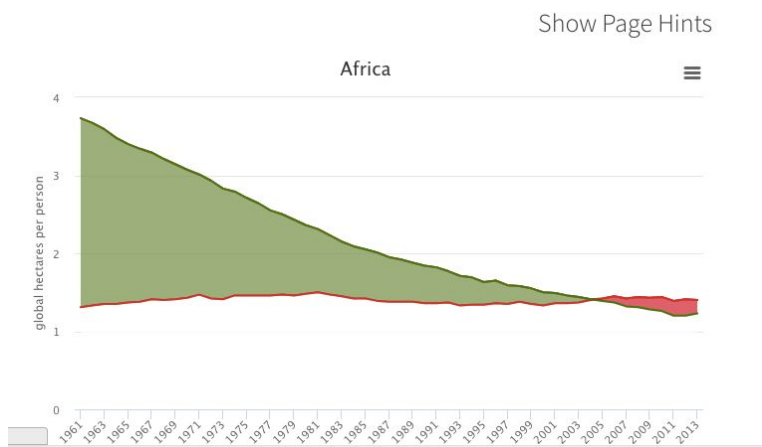


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## Day 2: Greener Footprint

I went through the earth overshoot day website, and I chose to take the pledge #3: dive into data! I liked this specific pledge, because as I've worked to make my school more sustainable, I've realized how little people know about things from climate change to recycling. Looking and learning can go a long way to make people more conscious about their environment! I looked at the compared chart of countries, and the United States has almost the highest ecological footprint, which doesn't surprise me since we live so lavishly. However, what was even more concerning is that the US was one of the only countries to have had a large ecological deficit, meaning a higher footprint than the biocapacity of their landmass, since the beginning. China has a larger deficit, however in the 1960s they were sustainable and their footprint was below the biocapacity, however it shot up during their modernization and economic boom to have a deficit of 4.5 billion global hectares.

The most interesting part of the data for me, however, came when I switched the graphs to Ecological Footprint vs Biocapacity, but this time per capita. This time when I looked at the graphs, I observed that at least in the North America, and specifically in Africa, the per person footprint hasn't dramatically changed at all, it is the biocapacity that has decreased. North America was already overexploiting however if you look at the graph of Africa:



You will see that while their footprint, the red, has stayed approximately the same, their biocapacity, green, has plummeted. This is due to population. For every new human we produce our biocapacity is always dividing to support them, so as Africa's population booms, their biocapacity plummets: leading to a deficit of capacity. This means at least in rapidly

expanding populations, the key for sustainability could be population control, and we might have to shift the way we approach sustainability in these nations.

This is all quite interesting, and in order to fulfill my pledge, I plan to present it to my Green Club in order to educate them on sustainable living!

\*\*\*\* I cannot post on social media because I have pledged to Offline October as a way to support my family whose teenage friend committed suicide in Denver, Colorado.