

Binge-watching Netflix is bad for the environment

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Binge-watching Netflix generates a large amount of carbon dioxide emissions, says Dr Kari Hiekkanen, visiting researcher at Aalto University and trainer at several programs of Aalto University Executive Education and Professional Development (Aalto EE).

Hiekkanen says that engaging activities such as watching a TV series, whilst simultaneously browsing social media requires a significant amount of energy.

For instance, streaming videos on your device, such as TikTok, generates significantly more carbon emissions than listening to an audiobook.

“Every device, including its manufacturing process, consumes electricity. The emissions from ICT represents an ‘inconvenient truth.’ Digitalisation has been touted as a solution to numerous challenges, yet it is crucial for people to recognise that it comes with its own set of problems,” says Kari Hiekkanen.

Kari Hiekkanen adds that the tech titans are reluctant to admit their contributions to the problem. In 2023, Googles energy consumption equalled a quarter of the annual energy used in Finland.

“To grasp the magnitude of the issue, ICT services account for approximately 3.5 to 4 percent of global electricity consumption. There is a broad agreement amongst scientists that ICT services have already surpassed aviation in carbon emissions several years ago, and this will only get worse with the ever-growing demand on ICT services,” says Kari Hiekkanen.

Kari Hiekkanen says that raising awareness is key, and this involves recognising that digital consumption does indeed consume energy. It’s time for consumers to reclaim control over how they spend their time.

/ENDS.

For more information, or to speak with Kari Hiekkanen, please contact Katie Hurley from BlueSky Education on khurley@bluesky-pr.com.