

Ahnaia White

The Real Cost (Raw Expenses Challenge)

EPF.3 - The student will demonstrate knowledge of the price system by examining the purposes of price ceilings and price floors.

EPF. 10 - The student will develop consumer skills by examining basic economic concepts and their relation to product prices and consumer spending.

Hi everyone!

- My name is Ahnaia White and I am from Kendall Park, New Jersey.
- Social work major from Virginia State University and I am a second semester sophomore.
- Opportunity this past summer to intern as a PINEMAP undergraduate fellow.
- Now what exactly is PINEMAP you may be wondering? PINEMAP stands for: Pine Integrated Network: Education, Mitigation, and Adaptation Project.
- This is a very large research project fund in 2011 by the USDA. It involves 11 universities, several government agencies and dozens of students.

Scientists involved with this project come from many different facets such as: biology, modeling, genetics, economics, policy, education, and outreach and they are all involved with one another.

PINEMAP's overall goal is to enable southern pine landowners to:

- manage forest to increase carbon sequestration by 15% by 2030;
- increase efficiency of nitrogen and other fertilizer inputs by 10% by 2030;
- adapt forest management approaches and plant improved tree varieties to increase forest resilience and sustainability under variable climates

Which leads me to my presentation today.

- How many of you like to shop?
- How do you guys think shopping relates to the forest?

Shopping may seem like an unrelated topic to the forest but in actuality they are both directly and indirectly related with one another.

- through this simulated shopping exercise students will be able to learn about life cycle assessments and their consumer impacts on the surrounding environment.

BACKGROUND:

All of the products that we buy have their own environmental impacts that, that can occur at different stages of that products life cycle. They life cycle is the time that extends from raw material extraction to when it is disposed of. Environmental impacts can vary from air pollution, water use, deforestation, or even chemical leaching. Life cycle assessments are conducted to show consumers the environmental impacts involved with each stage of the products life. Most of those impacts are externalities. An externality is an impact that effects a third party that is not directly involved with the purchase de cision. That third party could be another person or simply the environment. There are positive and negative externalities.

- Negative externalities - no negative, or hidden price is reflected in the cost of the good or service. **(ex: filling up your gas tank and driving around the city. Collective emissions from automobiles have been seen to lower air quality in cities which can in turn lead to health problems. The negative health impacts are not reflected in the price of the gas although.)**
- Positive externalities - there is a beneficial effect to the third party. (ex: A homeowner may decide to paint their house a more vibrant color than they once had before. This may not seem significant to most people but just by making this cosmetic change to their home it may increase the value of their neighbors property as well as their own.)
- Environmental impacts are addressed when they are **internalized** meaning that they are reflected in the prices of the goods or services to account for how they effect the third party.

(**John & John - To conserve space and time for the moment I will upload a copy of the module with my outline so that you can see the steps and further information about he activity. It is located on page 163. I am having problems figuring out how to cut certain parts out so that I can still reach all the objectives while not exceeding my time limit.)

It is important that that we are all informed consumers and that we aware that everything we buy has its own significant impact on the environment. Some simple things that we all can do to mitigate atmospheric carbon dioxide increases that we learned while doing this activity would be: buy products that could be reused, buy things that are grown locally at farmers markets so that they don't have to travel such long distances, and buy clothing items that are organic and take less resources to create. These things may seem insignificant but they can actually help in the long run with carbon emissions. Planet Earth is our home, and we must take every precaution we can to make sure that it is well taken care of.