 42 days
- Application of existing technologies to increase energy efficiency: 21 days.
- Halving meat consumption: 7 days.
- Halving global car traffic: 13 days.
- 75% of global electricity generation from low-emission sources: 26 days.

If you want to calculate your personal Earth Overshoot Day, you can do so [here](#). I did it again this year. As usual, the result was rather demoralizing: mid-March. I perform particularly poorly in terms of mobility – mainly due to too many and too distant flights. Not even cold showers or reducing heating can make up for it. But as the saying goes, self-awareness is the first step toward improvement. It's in our hands. Each of us, individually.

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Overexploitation of the planet at record levels!

Calculate your personal EOD [here](#)

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