

O 49. MODERN URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN CALABAR: REDUCING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT'S ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

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ABSTRACT: The need to govern land utilisation and the exploitation of natural resources has given rise to the notion of sustainability, which in turn encompasses the ecological footprint, denoting the aggregate land area necessary to maintain an individual's requirements. This study investigates the potential ecological footprint reductions associated with urban expansion and housing construction in Calabar, a mid-sized city in Nigeria. Specifically, it compares the ecological footprint savings between compact home buildings and single detached units, taking into consideration the size of the lots. The research approach used first included exploratory investigations, mostly consisting of physical observations, carried out across the city of Calabar. These investigations aimed to identify the primary land use activities that contribute to the accelerated urban expansion in the region. Furthermore, the examination of housing ideas was conducted via the implementation of experimental initiatives aimed at showcasing housing building paradigms that provide greater ecological advantages for urban areas. The ultimate goal of these endeavours is to mitigate the ecological impact of cities by reducing their carbon footprints in the long term. The findings indicate that the present expansion of urban development may be decreased by over 150% by the substitution of the prevailing practice of separate one-unit dwellings with the consolidation of units within a single block. Additionally, the research demonstrates the potential for preserving strips of agricultural land amongst urban expansion for the sake of urban agriculture.

Keywords: Ecological Footprint, Sustainability, Housing, Urban Development