For the
UN Secretary General
Climate Action Summit
New York, 23 September 2019

THE AMBITION CALL

The Ambition Call provides country recommendations for immediate climate action in response to the UN Secretary-General's request for countries to:

- present concrete, realistic plans that are compatible with the latest IPCC Special Report on global warming of 1.5°C
- enhance their NDCs by 2020 and
- reduce GHG emissions by 45% over the next decade, and to net zero by 2050.[1]

The 2019 Summit in Osaka saw the G20 countries (with the exception of the USA) reaffirming their commitments to fully implement the Paris Agreement.[2] Many have already announced their willingness to increase their mitigation targets, aiming for net-zero emissions by 2050.

UK

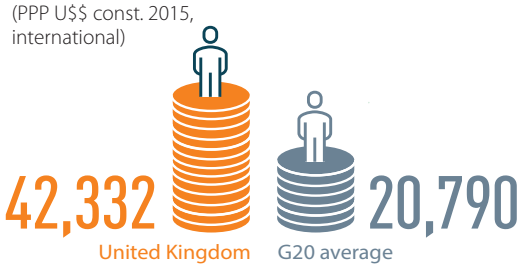
GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS (INCL. FORESTRY) PER CAPITA

(tCO_2e/capita)

Data from 2015 | Source: PRIMAP 2018

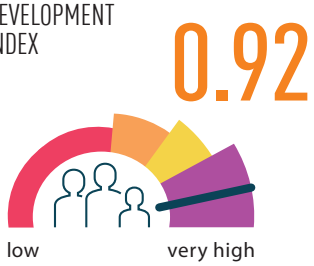
GDP PER CAPITA

(PPP U$$ const. 2015, international)



Source: World Bank 2017

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX



Data from 2017 | Source: UNDP 2018

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

#1

Establish a moratorium on current and new permits for North Sea oil and gas exploration and extraction.

#2

Adopt goal of 100% sales of zero-emission cars by 2030.

#3

Ban further airport expansions, to curb the rise in aviation emissions.

Climate Transparency

Climate Transparency is a global partnership with a shared mission to stimulate a 'race to the top' in G20 climate action and to shift investments towards zero carbon technologies through enhanced transparency. Climate Transparency is made possible through support from the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), through the International Climate Initiative, ClimateWorks Foundation and the World Bank Group.

https://www.climate-transparency.org/

All endnotes see full version: https://www.climate-transparency.org/call-for-more-ambition-ahead-of-the-un-climate-action-summit

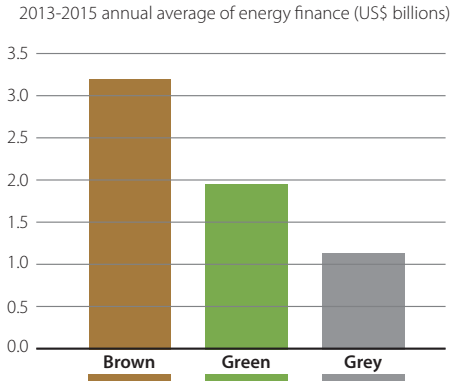
August 2019

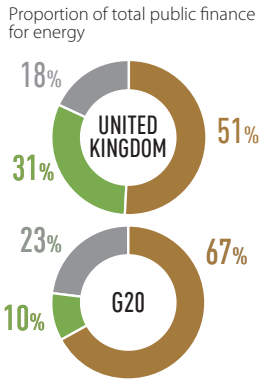
Establish a moratorium on current and new permits for North Sea oil and gas exploration and extraction

#1

According to recent research, CO_2 emissions from the oil, gas and coal in already-operating fields and mines globally will push the world far beyond 1.5°C of warming.[3] Although the UK Government has introduced pioneering Climate Change Acts and is phasing out coal power, emissions from the burning of oil and gas have fallen just 3% since 1990 and the government's policy on oil and gas is to enable the greatest possible volume to be extracted.[4] This goes in the opposite direction of UK's climate commitment and creates a risk of breaching the Paris Agreement's long-term temperature goal. This could potentially lead to stranded assets, as it is expected that onshore wind and solar PV will be less expensive than the cheapest fossil fuel alternative by 2020.[5] Thus, the UK should establish a moratorium on current and new permits for gas and oil exploration in the North Sea.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC FINANCE FOR THE ENERGY SECTOR





brown Coal, oil, gas, and fossil fuel-based power projects

grey Large-scale hydropower, biofuels, biomass, nuclear, incineration, transmission, distribution, storage, energy efficiency, other general electricity support

green Renewable energy projects (excluding grey financing)

Source: Oil Change International 2017

What does this mean?

CO_2 emissions from offshore oil and gas will significantly decrease if the UK revokes undeveloped licenses and review whether existing facilities should be phased out early via a just transition. This will bring the UK closer to achieving the Paris Agreement goals.[6] Establishing a moratorium on new permits for gas and oil exploration and development will help make zero-carbon alternatives more attractive, prompting large-scale deployment of competitive renewable energy in the power sector. Moreover, installation of renewable energy facilities and the need for new skills and infrastructure in the industry will spur investment in local communities and generate more jobs.

Additional development benefits

SDG 3
Moving away from oil and gas to carbon neutral energy sources will significantly reduce air pollution and associated diseases like respiratory problems.

SDG 8
Development of a new carbon-neutral industry will support employment opportunities through the creation of safe and decent jobs.

SDG 9
Development and integration of new clean technologies replacing oil and gas supports sustainable industrialisation and infrastructure upgrading.

SDG 11
When renewables and other zero carbon technologies displace the use of fossil fuels, such as oil and gas, they help reduce the environmental impact of cities by reducing GHG and air pollutants from their activities.

SDG 12
Switching to a carbon-neutral technology for energy requires and contributes to the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

Good practice in other countries

In 2017, **France** symbolically committed to ban all new gas and oil exploration, as of 2017, and gas and oil production across all its territories by 2040.

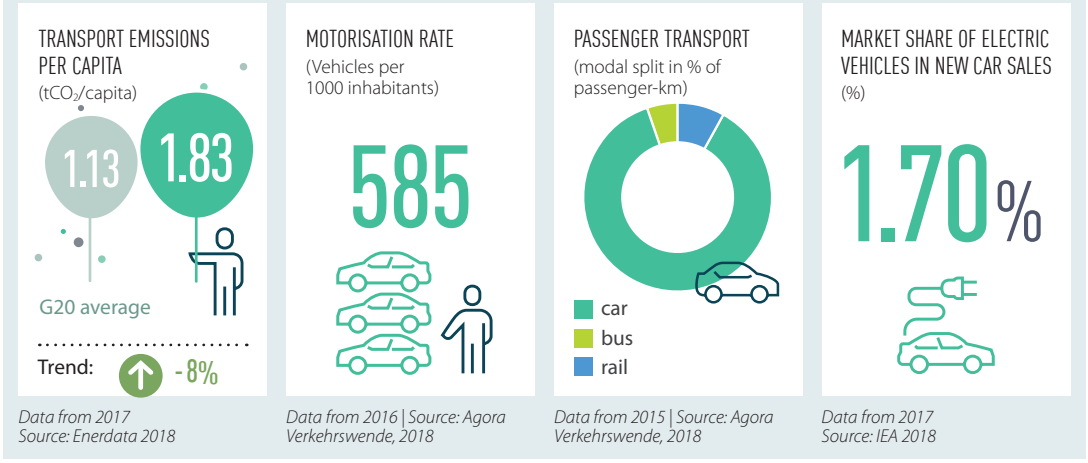
In November 2018, **New Zealand** banned new offshore oil and gas exploration projects. The country has the fourth-largest exclusive economic zone on the planet.

Adopt goal of 100% sales of zero-emission cars by 2030

#2

In 2018, transport accounted for a third of total CO_2 emissions in the UK. A majority of these emissions came from road transport.[7] In 2017, the sales of electric cars constituted only 1.9% of all new cars.[8] The UK Government set a target of 100% sales of EVs by 2040, but the Paris Agreement temperature target requires that all transportation is decarbonised by mid-century, which requires the implementation of stringent vehicle emission standards in the short term and a faster uptake of zero-emissions vehicles.[9] Since purchasing costs of EVs are already expected to be lower than those of conventional cars by 2030 and because EVs have lower running costs than conventional vehicles[10], a target of 100% sales of EVs in 2030 is not only feasible but also needed to redirect the evolution of the transport sector in line with the recommendations of the IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C.

TRANSPORT SECTOR



What does this mean?

Defining a goal of 100% sales of emission free cars by 2030 is a major step in the transport sector in the UK, as achieving this would provide strong signals to guide the uptake of cleaner alternatives in transport. Working towards this goal would result in over 85% reduction of the emission in the sector and could place the UK as frontrunner in the global fight against climate change. Significantly increasing EVs would also mean less reliance on energy imports and help reduce air and noise pollution, while aligning UK policies with the Paris Agreement and the recommendations of the IPCC Special Report on global warming of 1.5°C.

Additional development benefits

SDG 3

Switching to zero emissions vehicles reduces air pollution by lowering fuel use and improves mental health and well-being by reducing noise.

SDG 8

Zero-emissions vehicles increase resource efficiency by reducing fossil fuel use and help decouple growth from environmental degradation. New vehicle and fuel types contribute to technological/infrastructure upgrading and economic diversification.

SDG 9

Development and integration of zero carbon vehicles and associated infrastructure (e.g. charging networks) supports sustainable industrialisation, the adoption of clean technologies and infrastructure upgrading.

SDG 11

Shifting to zero carbon vehicles increases access to safe, sustainable transport systems for all and significantly reduces air pollution in cities.

SDG 12

Switching to zero carbon vehicles increases resource efficiency, reduces air pollution and can support the adoption of sustainable practices such as encouraging users to reduce their transport related emissions.

Good practice in other countries

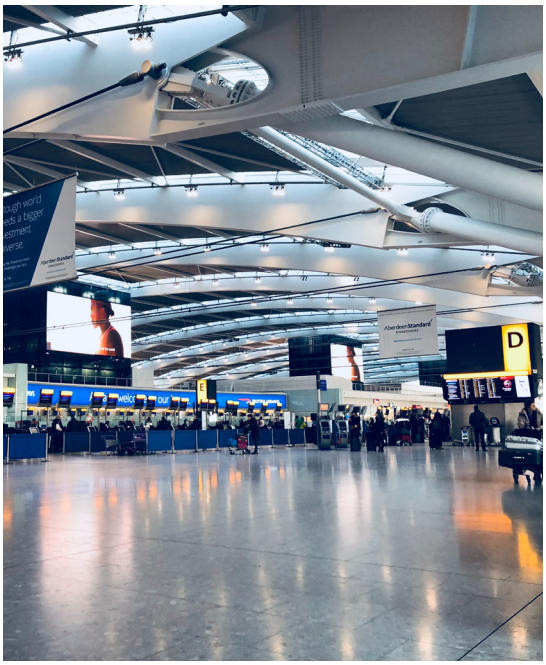
In its National Transport Plan 2018-2029, published in 2016, **Norway** announced that cars and light vans will be zero-emission vehicles by 2025.

Several **European** cities have ambitious targets for electric mobility: Rotterdam (bus fleet by 2029), Paris (cars and buses by 2025), Rome (cars by 2024), London (buses by 2025).[11]

Ban further airport expansions, to curb the rise in aviation emissions

#3

International aviation accounts for approximately 500 $MtCO_2$ a year and has an even wider impact on the climate from other (non-CO_2) emissions.[12] Globally, the sector's carbon emissions are growing rapidly and are projected to double by 2035.[13] Only in the UK, international air transport grew by 20% between 2010 and 2016, and related international GHG emissions increased by 7%.[14,15] Despite their magnitude, policies to regulate aviation emissions are only starting to be discussed. In June 2019, the UK Parliament adopted an amendment to the 2008 Climate Change Act, which sets a net-zero emissions target for 2050.[16] However, the British Government plans to expand Heathrow airport, which is already a major contributor to the UK's national GHG emissions. Currently, aviation accounts for around 7% of the UK's total emissions, but its share is likely to increase up to 25% by 2050, as other sectors decarbonise more quickly.[17] In 2016, the independent Committee on Climate Change found that the business plan for Heathrow expansion alone projects a 15% increase in aviation emissions by 2050.[18,19] Decarbonising the aviation sector is difficult, so the UK should also focus on decreasing the demand rather than expanding it. This could be completed via a combination of various measures, including carbon pricing, limiting airport capacity and offering alternatives to air travel (such as train) at competitive prices.



What does this mean?

If the UK goes ahead with the expansion of Heathrow airport, the government will have to make deeper emissions cuts from other sectors of the economy to be able to comply with their newly set target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. Moreover, according to government calculations, a new runway would still have a negative noise impact on nearly a million households, or 2.2 million people. Department for Transport documents, released by the Civil Aviation Authority, show the government expects 973,000 households around Heathrow to experience increased daytime noise by 2050 after a third runway has been built.

Additional development benefits

SDG 3

Reducing aviation activity, air and noise pollution would lead to a decrease in negative impacts on the mental health and well-being of communities living around the airport areas.

SDG 6

Avoiding further expansion of airport area would reduce water contamination caused by coverage of these large areas with concrete.

SDG 11

Reducing aviation activity will help lower the environmental impact of cities by tackling the amount of GHG and noise pollution from cities. The large areas needed may also lead to forced relocation of the population in nearby areas.

SDG 15

Avoiding further expansion of airport areas would help avoid potential deforestation and soil degradation due to land use change in the large areas needed for airport facilities.

Good practice in other countries

In July 2019, **France** announced that they will introduce a tax on airlines flying from its airports to help reduce the aviation sector's carbon emissions.

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