

Air Travel Carbon Emissions are destroying the Environment

The UK government is aiming for a 60% cut in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 but we will not be able to meet our goals on climate change without curbing the demand for air travel. At present the experts predicts that only 5.5% of the UK carbon emissions is due to air travel and that the government should concentrate on the other 94.5% as the UK air travel industry generates thousands of jobs and billions of pounds in revenue and these figures are set to increase as the airline industry wants to increase the number of passenger movements in UK airports from about 200m per year now to about 470m by 2030. If this happens then air travel will account for over 10 % of carbon emissions in the UK. It will be more than 10% if other polluting sectors such as car travel are reduced due to an increase in public transport use and cleaner fuels.

What can we do to prevent this growth in flying?

The government has said it wants aviation included in the next round of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. What is this? Wellâ?!

There is an emissions trading scheme in operation internationally but many people are not aware that this is perceived to be the cornerstone of the climate change policy in the EU and USA.

Firms are set quotas on how much carbon dioxide they can produce per year, if they produce more than this allowance, then they buy an allowance from another firm that has not reached its quota on how much it can produce in one year! Get it?

Emissions Trading is particularly suited to the emissions of greenhouse gases, the gases responsible for global warming, which have the same effect wherever they are emitted. The idea of the carbon-trading scheme was to raise the cost to firms of continuing to pollute while creating a market to give an incentive to become more environmentally efficient.

Another suggestion to curb travel is airlines paying higher taxes on short haul European flights to reflect emissions, even if this results in higher fares. The thinking is that taxation through passenger duty would be easier and quicker than focusing on the Emissions Trading Scheme but any proposed increase in taxation would need to be enough to slow down the growth and eventually decrease the number of short haul flights.

A decrease in flights would be bad for airports and airlines as they would see a decrease in airport generated profits and could lead to a number of job losses and competitiveness for the UK economy, but other sectors of the UK economy such as domestic tourism would benefit thus creating jobs and revenue for the tax man to get his greedy hands on.

Most of the wealthier nations in Europe are developing an air dependent culture and its clear that something needs to be done. Frequent flying for business and pleasure and second homes abroad is fuelling this growth in air travel. Other forms of public transport such as rail are getting more expensive making domestic flights within the UK more affordable and convenient. In the USA this tends not to be the case due to the distance between major cities.

Carbon offsetting helps you to offset the carbon dioxide that you use when flying by planting trees or installing solar panels and thereby removing your contribution to global climate change. You contribute to pollution by flying; you reduce the pollution by planting trees! You are carbon neutral!

Visit the authors website to learn more about [Offsetting Carbon](#) and carbon offset companies.

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Davinios Greeno works for the [organic food](#) and [ethical clothes](#) directory that lists 100s of Organic and Ethical Companies and we also have [Health Articles](#) for you to read or publish.