

## Global aviation emissions must be capped to tackle climate change

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The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) has advised the UK Government ahead of talks at Copenhagen that global aviation emissions should be capped as part of a wider global agreement to tackle climate change. Developed countries will need to take the lead in making significant reductions in cutting aviation emissions, ensuring that these are no higher – and possibly lower – than 2005 levels in the period to 2050. An interim period where rising aviation emissions are offset by emissions reductions in other sectors would be feasible. Over time, however, aviation emissions growth will have to be constrained.

The recommendations were outlined today in a letter from the CCC to Secretary of State for Transport Lord Adonis and Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Ed Miliband. The Government requested that the CCC advise them on options to reduce global aviation emissions ahead of the UN summit at Copenhagen.

The CCC's recommendations are designed to reduce aviation emissions in line with a global reduction in emissions of all greenhouse gases of 50% by 2050 in order to stabilise global temperature rise and avoid dangerous climate change. If left unchecked, global aviation emissions could account for 15-20% of all CO<sub>2</sub> produced in 2050, contributing to negative impacts associated with global warming. A new and ambitious policy on aviation is therefore required.

Cutting gross UK aviation emissions in 2050 to 2005 levels together with 90% emissions cuts in other sectors would achieve the required economy wide 80% emissions reduction which has been committed to by the UK under the Climate Change Act.

In the letter, the CCC argues that other developed nations should accept similar targets for aviation to complement the 80% economy-wide targets recently committed to by the G8, meaning that the aviation sector should aim to reduce its own emissions to 2005 levels by 2050.

The CCC advises that:

- **All Aviation CO<sub>2</sub> emissions should be capped** either through a global sectoral deal **or by including international aviation emissions in national emission reduction targets**
- **Any international agreement to reduce emissions should be ambitious** and no less than that already agreed by the EU, which requires a 5% reduction in net emissions from 2013-2020.
- The CCC support the inclusion of aviation emissions in the EU cap and trade scheme from 2012, but **emissions allowances should be fully auctioned to prevent airlines benefiting from windfall profits** that would ensue under a free allowance allocation system.
- **Auction revenues are one of a number of potential sources of funding for adaptation that should be agreed at Copenhagen.**
- **Radical innovation in engine, airframe and fuel technology is required to reduce aviation emissions in the period to 2050;** and a funding source for aviation R&D should be identified as part of a deal.
- **Emissions trading and offsetting offer useful short to medium term flexibility for meeting aviation targets, but in the long-term, the aviation industry should plan for deep cuts in its own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions,** with developed countries keeping aviation emissions at 2005 levels in 2050.
- **Significant domestic action is required** as there is likely to be very limited scope for the aviation sector to meet 2050 targets through the purchase of credits.
- **Additional non-CO<sub>2</sub> effects** (e.g. NO<sub>x</sub>, cirrus, contrails) from aviation are contributing to global warming. The effects of these should be addressed within a global deal on aviation.

The CCC's Chief Executive David Kennedy said:

*"It is vital that an agreement capping global aviation emissions is part of a Copenhagen deal. We are calling for a cap that would not require people to fly less than today, but would constrain aviation emissions growth going forward. Such a cap together with deep emissions cuts in other sectors would limit the risk of dangerous climate change and the very damaging consequences for people here and in other countries that this would have".*

The CCC will be publishing a full report on how the UK can meet the 2050 target to reduce gross aviation emissions back to 2005 levels including consideration of scope for improvements in technology, appropriate policies required and the implications for further aviation expansion on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

ENDS

#### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Committee on Climate Change (CCC)**

The CCC is an independent body established under the Climate Change Act 2008 to advise the UK Government on setting the first legally binding carbon budgets, and to report to Parliament on the progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The CCC also advises on what the UK's long-term climate change target should be as a fair contribution towards a global deal. [www.theccc.org.uk](http://www.theccc.org.uk)

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