

Impact of a Phone's Price Range on Its Lifespan and Carbon Footprint

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Subject: Sustainable Computing

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October 2025

This project will mostly focus on the impact of a phone's price range on its lifespan and carbon footprint. The project will try to provide useful information on how to become a more environmentally conscious consumer when buying a new phone. A big part of all the environmental movement towards a better future are EU and the UN that are pushing for more sustainable practices in product development and production.

1 Related Work

Some good data on carbon footprint of phones can be found in books such as *The carbon footprint of everything* [2] and *Sustainable Energy - without the hot air* [7]. These books include calculated carbon footprints of various devices, including phones, and provide a good starting point for understanding the environmental impact of these devices. We believe some useful data and information can be found on company websites such as Apple [1] and Samsung Electronics [8] as these global companies are trying to follow the sustainability trend. None of these efforts would be made without the EU and European Commission pushing for more sustainable practices in product development and production. Some important research by the European Commission includes research on the impacts of the *Right to Repair* policy [4] and enforcing the new *Energy Label* [3].

2 Methodology

The methodology of this project will include determining phone price ranges and selecting the most representative phone model for each price range. For this part we will use data from company websites such as Apple, Samsung and similar companies. Data will then be gathered on the lifespan of each device (including years of software support, battery health and repairability).

Additionally, data on carbon footprint of each device will be collected and compared between price ranges. For this part we will use data from books such as *The carbon footprint of everything* [2] and *Sustainable Energy - without the hot air* [7], as well as data from the ILCD International Life Cycle Data system [5] and IPCC reports [6].

The project will also include lifecycle mapping of the selected phone models and some estimations of carbon footprint at each stage. Useful data for this part of the project can be found in the ILCD International Life Cycle Data system [5]. Additionally, the explanation of the *Energy Labels* [3] will be provided and some comparisons of company promises versus real world data will be made. These promises can be found on environmental parts of company websites such as Apple [1] and Samsung [8].

3 Milestones

The proposed timeline for the project is as follows:

- **17.10.2025** – Submission of project proposal
- **05.11.2025** – Completion of literature review and lifecycle framework
- **26.11.2025** – Data collection, preliminary comparisons and carbon footprint estimations
- **19.12.2025** – Draft of price range comparison and carbon footprint analysis
- **12.01.2026** – Submission of final project report

Some main tasks in developing this project are shown in the table below:

Task	Content	Person
Brand selection	Select a smartphone brand to analyze.	Mark
Price range definition	Define price ranges for analysis (e.g., budget, mid-range, flagship).	Mark
Model selection	Choose representative models from each price range.	Mark
Data collection	Gather data on lifespan, software support and repairability.	Nina
Lifecycle mapping	Map out the lifecycle stages of each selected model (extraction, manufacturing, shipping, use, disposal).	Mark
Carbon footprint estimation	Estimate the carbon footprint for each lifecycle stage of the selected models.	Nina
Data analysis	Analyze the collected data to identify trends and correlations between price range, lifespan, and carbon footprint.	Nina
Recommendations	Provide recommendations for consumers based on the findings.	Mark, Nina
Report writing	Compile the findings into a comprehensive report.	Mark, Nina

Table 1: Table of the main tasks of the project with their content.

4 Evaluation Plan

The evaluation will consider how the project aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [9], particularly goals 8 (Decent work and economic growth), 12 (Responsible consumption and production) and 13 (Climate action). The project's success will be evaluated based on the reliability and availability of data sources and the quality of the carbon footprint analysis. A satisfactory project should include explicit recommendations for the end user on how to choose a phone based on its price range, lifespan and environmental impact based on carbon footprint of the device.

References

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- [9] United Nations. The 17 goals — sustainable development, n.d. Accessed: 2025-10-16.