

California overusing its natural resources

By Mathis Wackernagel, Sacramento Bee

The drought in California has made the economic risks of living beyond the means of nature all too clear. Just last month, estimates pegged the state's economic losses from the drought at \$2.7 billion, an enormous number that still fails to capture the toll on individual farmers and farmworkers.

Water, however, isn't the only natural resource that our state is overusing and must manage more carefully to ensure a resilient future.

On Tuesday, the United States will go into ecological deficit. That means our nation will be using more of nature's renewable resources and services than our ecosystems can regenerate in the entire year. Of all 50 states, California is running the largest ecological deficit, according to our analysis, which we will release Tuesday in a report called "State of the States." We found we would need a land area equal to eight – eight! – Californias to support the "ecological footprint" of California residents.

Read the whole story