

# Sustainable Processor Design

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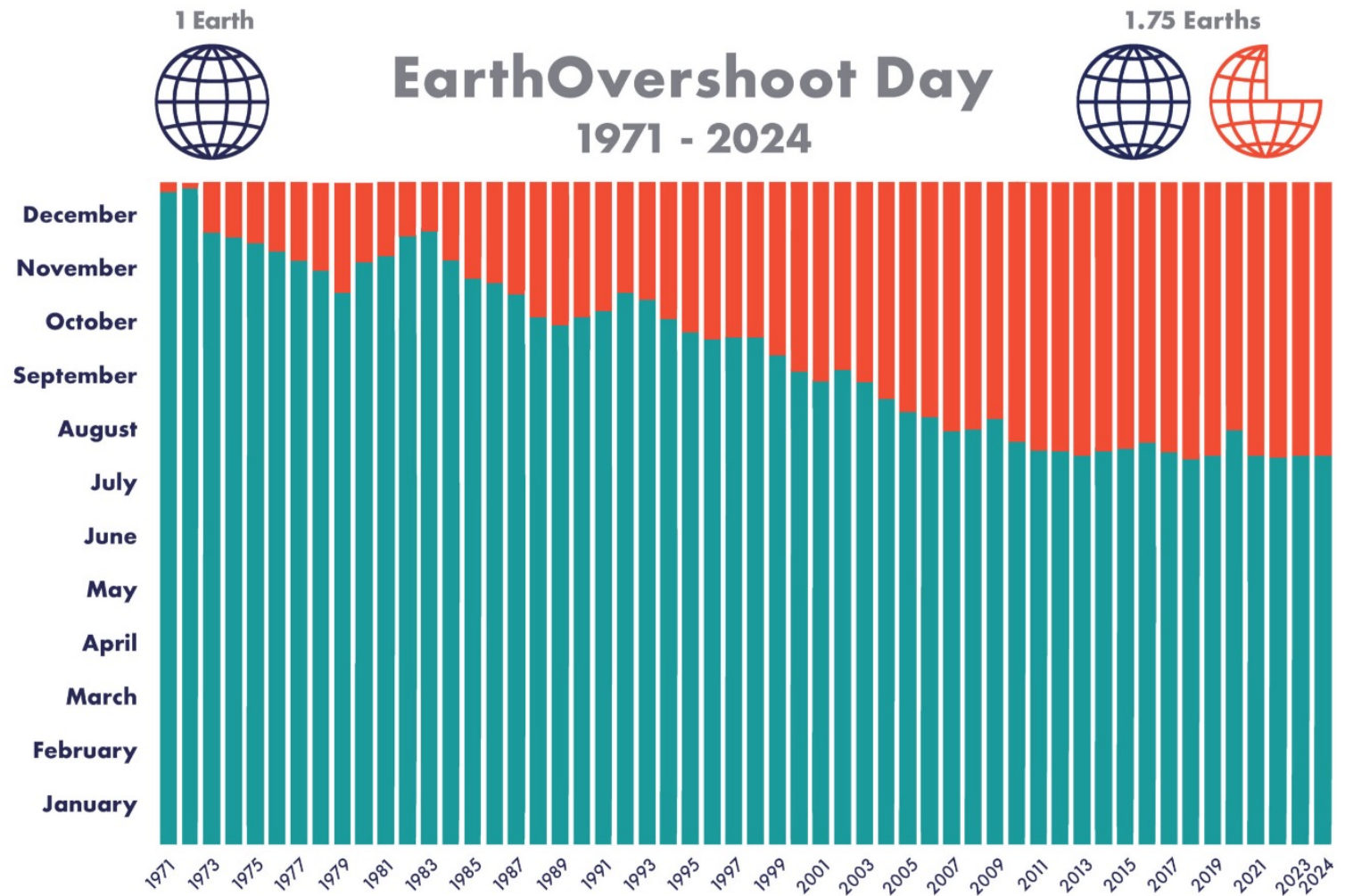
*University of Glasgow*

*LOCOS -- January 22, 2026*

***“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”***

*[The Brundtland Report of the World Council on Economic Development, 1987]*

# How Are We Doing?



Based on National Footprint and Biocapacity Accounts 2023 Edition 3

[Global Footprint Network]

# **U.N. Report Says World Could See 3.1°C Warming by 2100 Without Urgent Action on Climate**

**HEADLINE** OCT 25, 2024



# GHG Emissions Lead to Global Warming

*bush fire*



*drought*



*biodiversity loss*



*flooding*



*hurricanes*



**Contribution of ICT to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions estimated to be around 2.1–3.9%, and it is rising  
...on par with aviation industry...**

*[Freitag et al., 2020]*

# Sustainability is a Multi-Faceted Challenge

**Sustainability** is much more than combating global warming

It is also about

- **Raw material extraction**

World Bank projects that demand for metals and minerals will increase rapidly with climate ambition

- Electric storage batteries: 10x more metals (aluminum, cobalt, iron, lead, lithium, manganese and nickel) needed by 2050 under a 2°C scenario

Under EU's climate-neutrality scenarios for 2050, the EU needs

- 18x more lithium in 2030, and almost 60x more in 2050
- 5x more cobalt in 2030, and almost 15x more in 2050
- 10x more **Rare Earth Elements (REEs)** in 2050
  - REEs for permanent magnets: Dysprosium, Neodymium, Praseodymium, Samarium; The remaining rare earths are Yttrium, Lanthanum, Cerium, Promethium, Europium, Gadolinium, Terbium, Holmium, Erbium, Thulium, Ytterbium, Lutetium

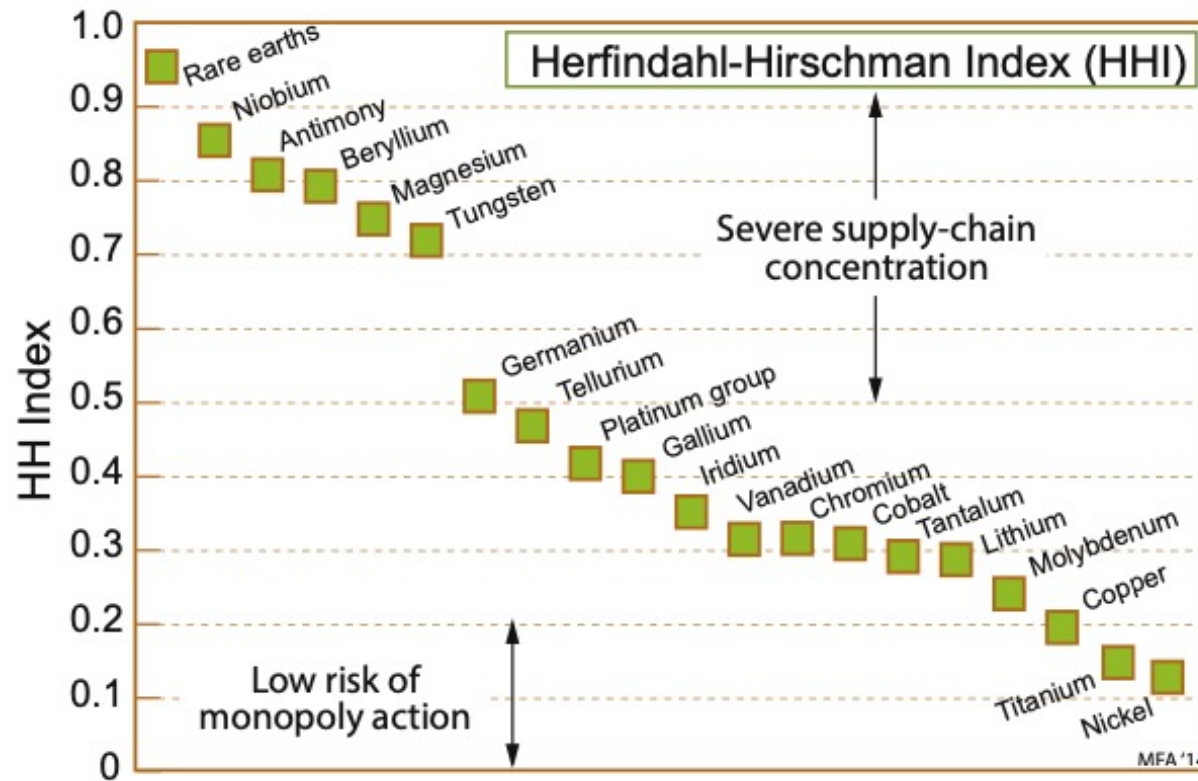
*[World Bank (2017): The Growing Role of Minerals and Metals for a Low Carbon Future]*

*[European Commission 2020: Critical Raw Materials Resilience: Charting a Path towards greater Security and Sustainability]*

# What Materials Are Needed to Produce Microelectronic Devices?

*[Ernst et al., HiPEAC Vision 2024]*

# Supply Chain Risk



**Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI):**

$$HHI = \sum_{i=1}^n f_i^2$$

$f_i$  is fraction of market sourced by nation  $i$ , and  $n$  is total number of source-nations.

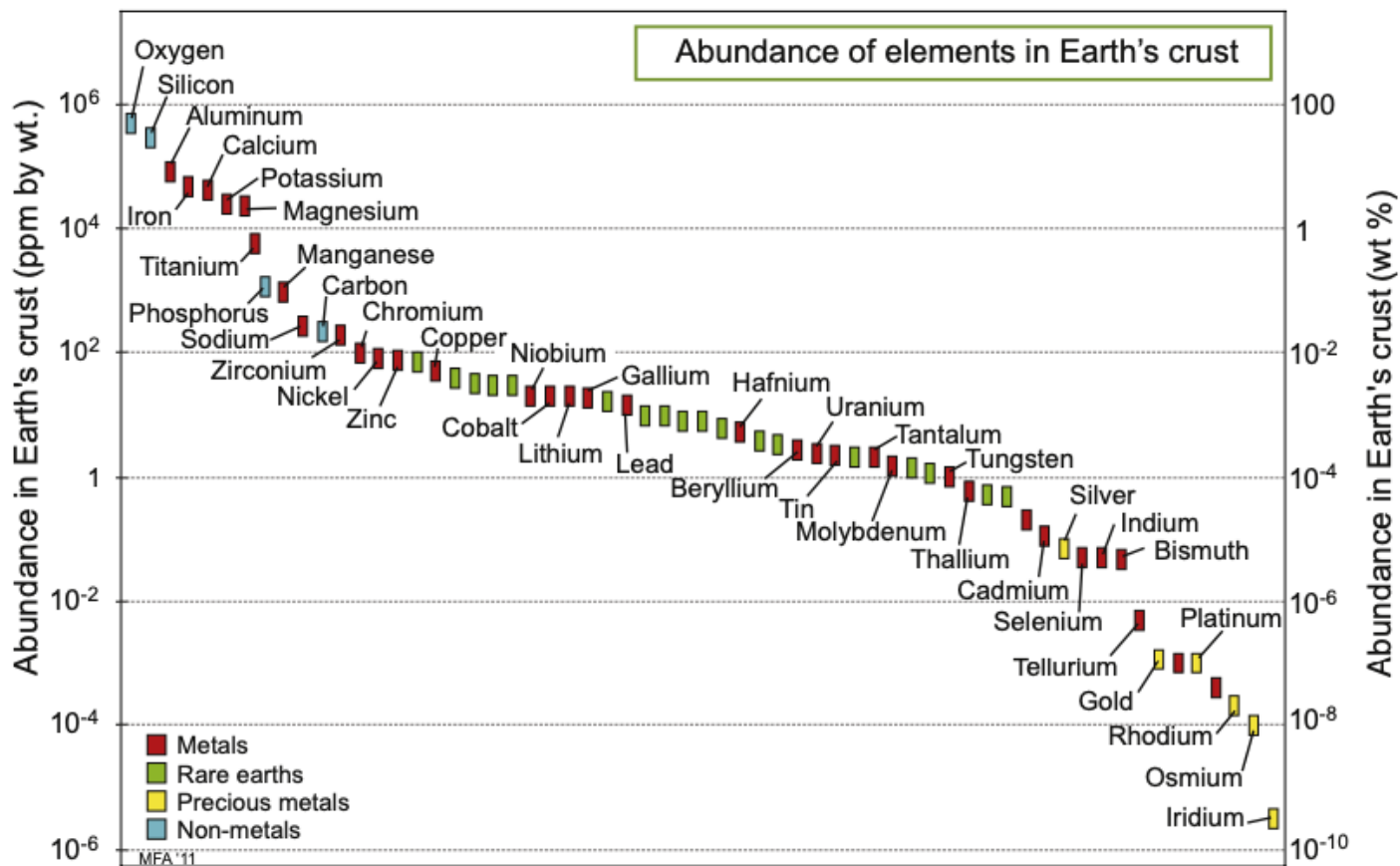
One nation is monopoly:  $HHI = 1$

Two nations with equal share:  $HHI = 0.5^2 + 0.5^2 = 0.5$

Many source-nations:  $HHI \rightarrow 0$

Esp. problematic if HHI is high and materials come from politically unstable region(s)

# Some Materials are Rare



**How much of everything have we got?**

Enormous range: some elements are abundant, others are rare

Mining rare elements can become extremely expensive and challenging

[M. F. Ashby, *Materials and Sustainable Development*, 2016]

# Raw Material Mining

- Energy/carbon-intensive industry
- Has significant impact on the environment

For example: copper (Cu)

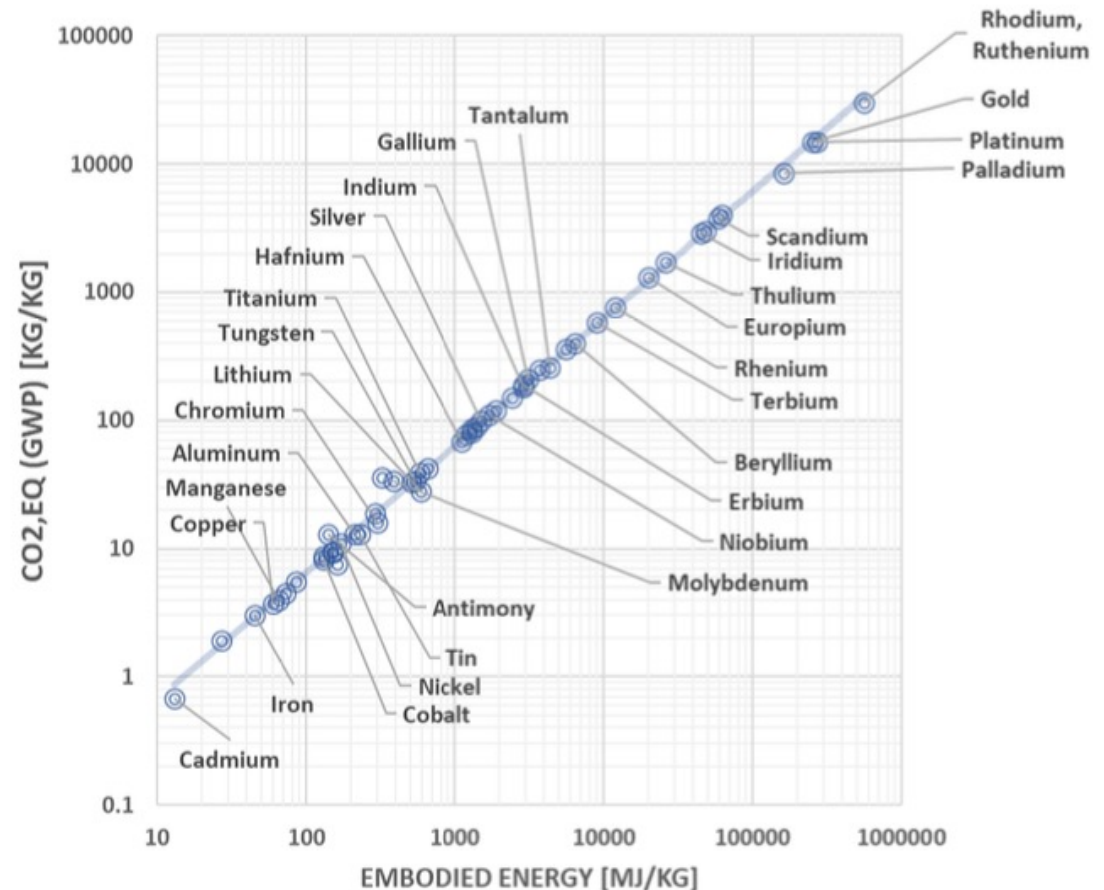
~50 MJ energy for 1 kg of Cu

~4 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> for 1 kg of Cu

For example: gold (Au)

~200 BJ energy for 1kg of Au

~15 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> for 1kg of Au



[M. Ashby (2016): Materials and Sustainable Development]

# Sustainability is a Multi-Faceted Challenge

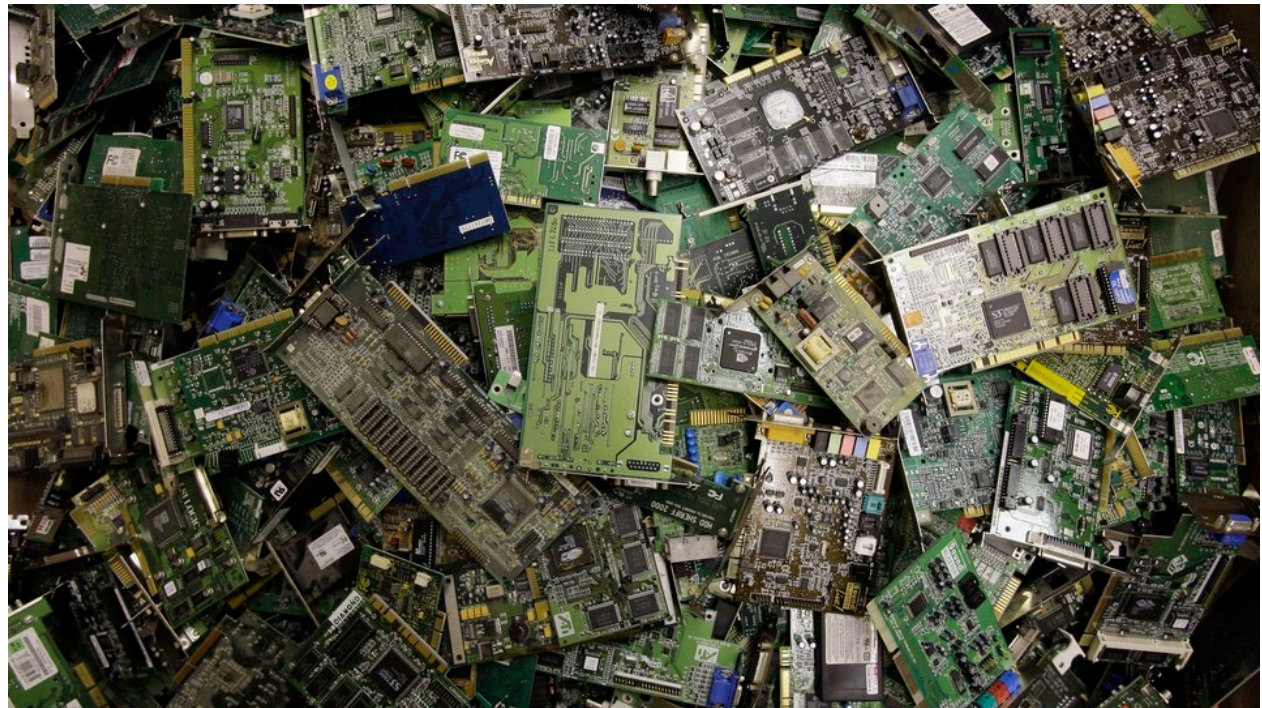
**Sustainability** is much more than combating global warming

It is also about

- Raw material extraction
- E-waste

due to linear economy

*[Credit: Michael Conroy, AP]*

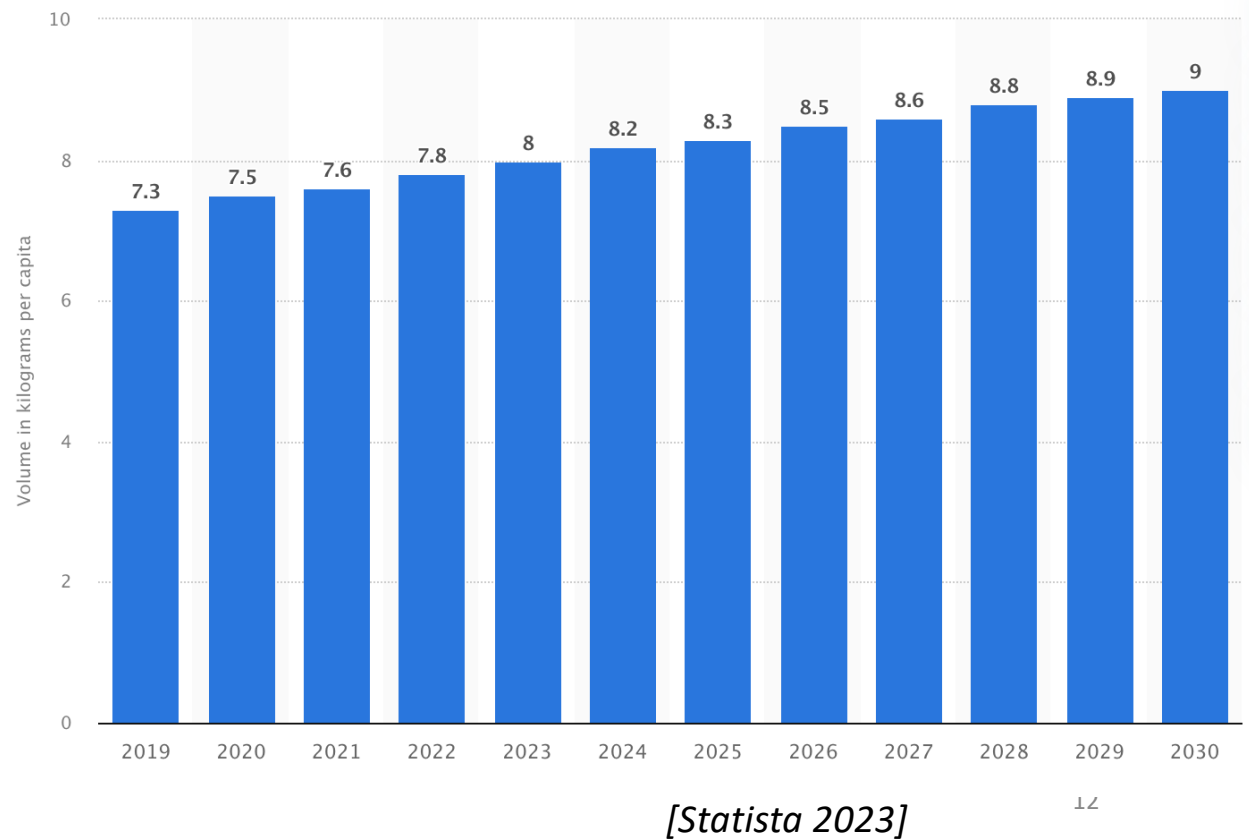


# Sustainability is a Multi-Faceted Challenge

**Sustainability** is much more than combating global warming

It is also about

- Raw material extraction
- E-waste
- 8 kg per capita per annum
  - this includes small to large appliances
- only 17% gets recycled

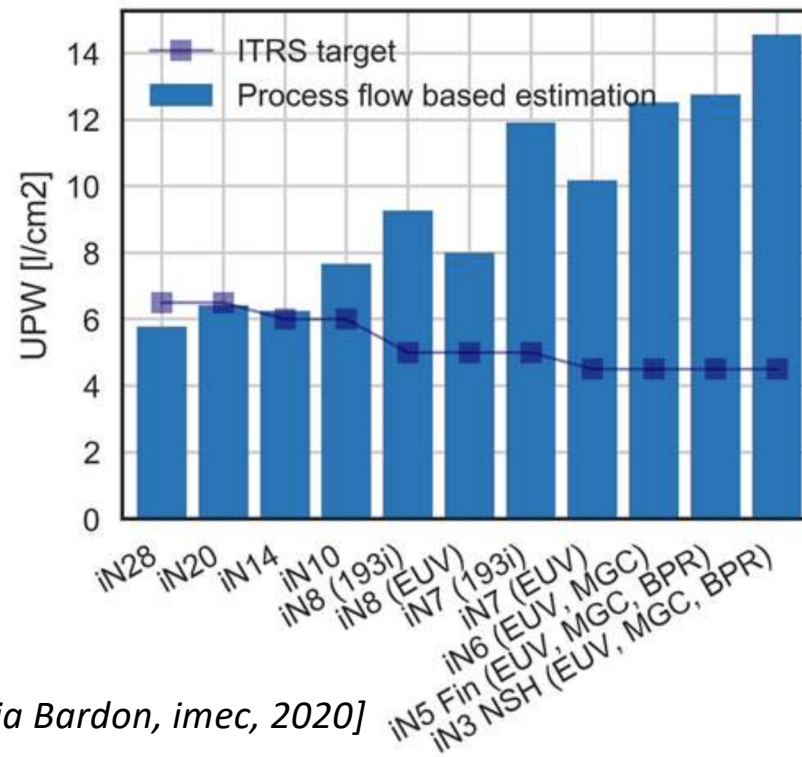


# Sustainability is a Multi-Faceted Challenge

**Sustainability** is much more than combating global warming

It is also about

- Raw material extraction
- E-waste
- Ultra pure water



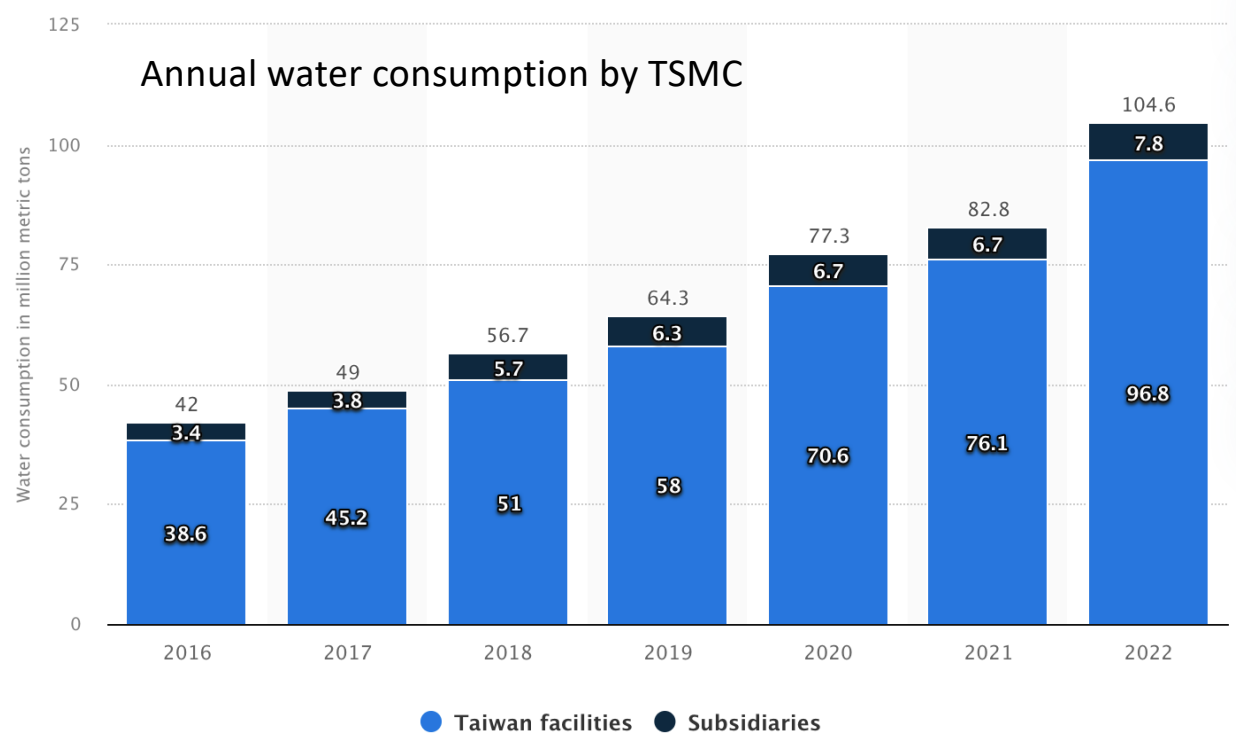
[M. Garcia Bardon, imec, 2020]

# Sustainability is a Multi-Faceted Challenge

**Sustainability** is much more than combating global warming

It is also about

- Raw material extraction
- E-waste
- Water usage



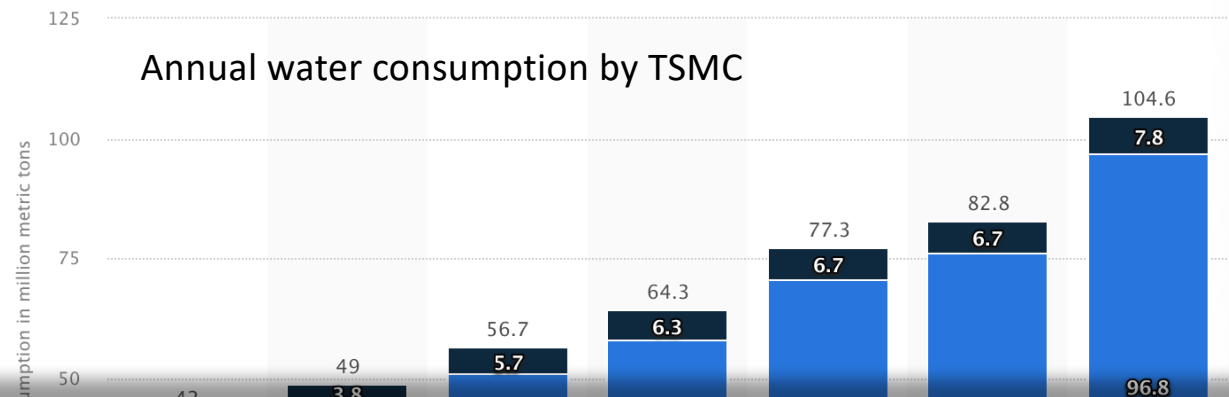
[Statista, 2024]

# Sustainability is a Multi-Faceted Challenge

**Sustainability** is much more than combating global warming

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- Raw material extraction
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- Water usage



## CLIMATE

### Epic drought in Taiwan pits farmers against high-tech factories for water

The island is facing one of its worst dry spells in a century, and both the agricultural and high-tech sectors are competing for scarce water resources.

April 19, 2023 | By: Emily Feng

[NPR, 2023]

# Sustainability is a Multi-Faceted Challenge

**Sustainability** is much more than combating global warming

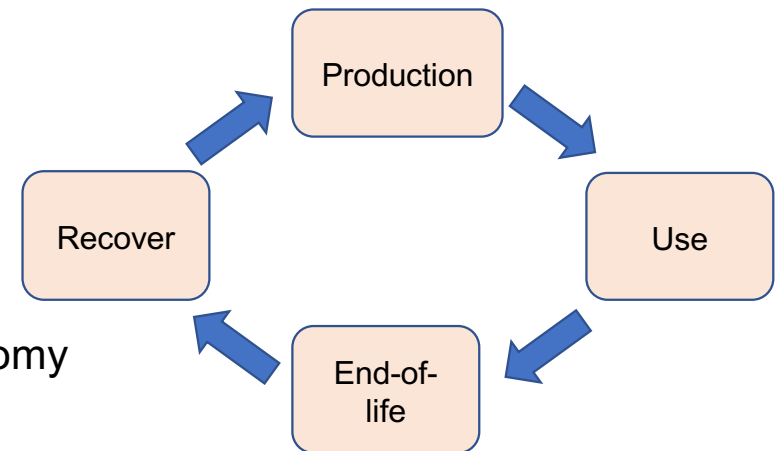
It is also about

- Raw material extraction
- E-waste
- Water usage
- **New business models & legislation**

Key motivation for circular (rather than linear) economy

**Keep materials in the economy longer**

- Fewer raw materials are needed
- Less impact on climate
- Avoid (e-)waste
- Improved security of material supply
  - Be less depending on third-party countries
- Design for repairability



**Selling services instead of goods**

Consumer wants (societal needs)

Light, not lamps

Mobility, not cars

Connectivity, not smartphone

# Kaya Identity

Contributing factors to carbon emissions *[by energy economist Yoichi Kaya, 1997]*

$$F = P \times G/P \times E/G \times F/E, \text{ with}$$

F = global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

P = global population

G/P = GDP per capita

E/G = energy intensity (energy / GDP)

F/E = carbon intensity (CO<sub>2</sub> / energy)



Kaya identity is used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to predict world CO<sub>2</sub> emission scenarios and impact on global warming

## Kaya identity: drivers of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, World

Our World  
in Data

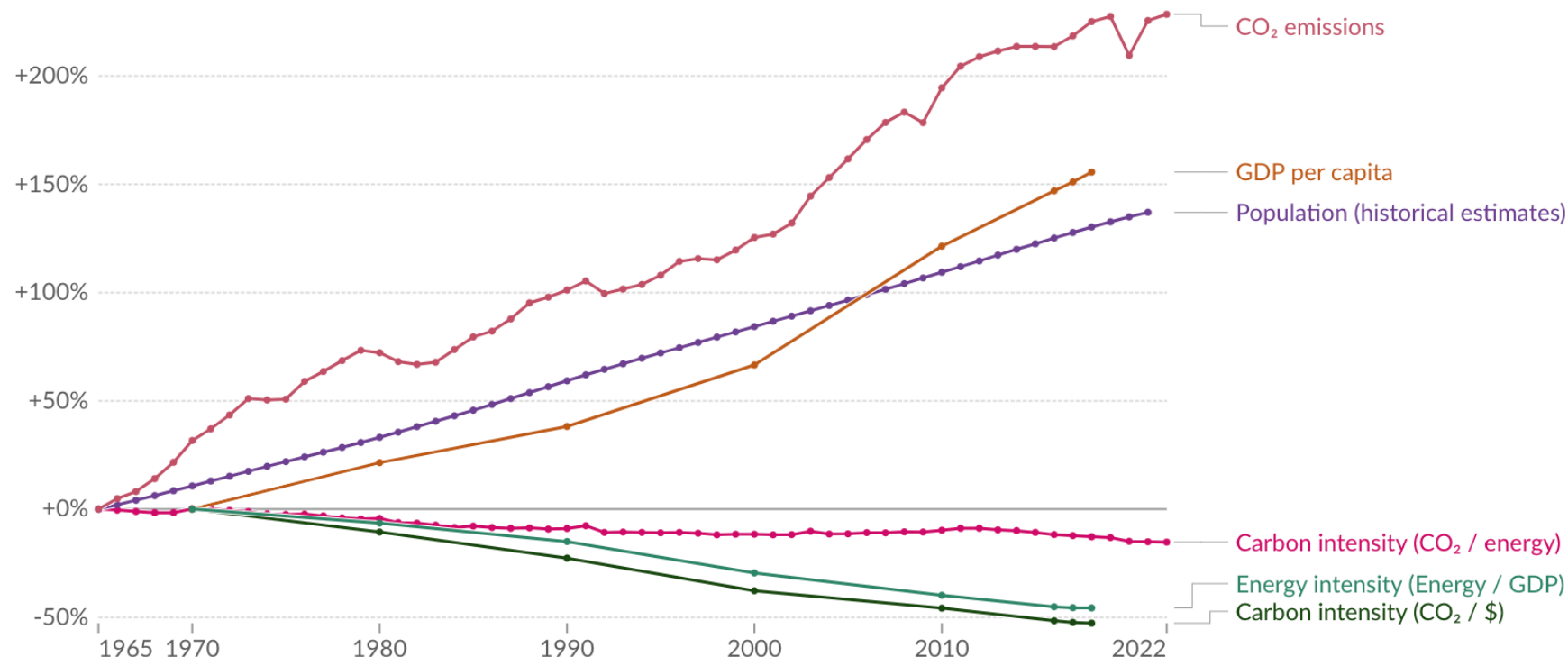
Percentage change in the four parameters of the Kaya Identity, which determine total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Emissions from fossil fuels and industry are included. Land-use change emissions are not included.

Table

Chart

Change country or region

Settings



**Despite improvements in energy intensity and carbon intensity, we witness an overall increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**

# Kaya Applied to ICT Devices

$$F = P \times D/P \times F/D, \text{ with}$$

F = global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

P = global population → CAGR = +0.9% per year [World Bank]

D/P = ICT devices per capita → CAGR = +8.4% per year

F/D = carbon intensity per device

[CISCO, 2020]

Region	2018	2023	CAGR
Global	2.4	3.6	+8.4%
Asia Pacific	2.1	3.1	+8.1%
Central and Eastern Europe	2.5	4.0	+9.9%
Latin America	2.2	3.1	+7.1%
Middle East and Africa	1.1	1.5	+6.4%
North America	8.2	13.4	+10.3%
Western Europe	5.6	9.4	+10.9%

# Kaya Applied to ICT Devices

$$F = P \times D/P \times F/D, \text{ with}$$

F/D = carbon intensity per device

iPhone 8 (2017) →

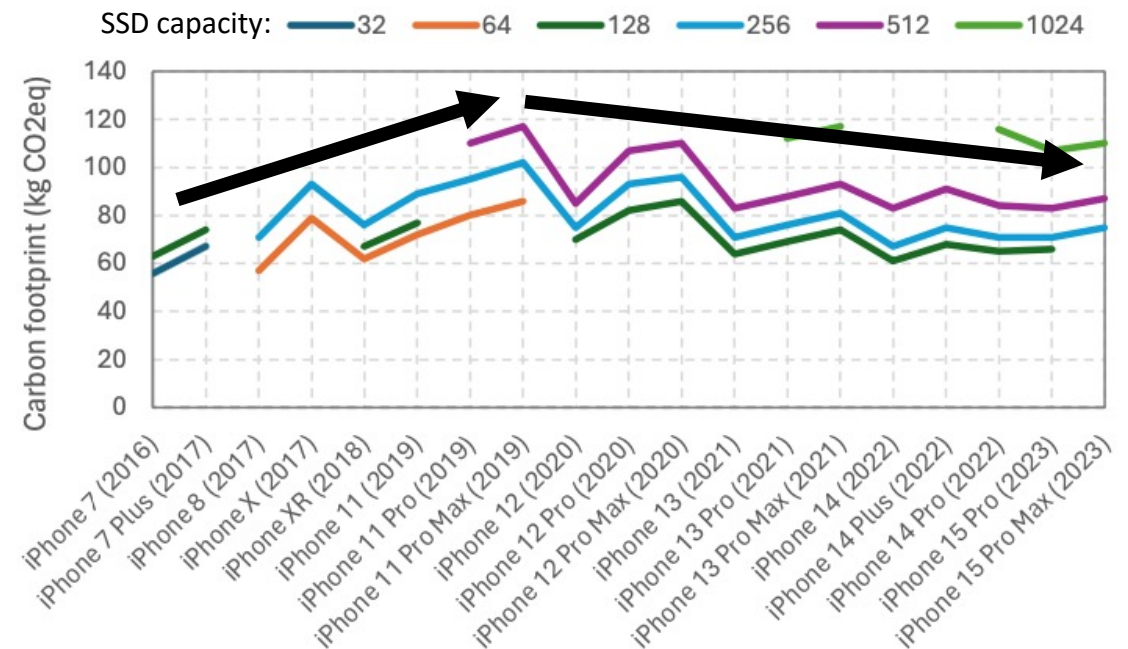
iPhone 11 Pro Max (2019)

CAGR = +19.8%

iPhone 11 Pro Max (2019) →

iPhone 15 Pro Max (2023)

CAGR = -7.1%



# Kaya Applied to ICT Devices

$$F = P \times D/P \times F/D, \text{ with}$$

**F/D = carbon intensity per device varies between -10% and +4%**

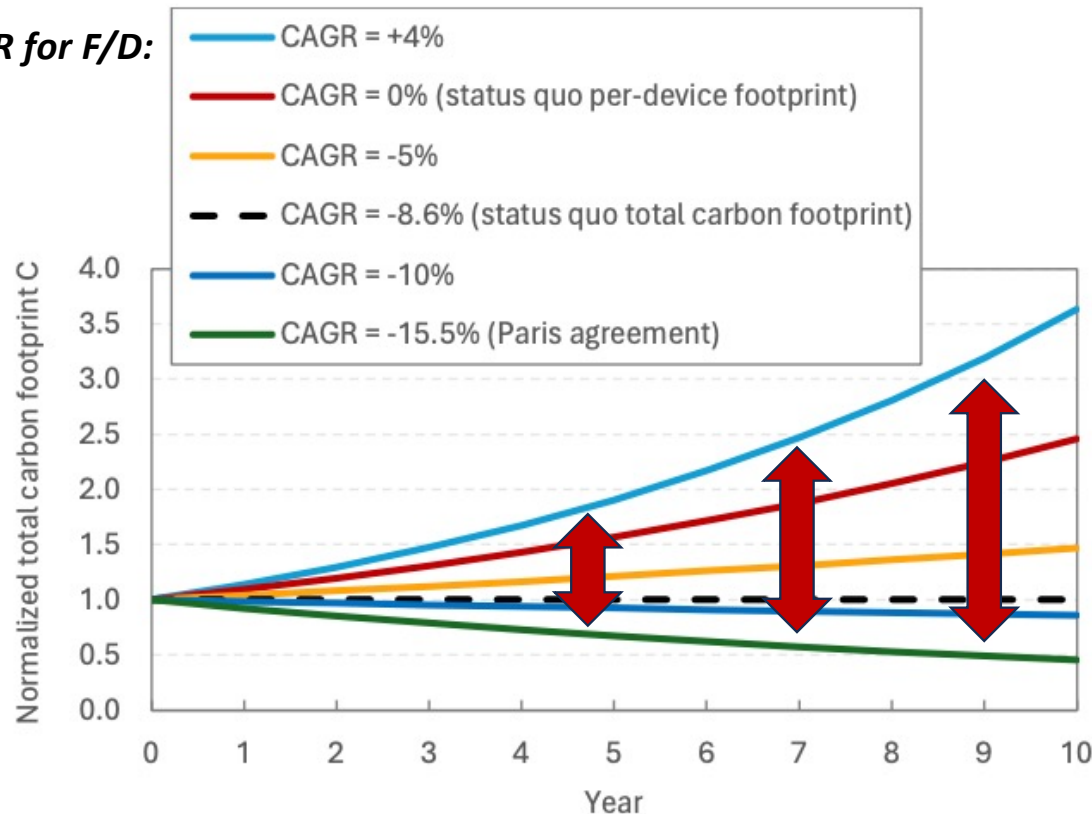
Device	Model	Period	CAGR
Smartwatch	Apple Watch	2019–2023	-7.7%
Smartphone	Apple iPhone Pro Max	2019–2023	-7.1%
	Apple iPhone Pro Max	2021–2023	-3.3%
	Google Pixel	2021–2023	-10.5%
Laptop	Apple MacBook Pro 16-inch	2019–2023	-6.9%
	Apple MacBook Air 13-inch	2018–2024	-5.1%
	Dell Precision 7000	2018–2023	+3.8%
Desktop	Dell OptiPlex 700	2019–2022	-8.1%
	Dell Workstations 5000&7000	2018–2023	+4.0%
Server	Dell PowerEdge rackmount	2014–2024	+1.8%

[L. Eeckhout, “The Sustainability Gap for Computing: Quo Vadis?”, *Communications of the ACM*, March 2025]

# Are We On Track?

## How to Close the Sustainability Gap?

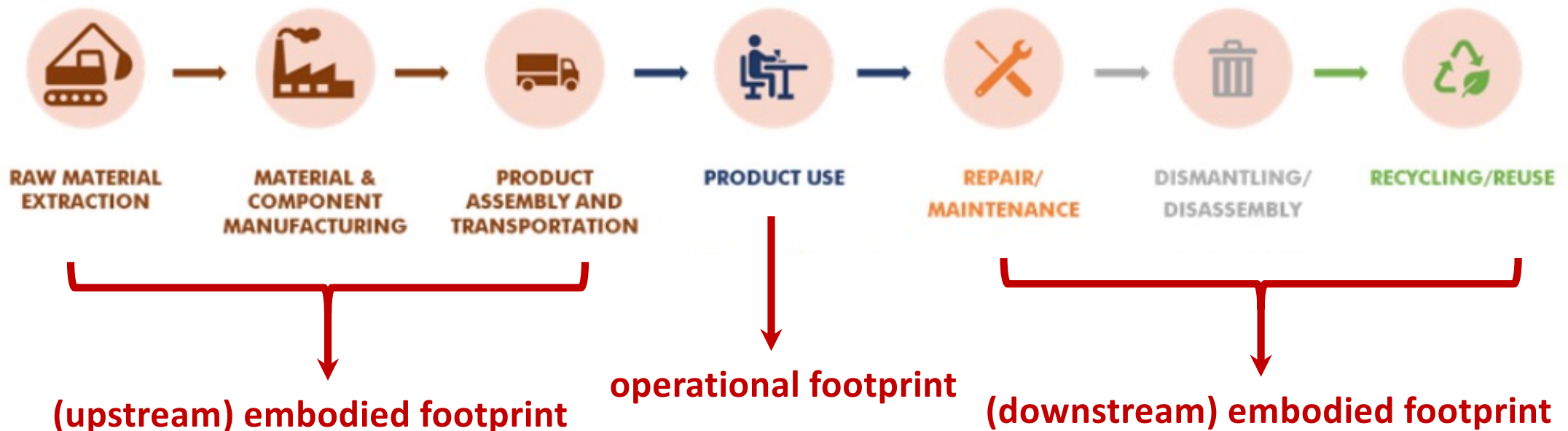
CAGR for F/D:



To close the sustainability gap, we need to reduce device carbon intensity by **15.5% per annum** to meet the Paris agreement, to compensate for population and affluence growth...

# The Life of a Computer Device

*Power/energy-efficient computing ignores embodied footprint*



[Global Economic Council, 2021: State of Sustainability Research -- Climate Change Mitigation]

# Rebound Effect due to Improved Efficiency

**Counter-intuitive finding:** making an individual system more carbon-efficient may lead to an overall increase in footprint  
a.k.a. Jevons' paradox

more efficient system → cheaper/easier to use → increased usage and deployment → increased (embodied and operational) footprint

**Making systems more carbon-efficient is a necessary condition, not a sufficient condition**

William Stanley Jevons (1865) first describes this rebound effect

- James Watt improved the efficiency of coal-fired steam engine
  - Each steam engine uses less coal, so coal became a more cost-effective fuel
- This led to an increased use of steam engines in a variety of industries
- The result was increased overall coal consumption



# Reformulating Kaya for Architects

Can we reformulate the Kaya identity to something we, computer architects, gain insight from?

... so we can understand how to reduce environmental impact of computing?

We focus on carbon footprint

- But representative for other sustainability issues
- Using recently published numbers, yet to be taken with grain of salt...

Distinction between

- **Embodied emissions:** GHG emissions during manufacturing process
  - **Scope-1:** chemicals and gases emitted
  - **Scope-2:** carbon emissions from energy usage
  - **Scope-3:** due to material extraction *[not considered here – follows same trend as Scope-1]*
- **Operational emissions:** GHG emissions during product lifetime

# Total Carbon Footprint

**Embodied Scope-2** (energy usage during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

**Embodied Scope-1** (chemicals and gases during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-1}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{CO2e/wafer}$$

**Operational** (energy usage during lifetime)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

*How do these factors scale over time?*

# Demand for Chips is Increasing

**Embodied Scope 2** (energy usage during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

**Embodied Scope 1** (chemicals and gases during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-1}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{CO2e/wafer}$$

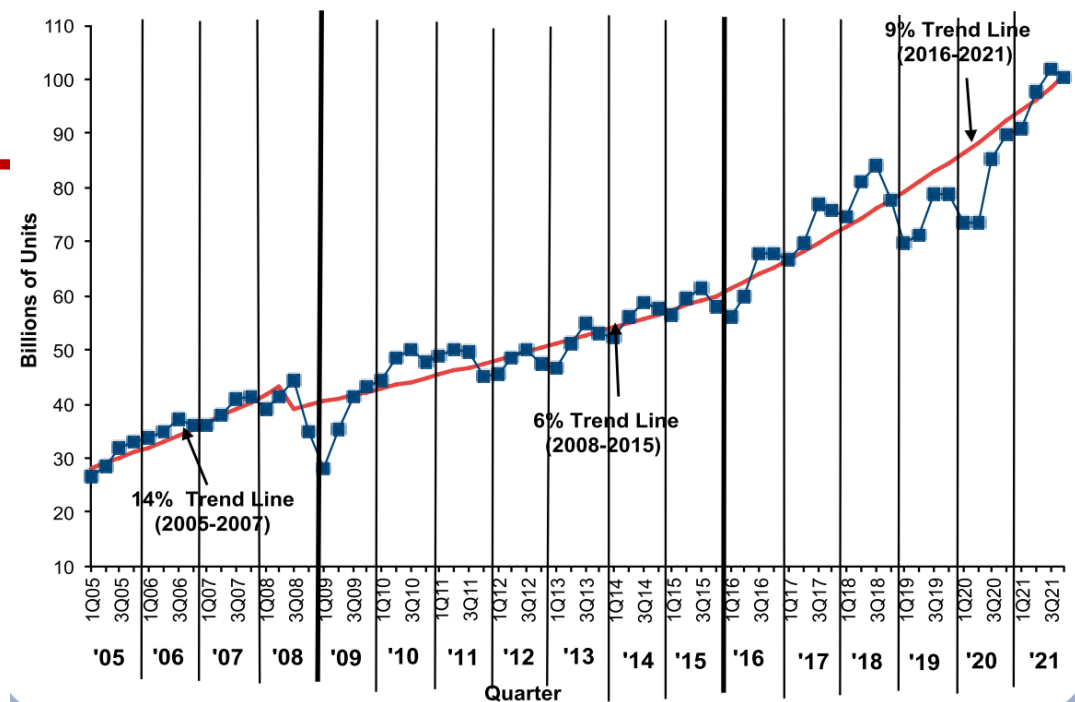
**Operational** (energy usage during lifetime)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

Increasing number of chips:

CAGR = +9%

2005-2021 Quarterly IC Unit Volume Shipment Trend



[IC Insight, 2022]

# Die Size Seems to Have Stagnated

**Embodied Scope 2** (energy usage during production)

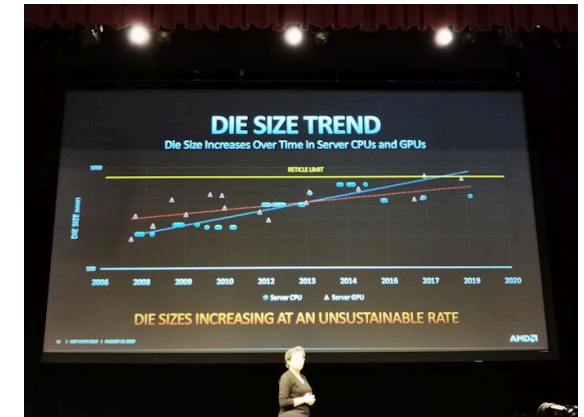
$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

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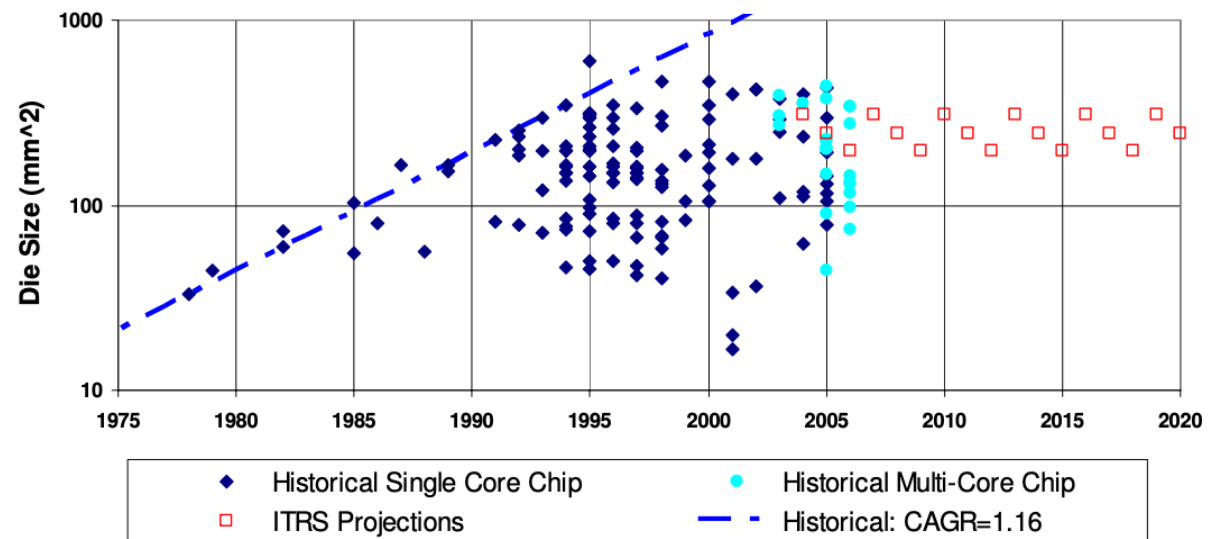
**Operational** (energy usage during lifetime)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$



Number of chips per  
wafer: CAGR  $\approx$  +0%

[Kogge et al., 2008]



# Increasing Energy Demand per Wafer

**Embodied Scope 2** (energy usage during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \text{chips} \times \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

**Embodied Scope 1** (chemicals and gases during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-1}} = \text{chips} \times \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{CO2e/wafer}$$

**Operational** (energy usage during lifetime)

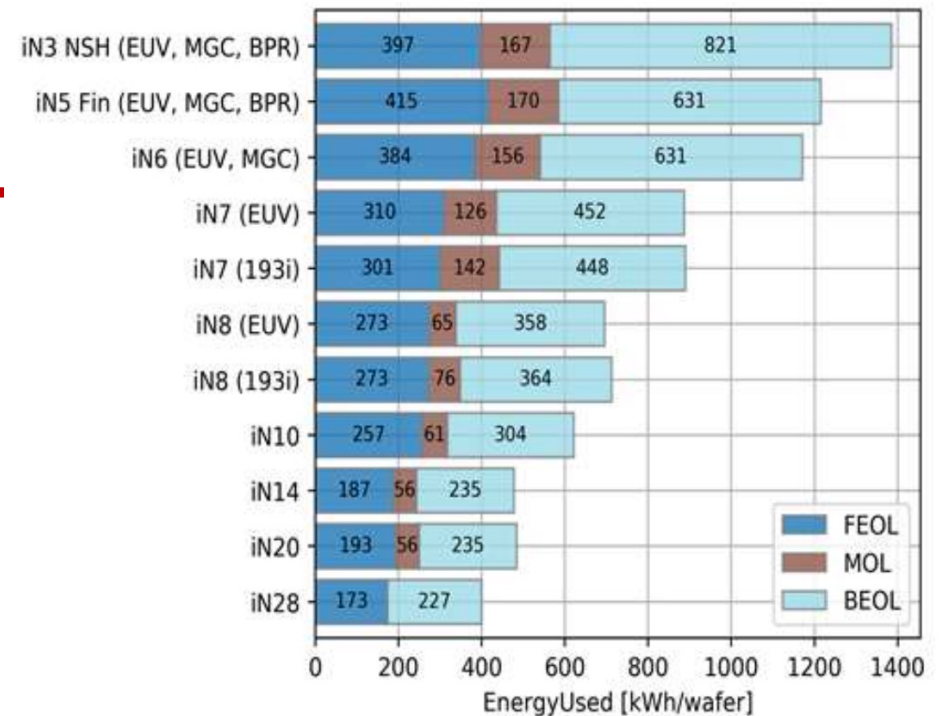
$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

[M. Garcia Bardon, imec, 2020]

Increasing energy demand for new tech nodes

increasing no. processing steps

CAGR kWh/wafer = +11.9%



# Increasing Chemicals/Gases per Wafer

**Embodied Scope 2** (energy usage during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

**Embodied Scope 1** (chemicals and gases during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-1}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{CO2e/wafer}$$

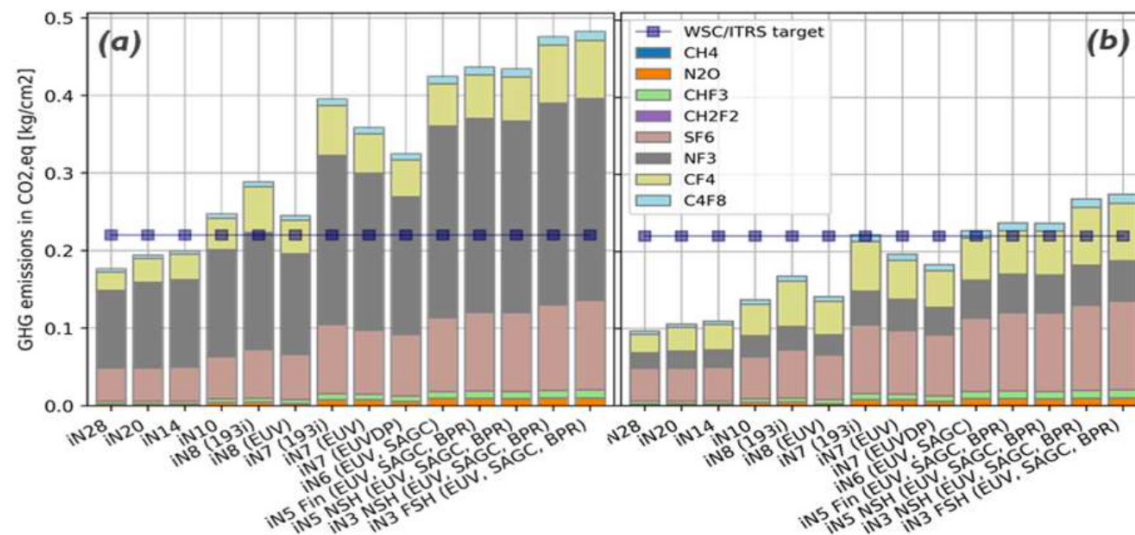
**Operational** (energy usage during lifetime)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

[M. Garcia Bardon, imec, 2020]

Increasing chemical/gas  
emissions for new tech  
nodes

CAGR CO2e/wafer =  
+9.4%



# Carbon Intensity Slowly Decreasing

**Embodied Scope 2** (energy usage during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

**Embodied Scope 1** (chemicals and gases during production)

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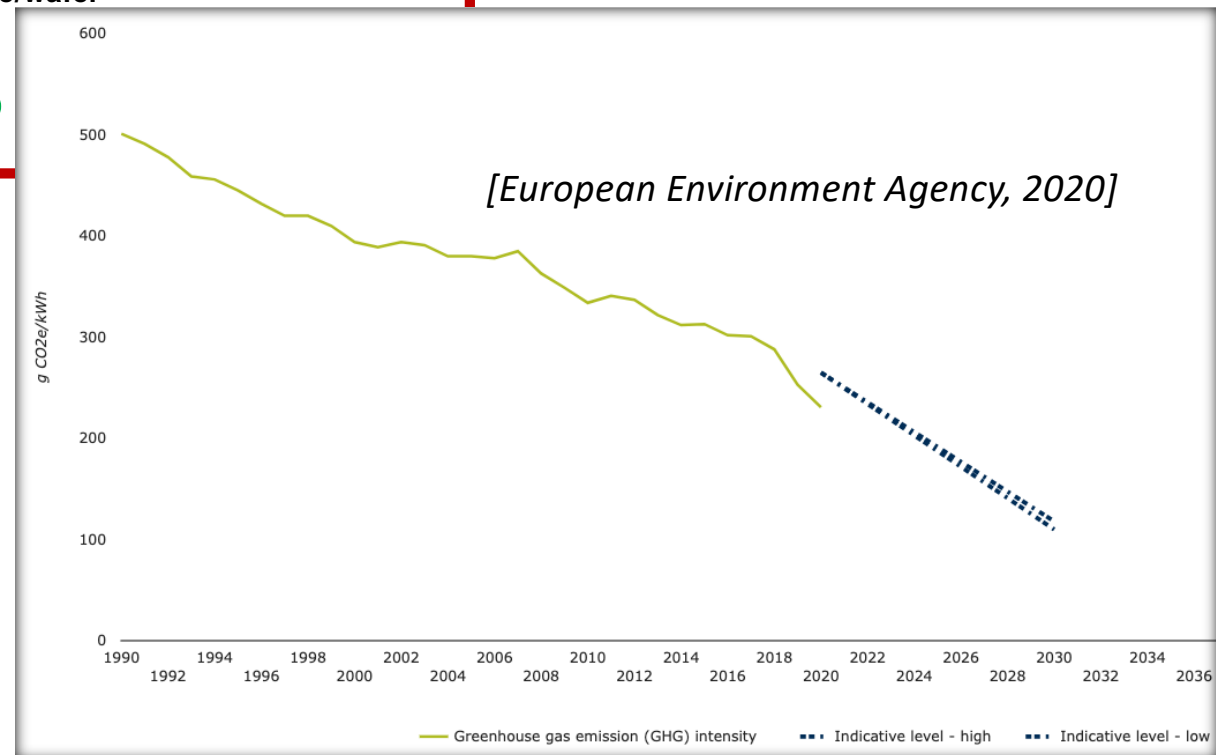
**Operational** (energy usage during lifetime)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

Transition towards green energy sources

CO2e/kWh (Europe): CAGR = -2.5%

Only addresses embodied scope-2 and operational footprint, not embodied scope-1 nor scope-3



# Decreasing Operational Energy

**Embodied Scope 2** (energy usage during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

**Embodied Scope 1** (chemicals and gases during production)

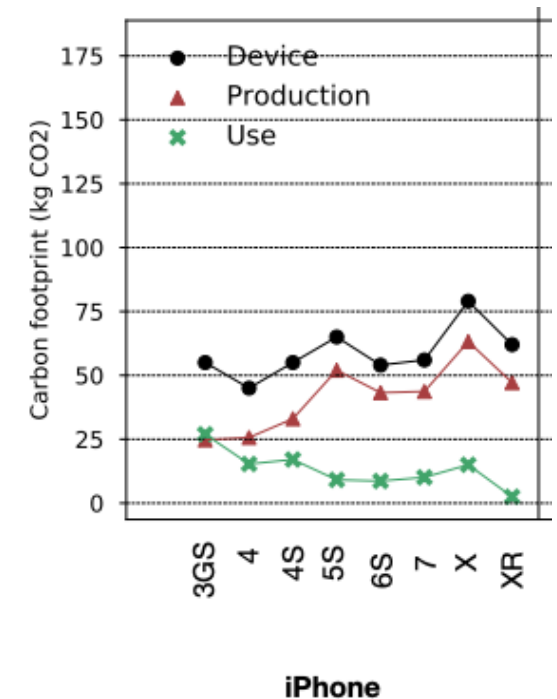
$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-1}} = \# \text{chips} \times \# \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{CO2e/wafer}$$

**Operational** (energy usage during lifetime)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

Operational energy consumption is decreasing

**kudos to ourselves! 😊**



[U. Gupta et al., HPCA 2021]

# How Does Total Carbon Footprint Scale?

## Embodied Scope-2 (energy usage during production)

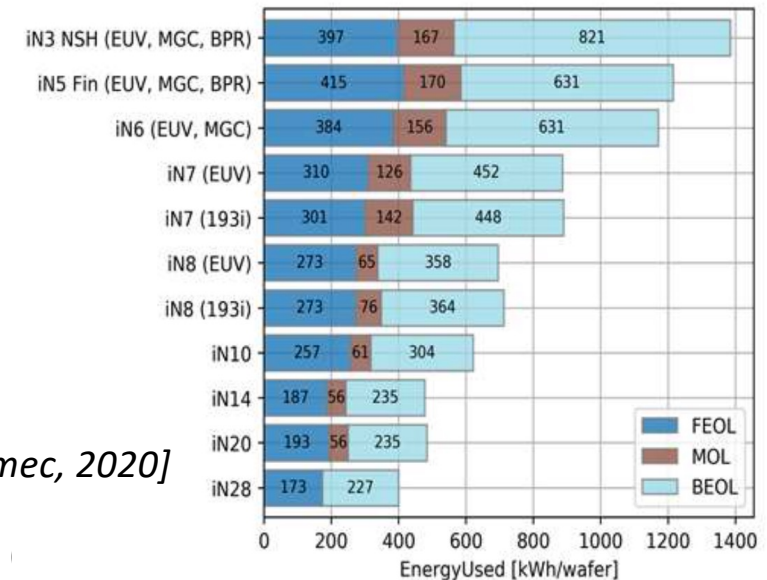
$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-2}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{kWh/wafer} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$

## Embodied Scope-1 (chemicals and gases during production)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{embodied, scope-1}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{wafer/chips} \times \text{CO2e/wafer}$$

## Operational (energy usage during lifetime)

$$\text{CO2e}_{\text{operational}} = \# \text{chips} \times \text{kWh/chip} \times \text{CO2e/kWh}$$



[M. Garcia Bardon, imec, 2020]

## Key take-aways:

- Demand for chips keeps increasing by ~9% per year
- GHG emissions (both scope-1 and 2) per wafer increase by ~9% to ~12% per year due to increased manufacturing complexity in new technology nodes
- Devices become more energy-efficient, so operational emissions decrease
- Transition to green energy not moving fast enough **and** it doesn't impact scope-1 nor scope-3 emissions (and other sustainability issues like raw material need, e-waste, water usage, etc.)
- End result: **embodied emissions dominate or will soon dominate**

***How to design sustainable processors  
considering inherent data uncertainty?***

***Embrace it!***

# FOCAL: First-Order Carbon Model

FOCAL is a top-down, parameterized model that

- is deliberately simple,
- is built upon first principles, and
- provides insight

Key idea:

- use proxies for embodied and operational footprint,
- parameterize relative importance of embodied versus operational footprint,
- while considering different use case scenarios, incl. rebound effects

*FOCAL enables powerful analyses despite inherent data uncertainty:*

- *similar conclusions across a range of scenarios → confident conclusions*
- *otherwise → need to be careful when reaching conclusions*

# Proxy for Embodied Footprint?

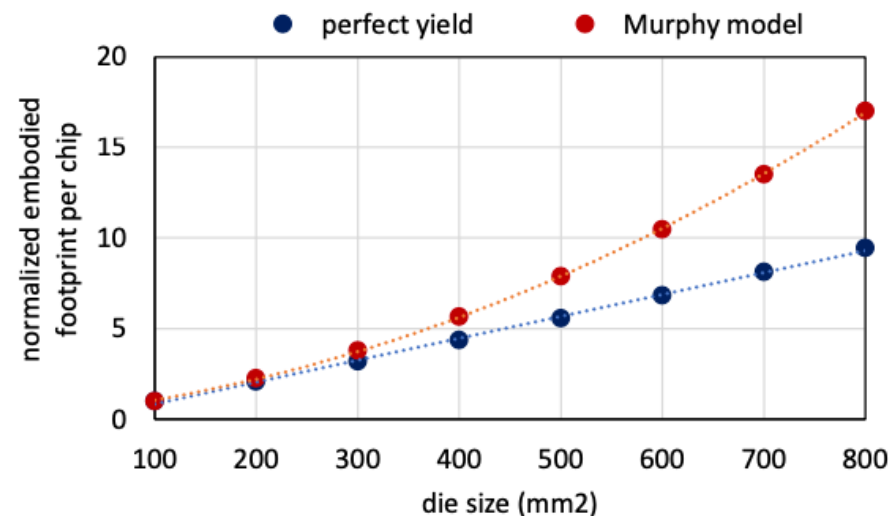
**Wafer = production unit in semiconductor fab**

- Environmental impact for producing a wafer: energy consumed, chemicals and gases emitted, ultra pure water used, materials used

**The bigger the size of a chip, the higher its embodied footprint**

- Accounting for lost silicon wafer area  
*[de Vries, 2005]*
- Accounting for yield issues  
*[Murphy model,  
TSMC: 0.09 defect density per  $\text{cm}^2$ ]*

***Proxy = chip area (A)***



# Proxy for Embodied Footprint?

Embodied footprint of an IC is proportional to its area

Amount of energy needed (and chemicals/gases emitted) to produce a wafer increases with newer chip technologies

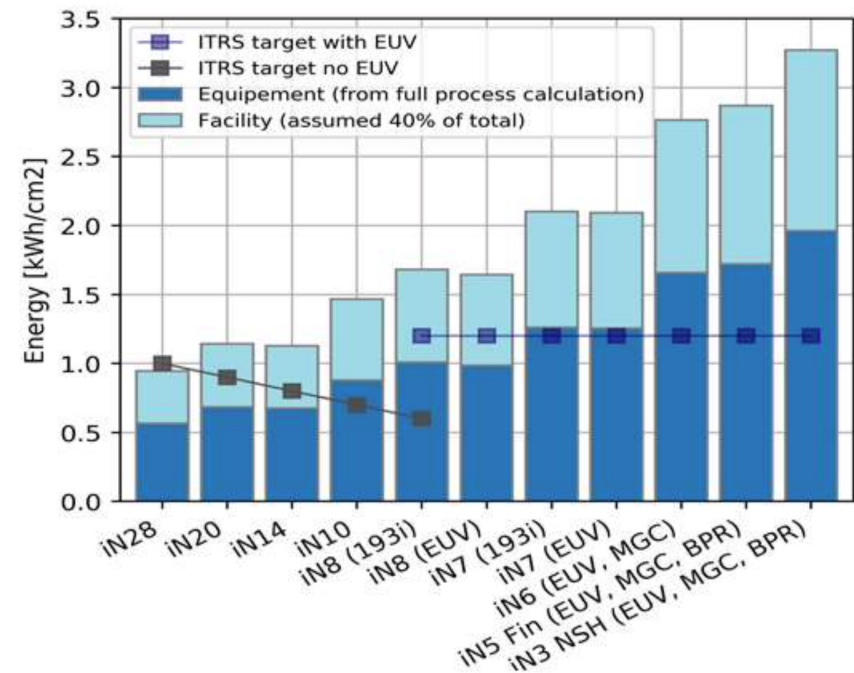
From imec: iN28 (~2011) to iN3 (~2022)

**CAGR = +11.9%**

***Proxy = chip area (A)***

***Embodied footprint =***

$$A [cm^2] \times E_f [kWh / cm^2] \times C_f [CO2e / kWh]$$



[M. Garcia Bardon, imec, 2020]

# Proxy for Operational Footprint? (1/2)

## (1) Fixed-work scenario

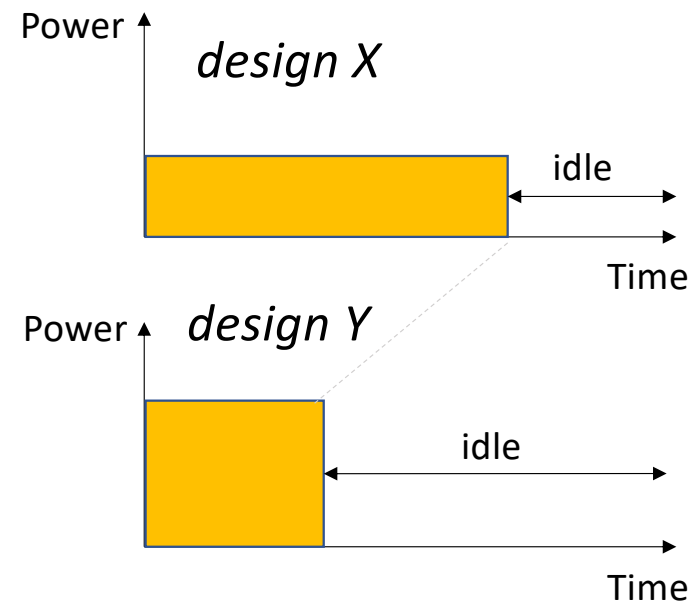
- Assumption: a device performs fixed amount of work over its entire lifetime

**The higher energy consumption, the higher its operational footprint**

***Proxy = energy consumption (E)***

***Operational footprint =***

$$E \text{ [kWh]} \times C_f \text{ [CO2e / kWh]}$$



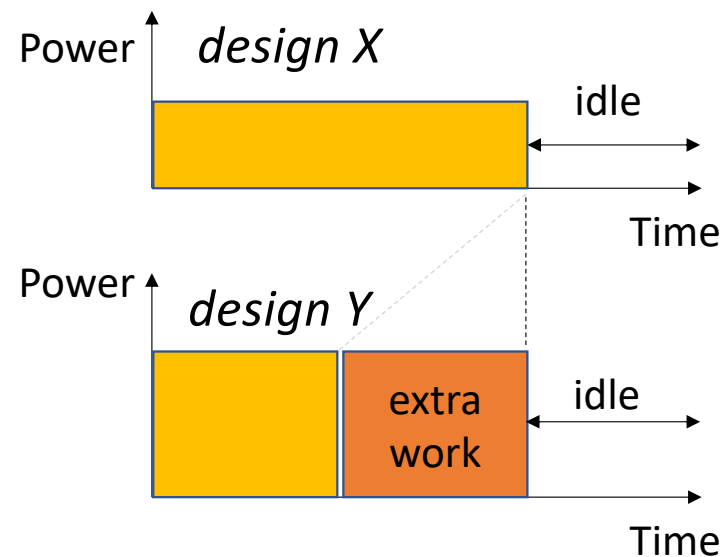
# Proxy for Operational Footprint? (2/2)

## (2) Fixed-time scenario – *more realistic scenario(?)*

- We do more work because it is more efficient, cf. Jevons' paradox
- Assumption: we use the device for the same amount of time

**The higher power consumption, the higher its operational footprint**

***Proxy = power consumption (P)***



# How to Weigh Embodied versus Operational Footprint?

Ratio of embodied vs operational footprint depends on

## Device type

Battery-operated vs always-on devices

## Lifetime

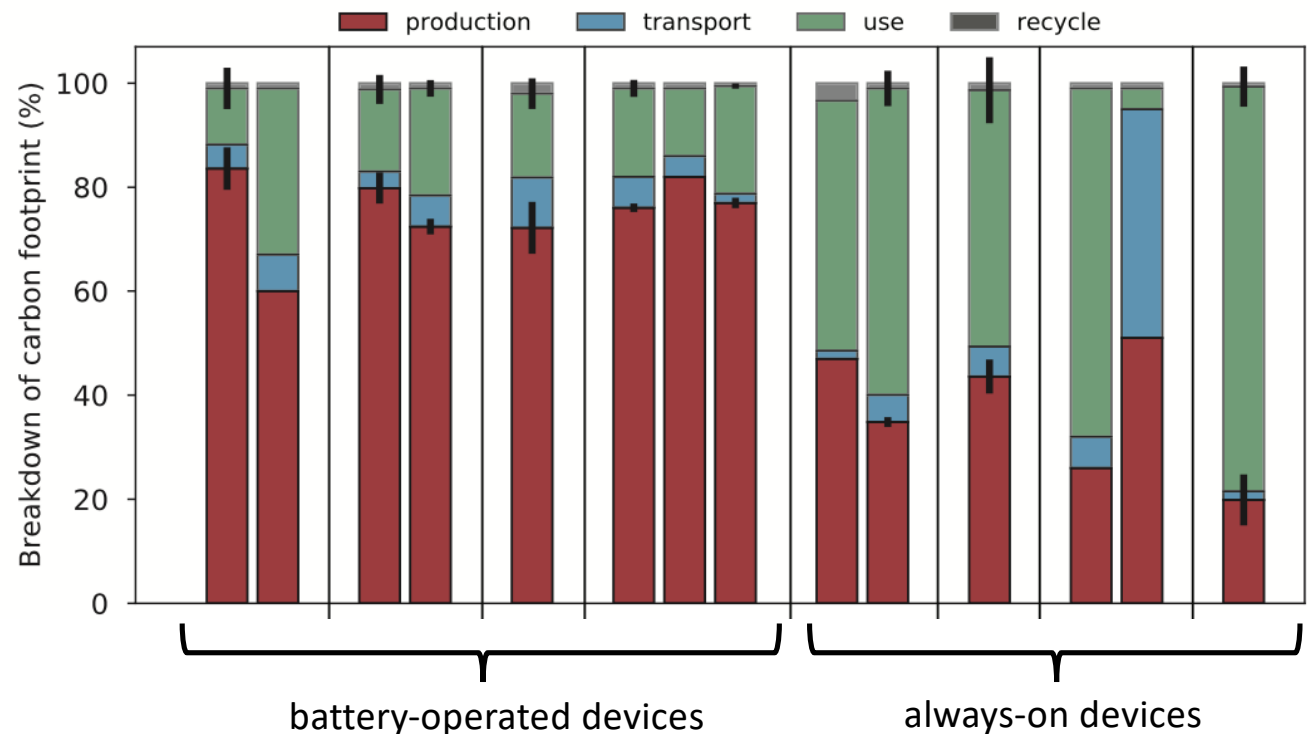
The longer the lifetime, the higher the relative weight of operational footprint

## Energy mix

The greener the energy mix during lifetime, the higher the relative weight of embodied footprint

*Answer: we parameterize the embodied-vs-operational footprint*

[Gupta et al., HPCA 2021]



# FOCAL Computes the Normalized Carbon Footprint (NCF)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{fixed-work:} \quad NCF_{fw, \alpha_{E2O}}(X, Y) &= \alpha_{E2O} \frac{A_X}{A_Y} + (1 - \alpha_{E2O}) \frac{E_X}{E_Y} \\ \text{fixed-time:} \quad NCF_{ft, \alpha_{E2O}}(X, Y) &= \alpha_{E2O} \frac{A_X}{A_Y} + (1 - \alpha_{E2O}) \frac{P_X}{P_Y} \end{aligned}$$

$\alpha_{E2O}$  parameter is a function of device type/usage, lifetime of device, rebound effect, energy source during manufacturing vs lifetime

**Parameterization allows for considering different scenarios w/ confidence intervals:**

- Embodied emissions dominate (assume  $\alpha_{E2O} = 0.8 \pm 0.1$ ) versus
- Operational emissions dominate (assume  $\alpha_{E2O} = 0.2 \pm 0.1$ )
- Fixed-work versus fixed-time

# Evaluating Archetypal Processor Design Choices using FOCAL

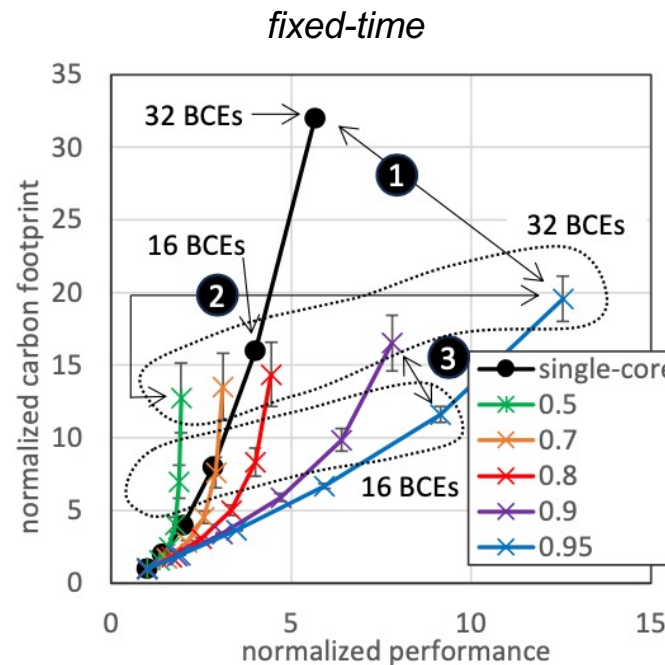
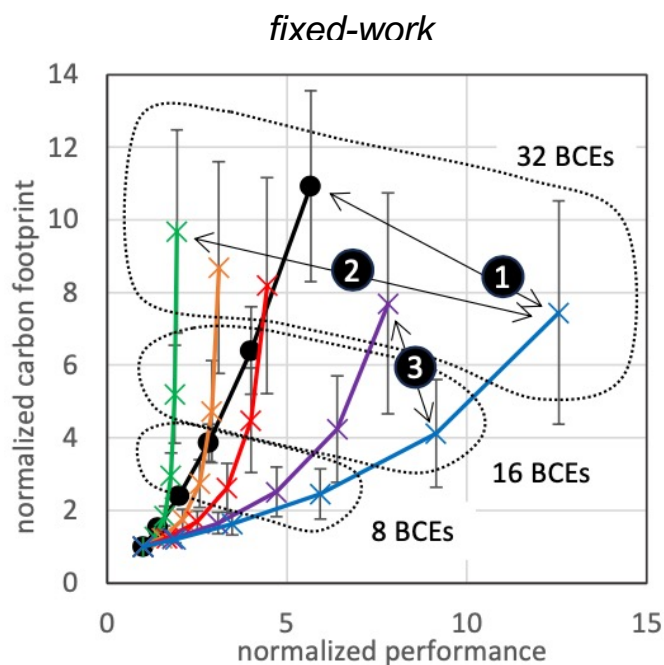
A design choice is

- **strongly sustainable** if it reduces carbon footprint under both the fixed-work and fixed-time scenarios  
→ *no (limited) risk for rebound effect*  
e.g., **die shrink**, **multicore (vs single-core w/ same chip area)**, pipeline gating, DVFS
- **weakly sustainable** if it reduces carbon footprint only under a fixed-work scenario  
→ *(substantial) risk for rebound effect*  
e.g., **speculation (branch prediction, runahead)**, heterogeneity, acceleration, caching
- **less sustainable** if it increases carbon footprint under both the fixed-work and fixed-time scenarios  
e.g., high-complexity microarchitecture (out-of-order vs. in-order), **dark silicon**, turboboosting

# #1: Multi-core is Strongly Sustainable

## Key insights:

1. Multicore is strongly sustainable compared to single core
2. Parallelizing software is weakly sustainable
3. Parallelizing software is more sustainable than adding cores



Using Amdahl's Law and  
Pollack's rule  
[Hill & Marty, 2008]  
[Woo & Lee, 2008]

$f$  = degree of parallelism  
[see legend]

BCE = Base Core Equivalent  
= number of cores  
= unit of chip area

assuming  $\alpha_{E20} = 0.2 \pm 0.1$

# #2: CPU Speculation is Weakly Sustainable

## Scalar Vector Runahead (SVR)\*

In-core data prefetcher by  
speculatively vectorizing chains of  
dependent loads

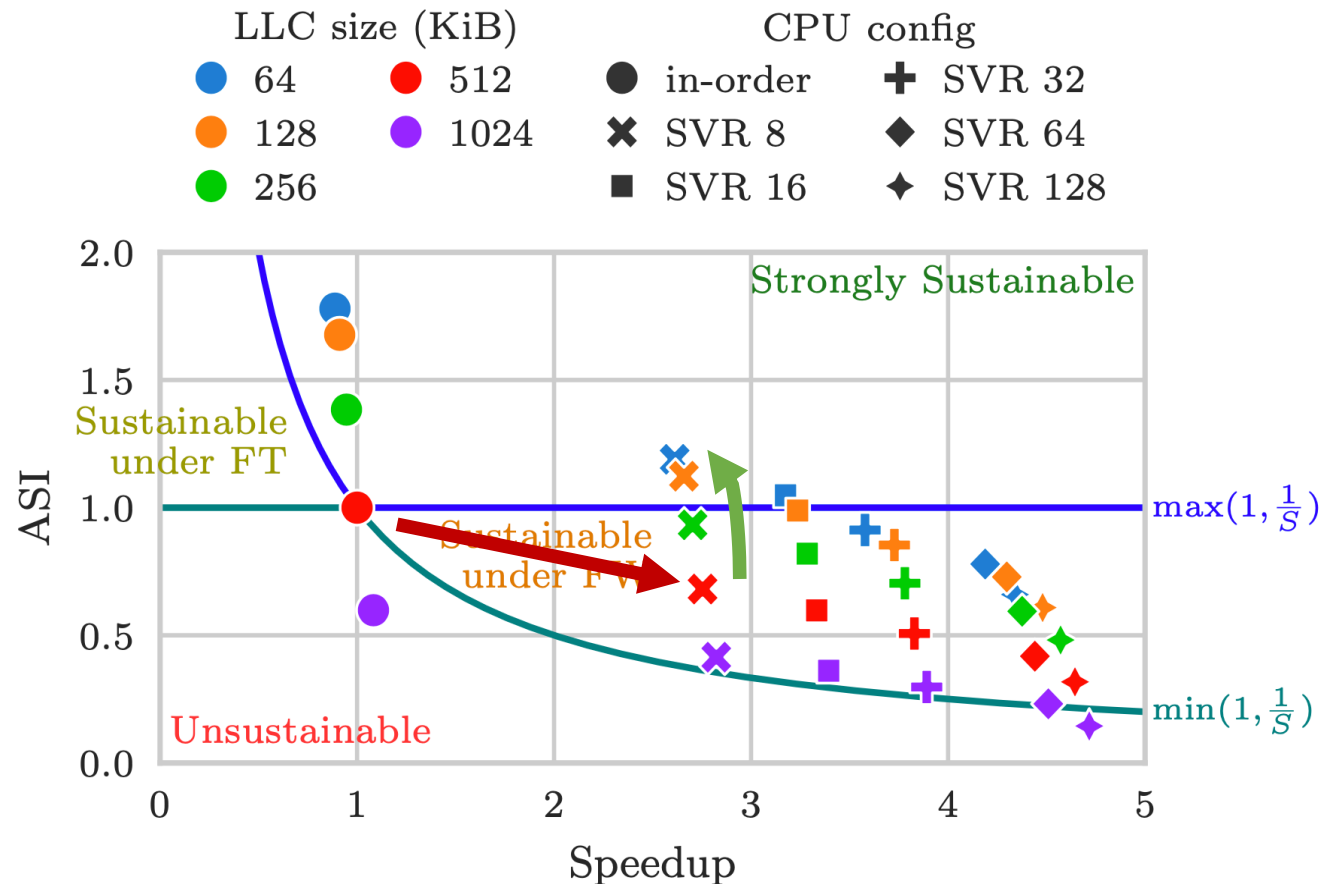
Architectural Sustainability Index  
(ASI)\*\* reports whether a design is  
weakly or strongly sustainable

SVR = Weakly sustainable

Compensate weak sustainability by  
reducing LLC size → illustrates  
how to design a strongly  
sustainable processor architecture

\*[Roelandts et al., MICRO 2024, Top Picks 2025]

\*\*[Roelandts et al., (Best of) IEEE CAL 2025]



# #3: Dark Silicon is Unsustainable

**Domain-Specific Accelerators (DSAs)**  
**powered on only when needed**

Sea of DSAs is widely deployed across modern-day SoCs:

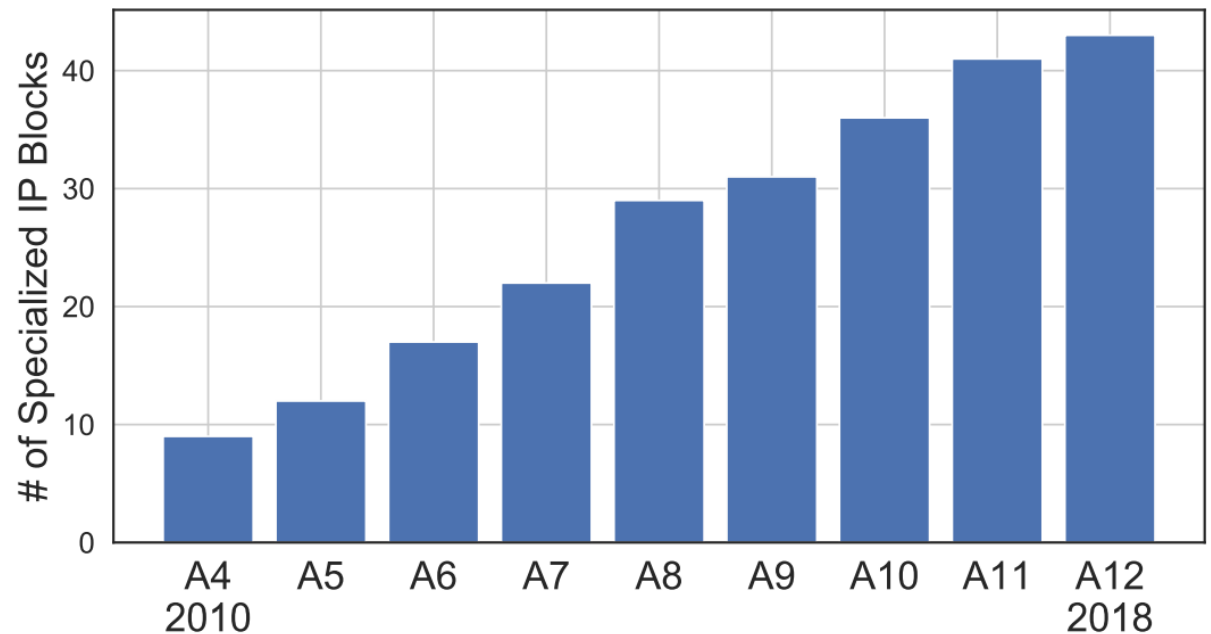
- **Mobile:** e.g., Qualcomm Snapdragon
- **Laptop:** e.g., Apple M2
- **Server:** e.g., IBM Tellum

**Dark silicon fundamentally trades off chip area for power/energy efficiency**

**Question: Does the increase in embodied footprint due to dark silicon offset the decrease in operational footprint? Answer: No!**

*[Brunvand et al., IGSC, 2019]*

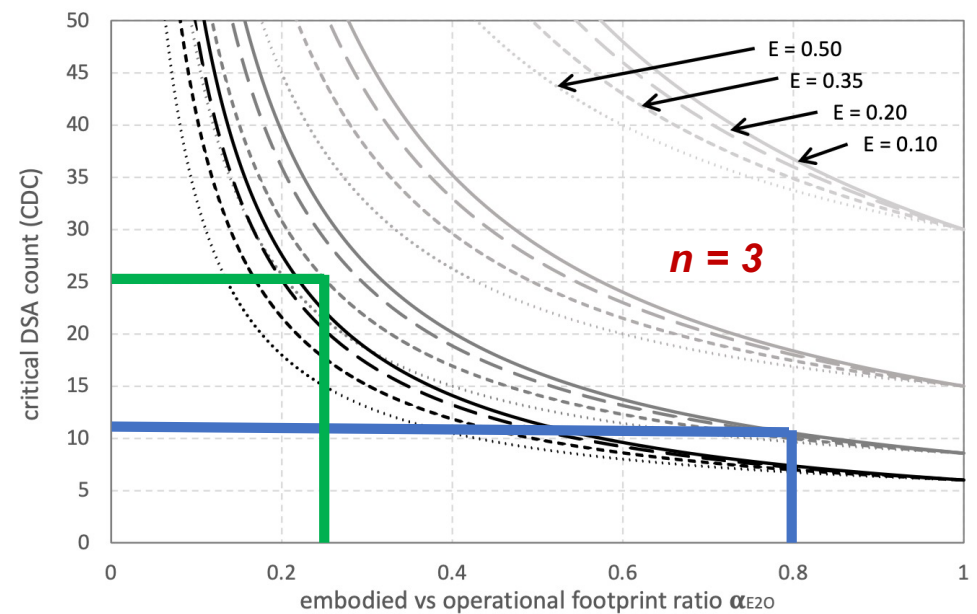
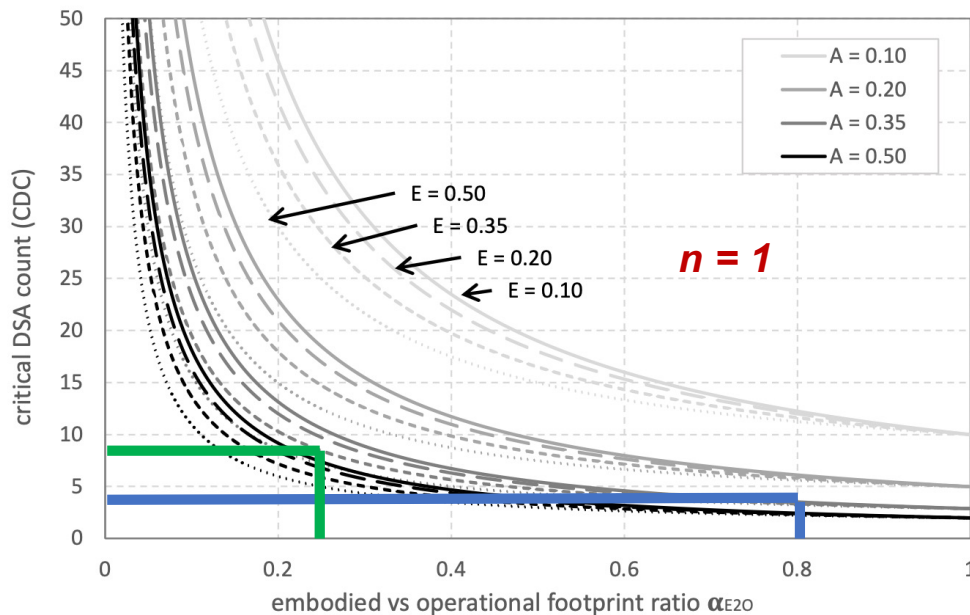
*[Eeckhout, ASPLOS, 2024]*



*[Shao et al., ISCA@50, 2023]*

# Reconfigurability to the Rescue?

*Does reduced embodied footprint of CGRA compensate for increased operational footprint?*



*for embodied-footprint dominated systems  $\rightarrow$  if it replaces  $\sim 4$  to  $\sim 12$  DSAs*

*for operational-footprint dominated systems  $\rightarrow$  if it replaces  $\sim 8$  to  $\sim 25$  DSAs*

**This is (way) fewer than the number of ( $\sim 40$ ) DSAs in modern-day SoCs**

*[assuming  $A = E = 0.35$ ]*

*[P. Dangi et al., ICCAD 2024]*

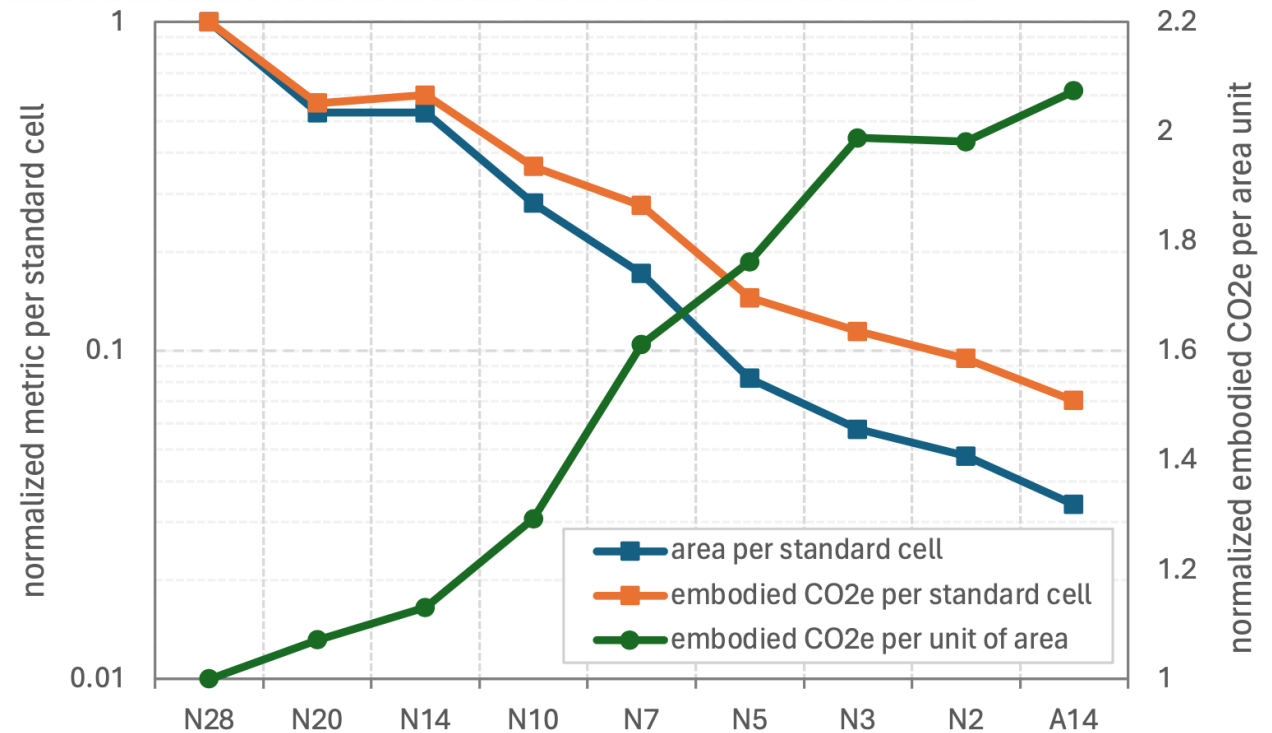
# Towards Sustainable Processor Design: Questioning Current Design Paradigm

Area per transistor and embodied footprint per transistor scale exponentially

Pure die shrink = strongly sustainable

This is not what we've done – we've used additional transistors to add more functionality (cores, caches, accelerators)

**Overall insight:** *use increasing available transistor count in a sober way and leverage reduced carbon footprint per transistor to design more sustainable processors*



[Boakes et al., IEDM, 2023]

# Wrap-Up

**ICT's contribution to global warming is significant, and rising**

**Assessing computer architecture sustainability is challenging**

- Multi-faceted problem, inherent data uncertainty, need to take whole lifecycle into account

**Total carbon emissions continue to grow** under current scaling trends

**Embodied emissions are, or will soon be, most dominant contributor** to the total carbon footprint

Computer architects can (and should) **reduce total carbon footprint by reducing die size** (primarily) *and* **operational emissions** (secondarily)

**FOCAL: First-order model using proxies for embodied/operational footprint and parameterized embodied/operational ratio to holistically reason about sustainability**

- Deliberately simple, yet accounts for Jevons' paradox
- Provides insight and intuition
- Framework to reason about computer architecture sustainability trade-offs for a variety of scenarios
  - Multicore, heterogeneity, caching, speculation, specialization, parallelization, etc.

**Exciting and important work ahead of us: call for action for computer scientists and engineers 😊**

# Sustainable Processor Design

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*January 22, 2026*

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*[S. Sheikhpour et al., “Sustainable High-Performance Instruction Selection for Superscalar Processors”, ICCAD 2024]*

*[L. Eeckhout, “FOCAL: A First-Order Model to Assess Processor Sustainability”, ASPLOS 2024, IEEE Micro Top Picks 2025]*

*[L. Eeckhout, “A First-Order Model to Assess Computer Architecture Sustainability”, (Best of) IEEE CAL 2022]*

*[L. Eeckhout, “Kaya for Architects: Towards Sustainable Computer Systems”, IEEE Micro 2023]*