

Evaluating the carbon footprint of research projects prior to their submission

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There is a growing practice in academic research to evaluate the carbon footprint of the institutes and projects (e.g. Blanchard et al. PLOS Climate 2022). This is very important to monitor the climate impact of our activities and adopt a strategy to mitigate these emissions. However, these carbon footprint are used to be estimated a posteriori, hence once the carbon is emitted. (e.g. Bern  et al. ERL 2022, Gokus et al. PNAS Nexus 2024)) In this talk, I will present an experiment that was organised over the entire astronomical community in France, to evaluate the carbon footprint of research projects, before they are submitted to funding agency. Nearly 200 projects were submitted and used a simple carbon calculator to help defining the project. I will present the methodology and results of this experiment and discuss the various options that are considered to include carbon footprint as part of the evaluation criteria in future calls.