***Project 2 - Carbon Footprint***

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* Any surprises from your domain from these data?

There are no surprises so far. I fully anticipated this domain painting a bleak picture of our future if things do not change by an order of magnitude. One thing that is not surprising but rather evokes more of a sense of dismay is the sheer volume of factual evidence concluding the detrimental effects of greenhouse gases and carbon emissions on our environment, contrasted with what (subjectively) appears to be a disturbing lack of concern and/or action by the majority of intelligent creatures who call this planet their home.

* Is the dataset what you thought it was?

A difficult question to answer at this junction. I have to admit that my initial foray into data discovery covered a lot of ground with no deep dives. This weekend I will spend my time analyzing the sources I have bookmarked to get a better sense of what I have to work with. I can say that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) appears to have a plethora of data sliced and diced many ways (which can be both a blessing and a curse I suppose).

* Have you had to adjust your approach or research questions?

Not yet, but like the question above, it may be premature to speculate too heavily on this. As I read over the research questions I included in my proposal, nothing jumps out at me that warrants any adjustments. Although if I’ve learned anything from this process, I can speculate ad infinitum until I get a little farther down the road.

* Is your method working?

My method will work if I stick to it. For this project, the end product is going to be a white paper on the project topic. I do not anticipate leveraging Machine Learning at all, although I will inject some degree of analysis, outside of the whole cloth I cut from various websites (with appropriate citations, of course).

* What challenges are you having?

There are two challenges. As I mentioned above, there is quite a lot of data on this subject available on the internet, with the EPA leading the pack. My concern is being able to see the forest for the trees or spending too much time getting drawn down side streets and losing focus. In general, that is one of the biggest challenges with doing projects in this program: distilling things down to something I can handle in a 4-week sprint.

My second challenge is the one I always have, whether it’s in my academic or professional life: getting the horse out of the gate. I always struggle on how to get started (which leads to pathological procrastination; something that drives both my wife and my boss bonkers). Therefore, my focus this weekend is to getter a better feel for the data available, and how it is applicable to my project, and to get a framework in place with which to build out the rest of the project.