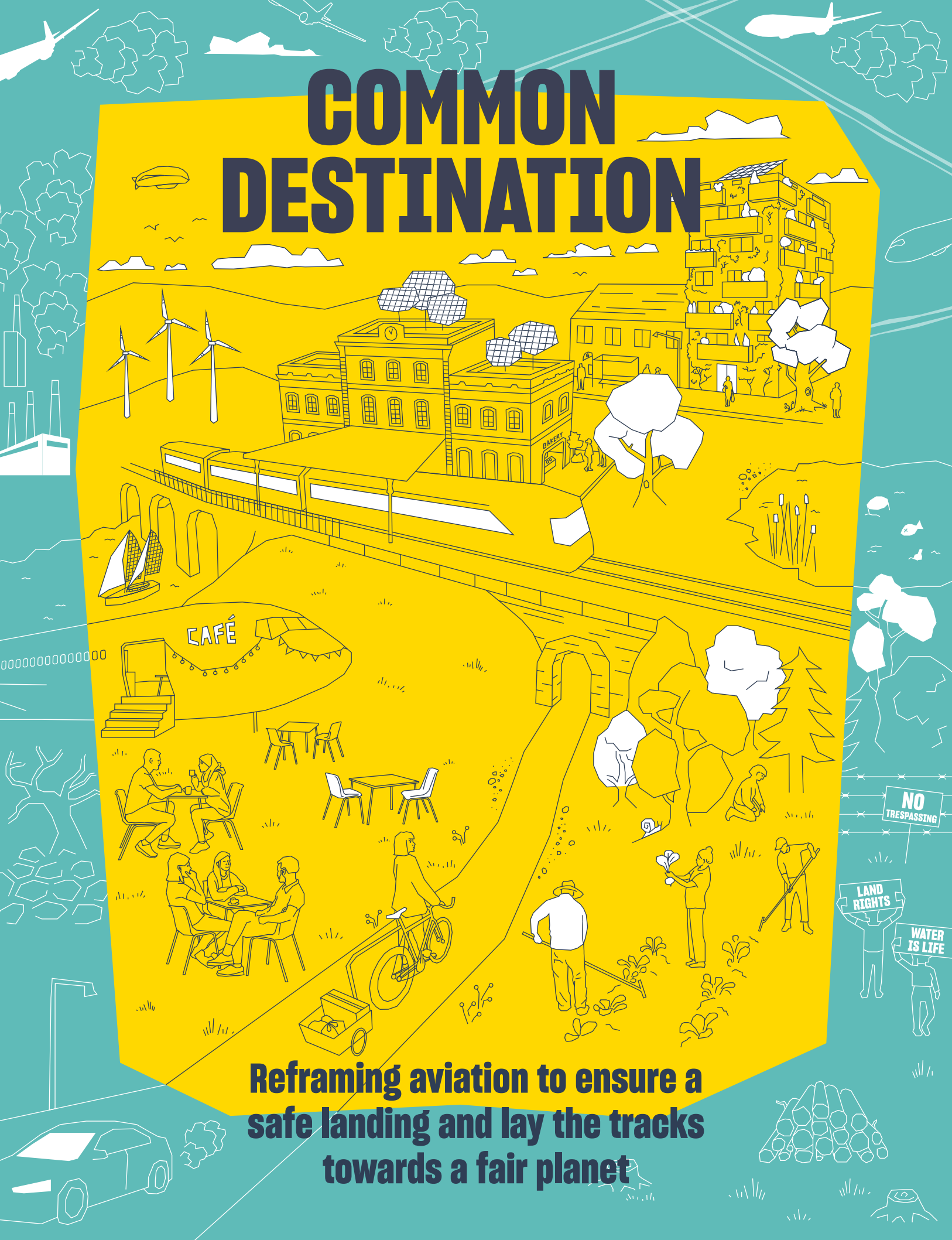# COMMON DESTINATION

Reframing aviation to ensure a safe landing and lay the tracks towards a fair planet

Everything's got a story in it. Change the story, change the world.

Terry Pratchett

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This is a guide to reframe how we think, talk and write about the aviation industry and its impact on people and the planet.

Chapter One, the **Introduction** (p. 5), describes the objectives and approach of this guide and the aims of the larger project it is part of. Start here if you want to explore the concepts this reframing project is grounded in. If you want to know why it is so important to campaign for a reduction of air traffic, what its climate and social impacts are, and how public opinion is evolving, read **Chapter Two: The Climate Crisis and Aviation's Role** (p. 13). It's also a good place to start if you are new to campaigning against aviation, as it provides facts and figures on why an expanding aviation industry is incompatible with a thriving planet and makes a case about why, to be successful, it matters to use the lens of climate justice. If you are looking for inspiration to broaden your climate campaigning, delve into the new narratives and associated stories in **Chapter Three: Tracks Towards a Fair Planet** (p. 37). This chapter illustrates what a new economy based on wellbeing, care and a sustainable mobility* system could look like. It also provides **five new narratives** (p. 41) that make up the core part of this guide. And finally, if you are ready to take action and help others imagine a new way of living, working and being together, **Chapter Four: How to Use the New Narratives** (p. 73) outlines useful tools and practical advice for reframing aviation and making the case for why we must now lay the tracks towards a fair planet and a wellbeing economy.

* Throughout the guide we talk about 'mobility' rather than 'transport', to highlight that transport is not an end in itself but a tool to satisfy needs.

Narratives and how to find them

The core of this guide is our five narratives about the problems with the aviation industry and the way to a better mobility. You can find them from page 41.

PLANE GREEDY

About how the airline industry puts its own profits above the future of people and planet (p. 42).

COMMON DESTINATION

About why, on our shared planetary home, we don't need more air traffic and tourism to thrive (p. 46).

GREEN MEANS GROUNDED

About why industry promises are just green lies and how mobility can become truly sustainable (p. 52).

SAFE LANDING

About why people working in aviation need a planned descent of the industry and how we can put the future on track (p. 58).

ENJOY THE JOURNEY

About alternatives to flying and why we will enjoy the journey more with them (p. 62).

Hope has never trickled down.
It has always sprung up.
Studs Terkel

1

INTRODUCTION

The aviation industry has spent billions over decades to paint itself in a positive light, and it is easy for people to fall into the trap of discussing the future of the industry on its own, rigged terms.

This guide seeks to help escape this trap and provide readers with **a toolkit to cast aviation in a light that illuminates its realities**: the inequality of aviation within and across borders, the lives and livelihoods destroyed through airport expansion and industry offset schemes, the greenwashing efforts of an embattled aviation industry hanging onto the status quo, and – most importantly – what is to be gained from laying the tracks for more equitable and climate-safe mobility systems around the world.

The pages of this guide serve as a toolkit for campaigners and organisers to help reframe our collective understanding of aviation in the global economy. It aims to support better storytelling about air transport and the wider impacts of aviation on people and the planet. It is about driving change, and connecting with diverse and various audiences in a positive and meaningful way. And finally, it is about showing that a better world is possible and that there are alternatives: to air transport, to the current exploitative economic system, and to unsustainable ways of life.

What do we mean by 'reframe'? We mean that if the commonly held mental image of flying is one that is alluring, our task is to shift that frame of thinking to one that realistically incorporates the harm aviation is causing to people, workers, communities and the planet. This means carefully considering how to speak, write and visualise the aviation industry in order to enable people to make a deliberate choice of how they think, feel and act in relation to it.

We all have images in our minds that can incite strong emotional feelings, including those related to the aviation industry and flying. These feelings can be positive, neutral or negative, but they can also be complex, conflicted and change over time in response to social pressures, political moments or our understanding of the world. The point is that what shapes how we feel about something has certain roots; it has been shaped or 'framed', often by things that we might not be consciously aware of, like media coverage, advertising and marketing.

Now is the time to embark on a reframing journey. In 2020, air traffic came to a near halt for some months due to the pandemic, and airlines were plunged into crisis. During the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of daily flights fell from almost 110,000 to less than 50,000, on average.[1] Instead of using taxpayers' money to bail out airlines, it would have been a perfect chance for the world's governments to pull the ripcord and change course towards a fairer and more sustainable mobility system. If you weigh the harmfulness of air transport against its benefits, and if you take the urgency of addressing the climate crisis seriously, there should have been no other choice. Yet governments didn't take this opportunity.

But why? While air traffic is not unique in receiving government support during the pandemic, the amount of public funds it did receive is a reflection of the wider flaws of our current economic and mobility systems. Many of these bailouts were handed to the industry without any requirements to change, despite the aviation industry embodying so many of the injustices behind the climate crisis and social inequality. It is an industry that is constantly accelerating and expanding, primarily serving a small and wealthy fraction of humanity to the detriment of the majority.

In 2022, Russia's war against Ukraine and its economic and energy supply consequences show once again how vulnerable to shocks and crises the fossil fuel-based energy system and the capitalist economic system as a whole are. We need more cooperation and solidarity to reach **our common destination: a peaceful, just and sustainable world**. Yet aviation has become a core part of a mobility system that is detached from the needs of most people and the limits of the living planet. With this guide, we hope to equip as many people as possible with the tools to reframe aviation and share empowering, positive stories about how to steer aviation towards a safe landing and lay the groundwork for a new economy.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

A theory of change describes what we think needs to be done to bring about desired changes in society, and what our role is in this process. It is helpful for activists and civil society organisations when they are drawing up big strategies and deciding on concrete actions. The theory underlying this guide focuses strongly on the power of discourse, the importance of big narratives: how do we think and talk about the world and what influence does this have on concrete political and social change? Our world is not determined by thoughts and language alone. Concrete actions, real institutions and physical infrastruc-tures matter. Nevertheless, one thing is certain: **we must first have a vision of what a better world could look like before we can build it**.

We do not subscribe to the false division of individual behaviour change and system change. The urgency of the climate crisis, and the scale of change that is required, means that the privilege of choosing one over the other has long since passed, especially for those in the Global North.* We need both – not only because they are both impactful and important in driving change, but because they reinforce each other: how individuals act and how our systems look like are inherently linked; systemic change is in part constituted by many acts of individual change, via social and cultural dynamics, while systems in turn reinforce certain types of behaviours and circumscribe the scope for individual change. Individuals are embedded within and across multiple systems, and are shaped by them as well as exerting influence on them as citizens, users and, crucially, social actors. Our approach seeks to enhance agency by empowering and connecting communities across regions and contexts, triggering systemic change.

* The conceptual Global South/Global North terminology used to describe early industrialised regions respectively poorer regions of the world originates from an academic discourse and is ambiguous, which is why we ourselves recommend avoiding it where possible and suggest naming specific countries or places instead. Moreover, justified criticism can be made of the rhetorical division of the world into two parts. Nevertheless, because of its analytical value, we resort to the terms in a few cases.

WE WANT TO ...

➜ achieve real social change that moves us towards a society and economy that allow everyone to thrive for generations to come. We focus on aviation as a particularly grave example of harmful climate injustice;

➜ shift what is politically possible, what is considered beneficial in society and what needs to be left behind;

➜ strengthen and connect narratives that can contribute to such change;

➜ increase and strengthen the knowledge and skills needed in our networks to communicate effectively;

➜ help and work together with communities living on the frontlines of the climate crisis;

➜ support the most affected groups in spreading their stories and winning their struggles

TO ACHIEVE THAT WE ...

➜ scrutinise dominant narratives and highlight which values, beliefs and stories are underlying them;

➜ create positive narratives that strengthen our own values, visions and goals in a way that resonates with people;

➜ collaborate with partners who all have their unique experiences and strengths and learn from each other;

➜ work with and listen carefully to people and groups who have been marginalised, learn from them and try not to reproduce inequalities;

➜ create spaces for exchange and mutual learning, in our networks and projects and beyond;

➜ spark and perform concrete actions to make our narratives tangible and draw attention to our stories and struggles.

ABOUT STAY GROUNDED

Stay Grounded is a global network consisting of more than 180 member organisations. These include local airport opposition initiatives, climate justice groups, NGOs, trade unions, academics, groups fostering alternatives to flying, and organisations that support communities struggling against on-the-ground offsetting projects or agrofuel plantations.

The network started to form in 2016, the year in which a very weak global strategy to target aviation's climate impact (CORSIA) was launched by the UN's aviation body ICAO: At different airports around the world, protests were organised simultaneously, and it became clear that building alliances is hugely important in order to exchange experiences, support each other, come out of the shadows and involve more stakeholders. It showed that local airport struggles (often framed as 'not in my backyard' conflicts) are not isolated cases, but that they are connected with the massive growth of aviation globally, the unfair subsidies of its industry and the proposal of false solutions like offsetting and agrofuels.

A modal shift of mobility can only be achieved by involving more and more groups and individuals to build pressure from below both locally and on a bigger scale by resisting, transforming and creating alternatives. In 2018, the network went public and since then it has grown steadily and has organised several international campaigns and days of actions.

Find out more at: **stay-grounded.org**

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Reframe, Rethink, Reshape project is led by Stay Grounded and aims to bring together the experience, diversity and breadth of the **Stay Grounded** network with insights on transformative climate communication. This guide was written by Stay Grounded together with the **New Weather Institute**. Partners in **Spain (Ecologistas en Acción), France (Résistance Climatique) and Germany (ROBIN WOOD)** supported the process with their expertise and have also translated the guide into Spanish, French and German while adapting the content to their particular needs and local context.

From the beginning, it was important that this project be oriented towards the requirements and needs of those who will work with the guide, and that it includes their expertise. While this project is Europe-focused, we also wanted to take as global a perspective as possible on the issues to ensure the guide is useful for a diverse and expansive movement of active citizens, community leaders, change makers, and climate communicators. We are, however, conscious of our limitations. As such, much care was taken to include perspectives outside of the project's European partners, and to acknowledge the realities of frontline communities globally. This was accomplished in part through multiple feedback rounds and interviews with additional experts, with a focus on voices from countries in the Global South.

A NOTE ON REFRAMING

What are we talking about when we talk about reframing?
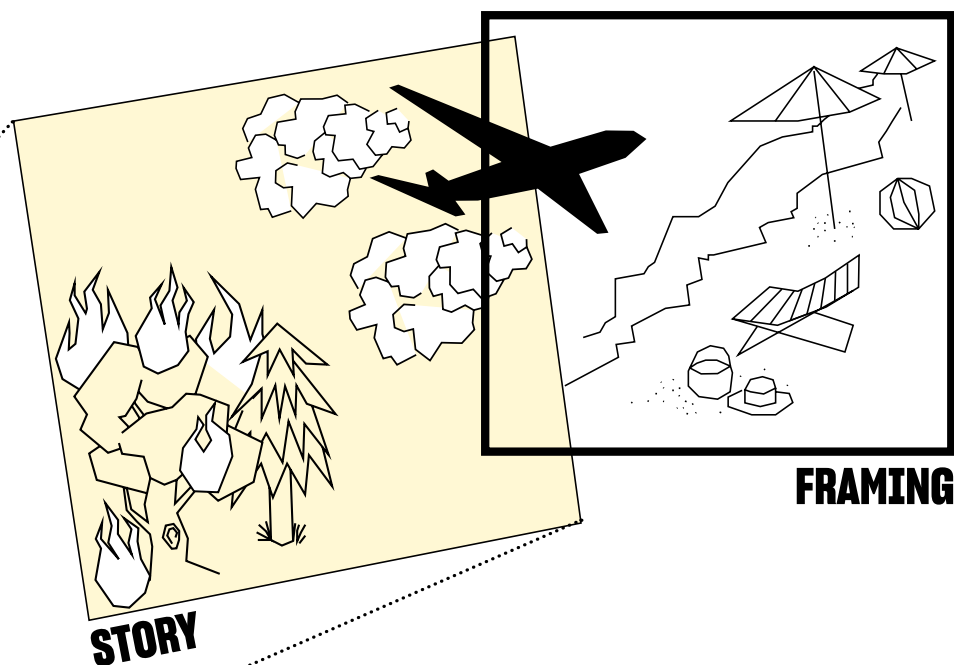
META-NARRATIVE
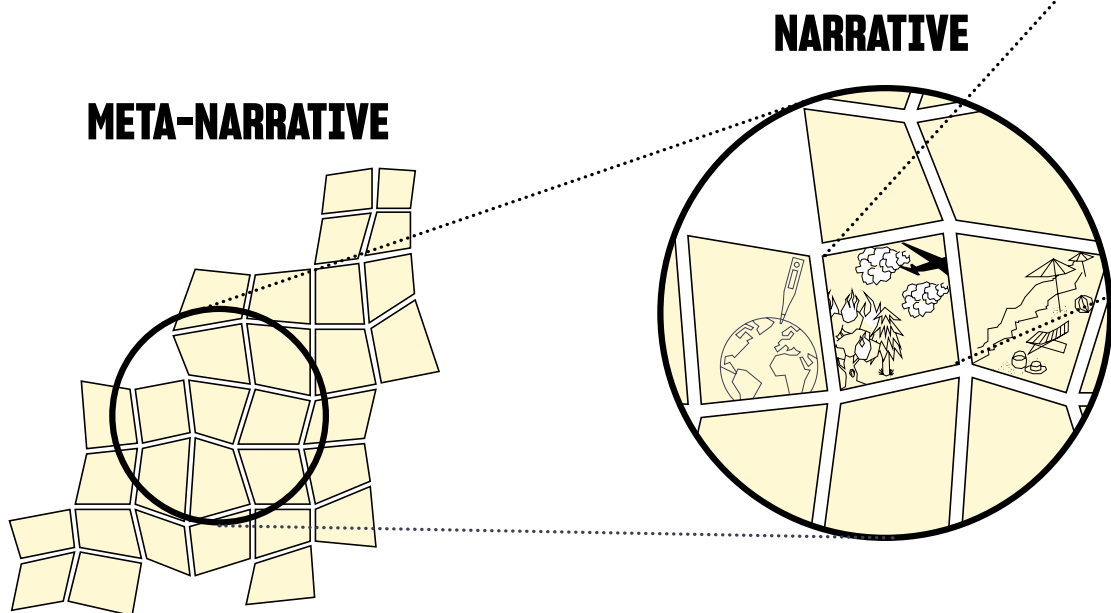
NARRATIVE

What tiles are to mosaics, stories are to narratives.
Narrative Initiative

Language matters: it is how we make sense of the world around us. All social and political struggles are competitions over people's hearts and minds, and language is key to winning. Facts are important too, of course. But when presented without considering the bigger picture they are part of, even the most shocking statistics are ineffective – no matter how much they reinforce our own ideas and goals.

Throughout this guide we use some terms frequently. They are: **narrative, story, framing,** and **metaphor**. All these terms are important for campaigners and activists but they are often understood differently, play into each other and sometimes overlap.

STORY

FRAMING

A **narrative** is a system of stories that is based around some central ideas and beliefs. Narratives are created through stories and have to be actively sustained. They are extremely powerful: people understand narratives at gut level and they do not need to be explained. Unlike stories, narratives do not have a concrete start or finish: they are ongoing, developing and open to interpretation. One narrative we often see is that economic growth can become "green", a claim which is not supported by evidence.[2]

Some narratives are deeply rooted in our cultures and are vital to how whole societies and economies are structured and organised. These are often referred to as meta-narratives, grand narratives, world views or common sense. One example of a **meta-narrative** is 'progress': the belief that 'humanity' is constantly improving and that this happens primarily through technological developments, innovation and entrepreneurialism. It is some of these narratives that play into 'discourses of climate delay' which are used to delay action against the destruction of our planet, research shows.[3]

A **story** is a concrete account of an event that happened to someone or something, real or imaginary. It touches on the how, when and where of a situation. Unlike a narrative, a story is a closed account with a clear beginning and end. Stories have protagonists and antagonists, they can describe struggles of good over evil, and can include lessons and advice for those that hear them. They can draw images and foreshadow the future.[4] Stories can convey ideas, values, beliefs and emotions. They also can – and should – be entertaining, engaging and fulfil the human urge to retell them, over and over again.

The organisation Narrative Initiative explains the relation between narratives and stories like this:
"What tiles are to mosaics, stories are to narratives. The relationship is symbiotic; stories bring narratives to life by making them relatable and accessible, while narratives infuse stories with deeper meaning." [5]

Framing describes the process of embedding information, events and topics within interpretive structures. Done consciously, framing can present facts in accordance with certain values and narratives.[6] The effect of frames has been extensively studied, from neuropsychology to applied linguistics, and shows that certain terms and expressions activate patterns of interpretation and connections in our brains. These patterns determine how we perceive information: for example, the way a question in an opinion poll is phrased may lead respondents to answer it in a certain way.[7] As this happens subconsciously, it is highly relevant for political communication to express messages in a way that aligns with values and campaign demands. But, unfortunately, this is often hard to do. Powerful actors, with substantial resources, are often able to push their frames, almost unchallenged and uninhibited. This has a pervasive impact, where the frames of powerful actors are reinforced and reproduced carelessly.
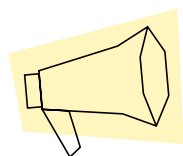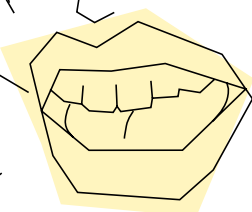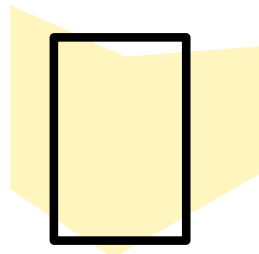
COLLECTIVE **ACTION** **FRAMES**

METAPHOR **& SIMILE**

REFRAMING

According to the theory of **collective action frames**, social movements must win people over through three different types of frames: diagnostic frames that explain what constitutes the problem, prognostic frames that explain how things could be better, and motivational frames that call people to participate in collective action.[8] Successful campaigns need all three.

The story is not in the plot but in the telling.

Ursula K. Le Guin

A **metaphor** is a figure of speech that directly refers to one thing in terms of another. It can provide clarity, disguise or show hidden similarities between two different ideas. Metaphors can make things which are otherwise abstract or unrelatable, tangible, understandable and relatable to people. Metaphors are not only important stylistically, but also cognitively. In their book Metaphors We Live By, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson show that there are many metaphors running through our society that are born from a particular worldview. Examples include "argument is war" or "time is money" – both can be "spent" and "wasted".[9]

A **simile**, on the other hand, is a figure of speech that directly compares two things, connected through the words "as" or "like". Like metaphors, similes can also make things more vivid, accessible and relatable. An example could be: his chewing was as loud as an aircraft engine.

The practice of **reframing** was popularised by George Lakoff in his book Don't Think of an Elephant[10], which explored how political framing can be used to sway and shape public opinion and people's political allegiances. It has roots in the 1970s and early 1980s interest in linguistics and postmodern theory that through 'deconstruction' sought to reveal the particular underlying mechanisms that create our sense of reality and why we think of some things as 'normal'. For example, imagine if every work of great philosophy used the pronoun "she" to represent a typical person.

When reframing something, we are trying to change the discourse surrounding it and all the meanings attached to that specific way of seeing the world. Reframing is a process where you help others to think and understand subjects, issues or ideas in a different way. It is an invitation to see the world from a new perspective as our imaginations are freed from the constraints of the status quo. To change the world, we must be able to identify ways that it can be different – and often it can just be a matter of perspective.

New narratives require a collective effort. Discussion during Stay Grounded's Degrowth of Aviation conference 2019 in Barcelona. © Christine Tyler

OUR METAPHORS

We use two metaphors throughout this publication: **guiding aviation towards a safe landing*** and **laying the tracks for a fair planet**** with sustainable mobility and economic systems.

With the first metaphor, we describe how the aviation industry must come down from its current altitude and that a safe landing, including a just transition for people working in the industry, is still possible. The alternative – if we continue flying as high and as fast we are – is an inevitable crash. In other words, the intended growth of the aviation industry is not sustainable and it must shrink, either by design – or by disaster.

The second metaphor makes clear that our mobility and economic systems are something that people can actively shape, and not something that is unchangeable: we can lay down new tracks that lead us toward a sustainable and liveable future for all – it is up to us.

* The purpose and effects of this metaphor have been described in the highly recommended report "Reframing the Economy" by the New Economics Foundation.[11] It was also inspired by years of campaigning with similar framing by Stay Grounded and members in various languages.

** This metaphor was inspired by the initiative Safe Landing, which connects air transport workers working to sustainably reduce their industry and its climate impact.

A safe landing means leaving no one behind in the transformation.

Laying new tracks means that together we can actively shape our society and economy.

SOURCES

[1] IATA (2021): Industry Statistics Fact Sheet. bit.ly/IndustryFactSheets
[2] Hickel & Kallis (2019): Is Green Growth Possible? bit.ly/IsGreenGrowthPossible
[3] Lamb et al. (2020): Discourses of climate delay.
[4] Canning & Reinsborough (2017): Re:Imagining Change.
[5] Narrative Initiative (2017): Toward New Gravity.
[6] Lakoff (2010): Why it Matters How We Frame the Environment.
[7] Tversky & Kahneman (1981): The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice.
[8] Benford & Snow (2000): Framing Processes and Social Movements.
[9] Lakoff & Johnson (1980): Metaphors We Live By.
[10] Lakoff (2004): Don't Think of an Elephant!
[11] New Economics Foundation (2018): Framing the Economy.

If our house was falling apart, you wouldn't fly around the world in business class, chatting about how the market will solve everything.

Greta Thunberg

2

THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND AVIATION'S ROLE

The climate crisis is escalating ever faster and aviation is making a significant contribution to it, although it only benefits a few people in the world. Here are the most important facts about the climate crisis, its injustices and the role aviation plays in it.

Flying is the fastest way to heat up the planet[1] – and it has become normal for a relatively small part of the world's population, while even fewer profit from it. The excesses of the aviation industry come at the cost of the majority, whose coastlines are disappearing, their skies filled by air traffic and pushed off their land by ever-expanding airports, oil extraction,[2] or agrofuel plantations (see story on p. 56). Most of these communities will never benefit from this growth, which comes at the expense of the rest of the living planet.

Most of us understand that things cannot go on like this. But we can't achieve real change if we act alone. That's why we need to come together to make a difference and to win. This is as true for air transport and mobility, as it is for all other areas of the global economy. It takes many different acts: changing your own behaviour and talking to others about it, organising, making good political choices, co-creating alternatives and taking a risk to protect the lives and livelihoods of people today and in the future. It is not too late to act, but we must move fast. Now is the time for action.

FACTS AND FIGURES ON AVIATION AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The importance of achieving climate justice and leveraging the current desire for change is brought into sharp focus when you consider the excesses of the aviation industry. Aviation's inequality of access, the environmental damages, health risks and social consequences of its continued expansion, as well as the ownership structures that prop it up allowing a small minority to reap the profits, are all illustrative of the **injustices**, **oppressions** and **wrongdoings** of the global economy.

But to successfully reframe aviation, you must be able to answer the simple question "why aviation?". To help you do this, the following section sets out the evidence of the realities of both the aviation industry and global air traffic, providing readers with the latest science, thinking and statistics to argue impactfully and proactively about **why we need a safe landing for the aviation industry to stop climate catastrophe**.

Relative to the size of the aviation industry and the number of people that use it, its environmental impact is enormous and its continued expansion is rapidly eating up our remaining carbon budget. **In 2018, the best estimates for aviation's overall contribution for that year to global heating was 5.9%.**[3] If aviation was a country it would be between the 5th and 7th worst polluters in the world.

And to make matters worse, the pollution from aviation is accelerating. Since the 1980s, global aviation emissions have doubled.[4] **Between 2013 and 2019 emissions from passenger aircraft increased by 33%**, outpacing improvements in fuel efficiency **by at least a factor of four**.[5] Not only does this run counter to the many pledges and unfulfilled promises the aviation industry has made regarding its environmental impact, it also means other sectors of the economy **that are used by a greater number of people**, such as agriculture or housing, will have to decarbonise faster and deeper to allow for aviation's excesses.

IF AVIATION WERE A COUNTRY

1. China, 2. USA, 3. India

4. 🇷🇺	4.8%	1.6 GT
5. 🇯🇵	3.3%	1.1 GT
6. ✈	2.9%	1 GT
7. 🇩🇪	1.9%	0.64 GT
8. 🇰🇷	1.6%	0.59 GT
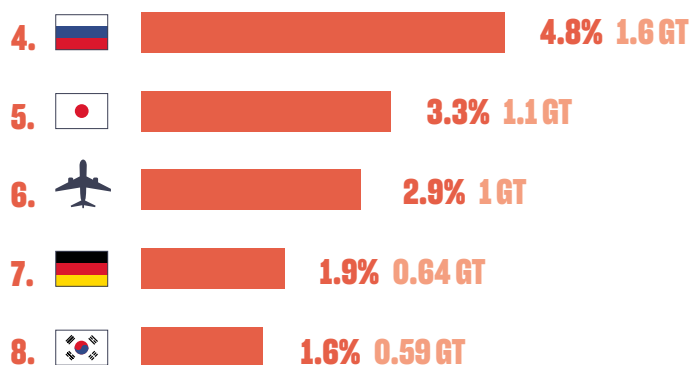
% of global CO$_2$ emissions in 2019
Gigatonnes of CO$_2$

If aviation were a country, it would be one of the largest single emitters, just behind Japan and ahead of countries like Germany and South Korea.

Sources:
Aviation emissions: Klöwer et al. (2021): bit.ly/AviaCont
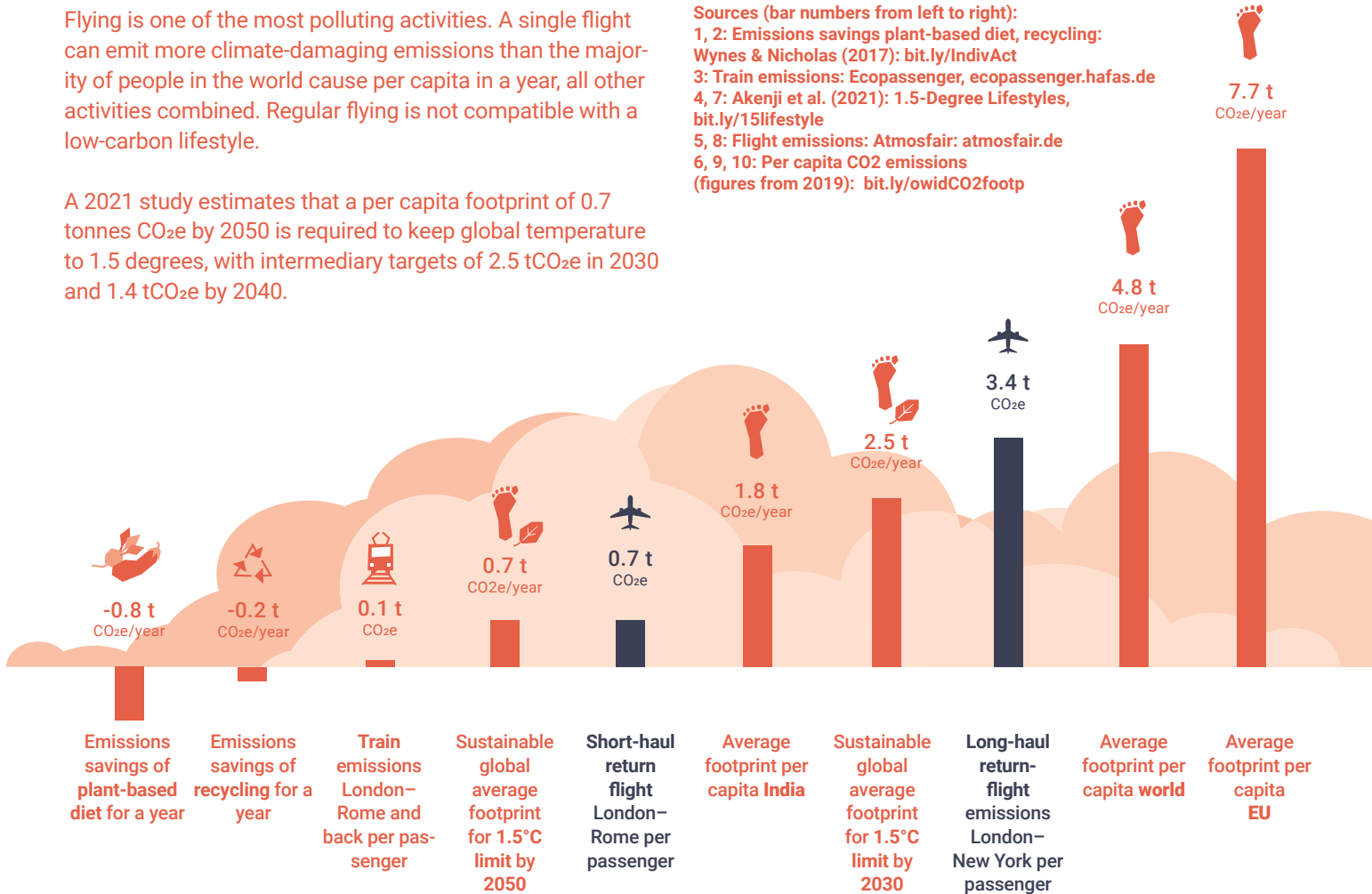**Country emissions: IEA Atlas of Energy: bit.ly/IEAEnergyAtlas**

IS FLYING COMPATIBLE WITH A 1.5 DEGREES LIFESTYLE?

Flying is one of the most polluting activities. A single flight can emit more climate-damaging emissions than the majority of people in the world cause per capita in a year, all other activities combined. Regular flying is not compatible with a low-carbon lifestyle.

A 2021 study estimates that a per capita footprint of 0.7 tonnes CO₂e by 2050 is required to keep global temperature to 1.5 degrees, with intermediary targets of 2.5 tCO₂e in 2030 and 1.4 tCO₂e by 2040.

Bar chart values:

| Value	Label
-0.8 t CO₂e/year	Emissions savings of **plant-based diet** for a year
-0.2 t CO₂e/year	Emissions savings of **recycling** for a year
0.1 t CO₂e	**Train emissions** London–Rome and back per passenger
0.7 t CO2e/year	Sustainable global average footprint for **1.5°C limit** by **2050**
0.7 t CO₂e	**Short-haul return flight** London–Rome per passenger
1.8 t CO₂e/year	Average footprint per capita **India**
2.5 t CO₂e/year	Sustainable global average footprint for **1.5°C limit** by **2030**
3.4 t CO₂e	**Long-haul return-flight** emissions London–New York per passenger
4.8 t CO₂e/year	Average footprint per capita **world**
7.7 t CO₂e/year	Average footprint per capita **EU**

AVIATION'S CLIMATE IMPACT IS MORE THAN JUST CARBON

For years, the aviation industry claimed that the sector was responsible for only 2% of man-made carbon emissions – a number consistently cited to downplay both the impact of aviation and the need for action. In fact, aviation's CO₂ emissions alone are significantly higher – amounting to 2.4% of all human-caused carbon emitted globally in 2018.[6] When the CO₂ emissions from the production and distribution of jet fuel are included, this figure rises to 2.9%.[7]

But aviation's total climate impact is caused by more than just carbon. Burning kerosene at altitude also generates contrails, induced cloudiness and nitrogen oxide derivatives that, although short-lived, are known to increase aviation's contribution to global heating. When you consider these non-CO₂ impacts, **the aviation industry's responsibility for global heating is approximately three times higher than CO₂ emissions alone.**[8] Adding on flying's non-CO₂ climate impacts, it has been calculated that in 2018 aviation's contribution reached 5.9% of the heating effect of all the human-caused greenhouse gas emissions of that year.[9] Overall, aviation is responsible for 4% of global heating to date.[10]

If pre-COVID aviation growth rates resume, air traffic alone would contribute a massive 0.1°C to global heating by 2050.[11] This is immense, especially when considering that this impact is caused by the very small portion of humanity that flies.

+0.1°C
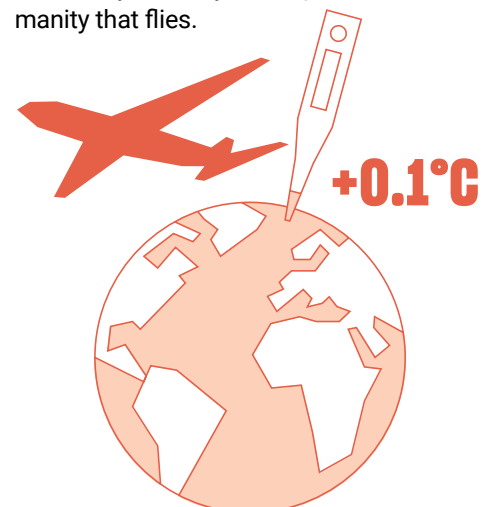
THE INEQUALITY OF AVIATION

The global emissions share from aviation becomes even more problematic when you ask the question, **'who flies?'**. The industry's advertisers and marketers would like you to think that the answer is 'most people' – but it really isn't. Not only is flying the most energy-intensive mode of transport available to humanity, it is also the most unequal – in terms of cost, restrictive immigration policies and accessibility to air travel options.[12] The act of taking one flight can emit as much CO_2 as many people do in an entire year.[13] While estimates vary, flying is accessible to only a small fraction of humanity with **approximately 80% of the global population having never flown** in a commercial aircraft.[14] In contrast, **in 2018, just 1% of the world's population was responsible for 50% of global aviation emissions.**[15] 10 countries are responsible for about 60% of total aviation CO_2 emissions and 30 countries for 86%.[16]

What's more, 19% of aviation's emissions in 2019 came from passengers flying in business and first-class, which is more than all the emissions that came from air freight in the same year (15% of all aviation emissions).[17] And, on a yearly basis, the figures are even more stark with only 11% of the world's population taking a flight in 2018 and only 4% flying overseas.[18]

With such a small fraction of humanity flying, and aviation already taking up a significant chunk of global emissions, it's clear that the frequency of flights taken is an important factor. In the UK, one of the nations whose citizens fly the most internationally,[19] only 1% of the population took a fifth of all the overseas flights in 2018.[20] British frequent fliers are often wealthy, with a household income of over £115,000 a year and the ownership of a second home abroad – often in a tax haven – being the strongest predictors of frequent flying.[21] A similar pattern is repeated in every major aviation market worldwide for which data is available,[22] and contrary to aviation industry narratives around the 'democratisation' of air travel,[23] these inequalities have grown as the industry has expanded.[24]

Other characteristics that influence how often someone flies are gender and migration background.[25] To this day, freedom of movement is still determined by origin. A Japanese passport allows you to enter 192 countries without a prior visa, while a Somali passport allows you access to 34 countries and an Afghan passport allows you to enter just 26 freely.[26] Gender also determines access to flights, with men flying more frequently than women and making up the majority for business trips.[27] Gender inequality impacts airline employees too. In 2018, travel group TUI reported the largest gender pay gap of any UK company, with women earning 56.9% less than men.[28] This, combined with dress codes and other codes of conduct for staff that are often perceived as sexist, led the Guardian to ask: "is aviation the least progressive industry?"[29] Only 3% of aviation industry CEOs[30] and only 5% of commercial pilots are women.[31]

AIR TRAFFIC IS THE MOST UNEQUAL MODE OF TRANSPORT

Only **1%** of the world's **population** causes **50%** of **commercial aviation** emissions while more than **80%** of the world's population **have never set foot on an aeroplane.**

No mode of transport is more unjust than aviation. A 2020 study estimates that only 2% to 4% of the world's population flew internationally in 2018. It concludes that 1% of the global population, a small minority of wealthy frequent flyers, is responsible for 50% of commercial aviation emissions.

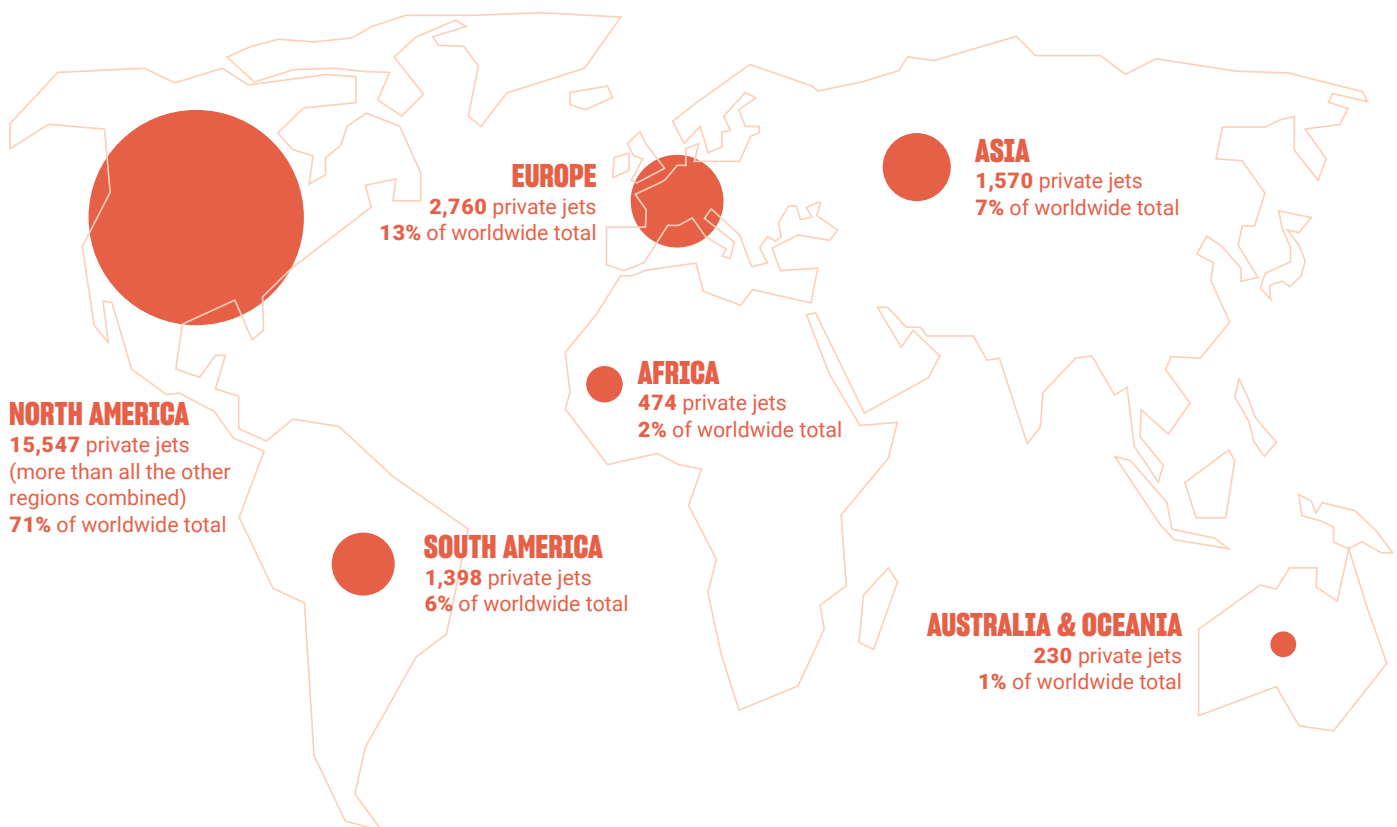**Source: Gössling, Humpe (2020): bit.ly/DistG**

PRIVATE JETS AND SPACE FLIGHT

When it comes to flying, there's nothing more unjust than private jets – perhaps with the exception of billionaires' space flights. **In 2019, there were 21,979 active private jets worldwide, with 71% of these based in North America.** Europe accounted for another 13% or 2,760, of which 495 were in Germany and 341 in the UK. Africa, on the other hand, has the smallest fleet worldwide with about 2% of all private jets.[32] Emissions from private jets have recently risen faster than those from regular air traffic, a trend that the global pandemic is accelerating. This is particularly destructive for our climate, as **private jets are between 5 to 14 times more polluting per passenger than scheduled flights**.[33] They are also more often used for short-haul flights, which are particularly unnecessary, because there are low-carbon alternatives.

Space travel is an unnecessary step for humanity, but a decadent race for a few egotistical billionaires. This latest illustration of obscene pollution and inequality can emit 250-1000 tonnes of CO_2 for an 11-minute flight. In contrast, a large part of the world's population causes less than one tonne of CO_2 per year per capita. This means that **one billionaire damages the climate as much with an eleven-minute flight as several individuals from the poorer part of the world's population do during their entire lifetime.**[34]

PRIVATE JETS: DESTINATION CLIMATE DISASTER

EUROPE
2,760 private jets
13% of worldwide total

ASIA
1,570 private jets
7% of worldwide total

AFRICA
474 private jets
2% of worldwide total

NORTH AMERICA
15,547 private jets
(more than all the other regions combined)
71% of worldwide total

SOUTH AMERICA
1,398 private jets
6% of worldwide total

AUSTRALIA & OCEANIA
230 private jets
1% of worldwide total

Regular flights are bad for the climate, but private jets are much worse in terms of per capita emissions. And they are extremely unevenly distributed. In 2019 there were 21,979 active private jets worldwide. Most were registered in North America, where the US is home to roughly 89% of the total jets on the continent.

Source: Stratos (2022): 2022 Key Private Jet Industry Statistics – By Region, By Country, By Type.

AVIATION HAS CONTRIBUTED MORE TO GLOBAL HEATING THAN ENTIRE CONTINENTS

4%

2%

Canada
2%

Mexico
1.2%

India
3%

Africa
3%

South America
3%
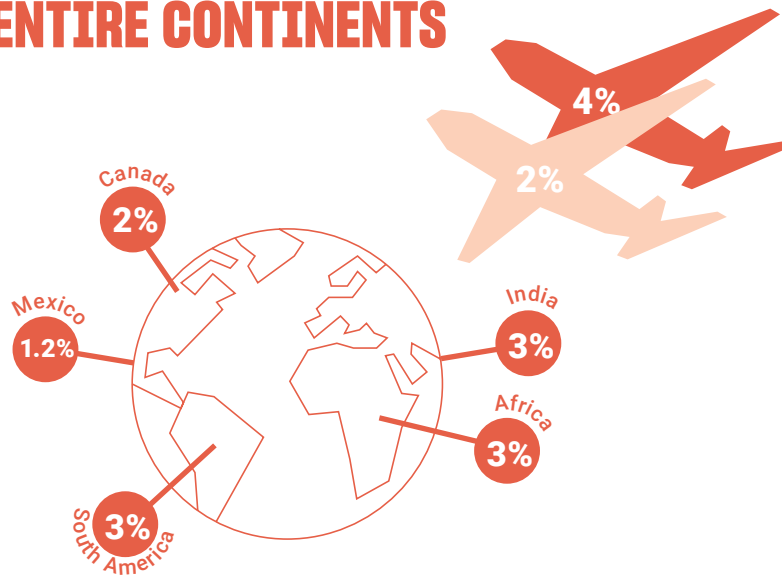
Aviation has a larger historical responsibility for the climate crisis than many nations and even whole continents, despite only serving a small fraction of the global population. Taking into account its whole climate impact, aviation has contributed 4% to climate heating to date, while having emitted about 2% of all carbon emissions alone. The pre-Covid annual share of aviation's emissions was even higher due to it's rapid growth.

Sources:
Aviation: Klöwer et al (2021): bit.ly/AviaCont
Country emissions: Our World in Data (2019): ourworldindata.org/contributed-most-global-co2

MILITARY AVIATION

While reliable statistics on military aviation emissions remain scarce, it is estimated to account for 8%[35] to 15%[36] of aviation's total climate impact. The carbon footprint of the military, and the industries that provide their equipment, has successfully eluded scrutiny for decades and continues to be excluded from virtually all international climate obligations currently in place. The US army provides an especially shocking example. In 2017, the total greenhouse gas emissions of the US military were greater than the climate emissions of entire industrialised countries, such as Portugal or Sweden, with jet fuel combustion accounting for the largest share.[37] Of course, the damage brought about from military aviation goes well beyond its climate impact, with war having devastating effects on people.[38]

In 2022, Russia's war against Ukraine showed once again how armed conflicts can affect air traffic and the fossil fuel-based energy system it relies on. During the 1997 Kyoto Protocol negotiations, intensive US government lobbying secured an exemption from any emissions-cutting obligation for its military by invoking national security concerns in order to maintain military operations. Even though the US never ratified the Kyoto Protocol, its ability to procure military exemptions left the door open for other military powers to follow suit. This automatic exemption for the military was removed under the Paris Agreement, signed in 2015. However, the treaty leaves it to the discretion of countries whether they include military emissions or not.

THE GROWTH OF THE AVIATION INDUSTRY

While aviation's share of total global climate pollution is already vast considering the number of people that fly, the growth of the industry is cause for concern. After the pandemic-induced pause, which saw planes grounded around the world, growth is set to return to the industry once more and emis-sions are set to climb. Without decided action to curtail air traffic, emissions will continue to rise.

Aviation growth doesn't just mean more climate heating and health damages – it also requires a vast expansion of airports around the world and the construction of new ones. **Between 2000 and 2016, new runways were added at 55 of the 150 airports with the most flights globally.**[39] By 2016 more than half of the expanded airports were below the capacity before the expansion, which casts doubt on the necessity of their expansion.[40] As of 2019, almost $1 trillion has been invested into building new airports around the globe, with 423 new airports planned or already under construction. Over half of these – 223 – are being built in the Asian Pacific region, with 58 planned for Europe.[41] China alone has announced plans to build 213 new airports by 2035.[42]

All of these newly built airports will require huge amounts of concrete, steel and glass, raising their emissions impact even further. The infrastructure will also 'lock-in' emissions for decades to come, making urgent change even more difficult. In addition, there is the immediate danger to people and nature. Communities around the world

struggle against human rights violations, eviction from their homes and farmland for aviation expansion, and to protect forests, wetlands and coastal ecosystems.[43]

For about 40 years, the airlines' **frequent flyer programmes (FFPs) have been a major driver of the rapid growth in air traffic**. FFPs are among the world's most successful marketing programmes. As the programmes are coupled to credit card use, rampant card use for purchases of all sorts – in order to acquire "free" "air miles" – has raised the price of goods for everyone, frequent flyer or not.[44]

We need to shift towards other ways to sustain local livelihoods, not rely on tourism.

Darío Solano, Fundacion Cultural La Negreta, Dominican Republic

THE HEALTH IMPACTS TO INDUSTRY WORKERS, PASSENGERS AND COMMUNITIES

The public debate around the health impacts of flying is mostly centered on the risks posed to passengers. For instance, long-haul flyers often face higher exposure to issues such as Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) or what's more commonly known as 'economy-class syndrome'. Scientific studies have found that the risk of developing DVT increases by 12% if just a single flight is taken each year, with risks especially high for those with pre-existing health conditions.[45] Another study looking at the health impacts of flying found that "consistent disruption of body rhythms from jet lag and travel fatigue can lead to cognitive decline and psychotic and mood disorders, sleep disorders, and possible heart disease

and cancer".[46] What's more, the low humidity found on aircraft can reduce the effectiveness of our bodies' natural defence mechanisms, such as drying up mucus, making us more susceptible to getting sick. **Catching a cold, for example, is 100 times more likely after taking a flight**.[47] In the age of Covid-19, the health risks of flying need to be brought into sharper focus – especially as air transport has been a major contributor to the rapid spread of the virus around the world.[48] What's more, frequent flying has significant psychological effects, especially among business travellers, with studies highlighting isolation, loneliness and a reduction in flyers' social ties.[49]

There are also considerable health impacts associated with working in airports and living nearby. A 2021 study found that exposure to jet engine emissions, which contain ultrafine particles (UFP) that are prone to reach the lower airways and lungs, is reported to increase the risk of disease, hospital admissions and self-reported lung symptoms.[50] The same study found that jet engine emissions had similar organic particulate matter composition to diesel, which is linked to a myriad of adverse health impacts such as lung cancer, asthma and heart disease.[51] Medical

FLYING IS THE FASTEST WAY TO FRY THE PLANET

Flying is the most climate-damaging means of transport per hour. Due to the speed and the long distances, flying emits many times more CO_2 than other means of transport. In addition, there are the non-CO_2 effects of flights. The total climate impact of a flight is about three times higher than CO_2 alone due to the altitude and other pollution. Exact emissions per trip vary due to various factors. Figures here are based on French data.

Source: Bigo (2019): Emissions de CO₂ par mode: détail des calculs. bit.ly/CO2permode
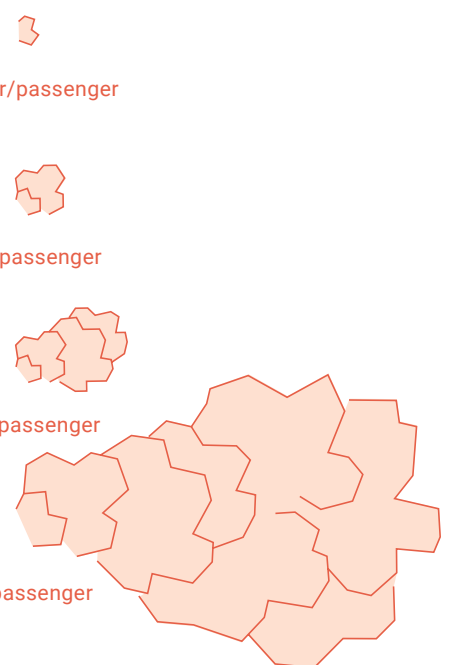
0.56 kg CO₂/hour/passenger

3.2 kg CO₂/hour/passenger

6.7 kg CO₂/hour/passenger

90 kg CO₂/hour/passenger

IF EVERYONE IN THE WORLD FLEW ONCE A YEAR ...

If every person in the world were to fly from London to New York and back once a year, the CO₂ budget for staying below 1.5 degrees of global heating (about 320 billion tonnes as of 2022) would be exhausted within 34 years just from flying. One such return flight emits 1.2 tonnes of CO₂ per person. With a world population of almost eight billion people, that would mean close to 10 billion tonnes of CO₂ per year. And this doesn't even take into account flights' additional climate impacts, which triple the CO2 effects. This simplified calculation shows: Flying, as it has become a normality for a small part of the world's population, cannot be universalised if we want to protect our climate.

Sources:
Carbon budget: IPCC (2021): AR6 Climate Change 2021
Flight emissions: atmosfair.de
World population: worldometers.info

1.2 TONNES CO₂ PER PERSON

1.5°C

34 YEARS

until carbon budget is exhausted

research has also shown that ultrafine particles can lead to premature births.[52] These health impacts, however, are not equally distributed across society and disproportionately affect ethnic minorities and those living in poverty.[53] The health impacts of aviation and flying reinforce the inequalities that are pervasive throughout wider society.

Many of the public health impacts of flying have social impacts too. For instance, the noise pollution from aircrafts can cause a range of health issues, such as hearing loss, hypertension, depression,[54] stress,[55] cardiovascular disease,[56] sleep deprivation and possibly even dementia.[57] In 2017, it was estimated that **3.2 million Europeans were highly affected by aircraft noise** and over 1.7 million suffered from high sleep disturbance around Europe's 47 major airports, although these figures are likely to underestimate the true extent of noise pollution.[58] Sleep deprivation can have very real knock-on effects for the quality of life of people that live in the vicinity of airports and their opportunities in life, especially children's educational attainment. A 2005 study discovered that children living close to airports in Britain, the Netherlands, and

Spain fell behind in their reading levels by up to two months for every 5 decibel increase above the average noise level in their environment. The study concludes by linking aircraft noise to lower reading comprehension.[59]

AVIATION'S PRIVILEGED POSITION

Aviation's climate impact is poorly regulated. Particularly compared to other sectors, the aviation industry seems to enjoy a special status. In the Paris Agreement, international aviation, accounting for about 65% of civil aviation emissions, is treated as separate from countries' Nationally Determined Contributions.[60] Most countries do not cover international aviation in their national climate plans and emissions budgets. Instead, the regulation of international departures' climate pollution is left to the ineffective ICAO. The **International**

Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) is a UN organisation funded and directed by 193 governments. The ICAO Secretariat is the most important institution on aviation policy internationally.

Despite the environmental impact of aviation, and the relatively few people that fly, it has enjoyed a disproportionately privileged policy environment for the last 75 years. In large parts of the world, the flight industry is practically tax-free despite its impacts on society and the environment. Most notably, an international agreement called the Chicago Convention, signed in 1944, sought to facilitate and expand aviation by prohibiting the taxing of fuel already onboard an aircraft when it lands. Over time this convention forged the common practice of exempting all aviation fuel from both taxation (excise duty) and value added tax (VAT), sometimes formalised through bilateral agreements.[61] Fuel for domestic flights can be taxed – and indeed is in countries like the USA, Japan, and Saudi Arabia[62] – but often economic pressure combined with corporate lobbying prevents this and instead states cling to giving priority to the 'competitiveness' of their airlines.

Tellingly, a VAT exemption is usually reserved for goods deemed a necessity, such as particular foods, wheelchairs and certain healthcare products. In some countries with large aviation industries and hyper-mobile frequent fliers, like the UK, this tax exemption could be worth €13bn every year. Similarly, within the EU, a tax on kerosene could raise approximately €17 billion a year, while introducing VAT on European-wide aviation would raise €30 billion.[63] This boost in public funds could be invested in expanding and improving the continent-wide rail network or funding a just transition for aviation workers (see Safe Landing narrative, p. 58). Considering the inequality of flying, is it really fair that someone who rarely or never flies has their taxes used to effectively subsidise the profits of airline shareholders and frivolous flying?

THE GREENWASH-ING OF AVIATION

Many in the aviation industry, and some outside of it like politicians and corporate lobbyists, are holding out for technology fixes to drive down emissions and ensure that a global minority can continue to fly frequently. To this end, various technologies are presented by industry and politicians as climate quick fixes, but they cannot be scaled up soon enough. What's more, all of these technologies have problems, adverse side-effects or will be constrained by the eventual limits on renewable energy, required elsewhere to serve basic needs. The most important of these false solutions are: **electric flight, hydrogen, agrofuels (commonly called 'biofuels'[64]) and e-fuels as well as carbon offsets – all of which perpetuate the unsustainable growth of aviation.**

Misplaced hope in techno-fixes and false solutions is growing as the **efficiency gains** of aircraft engines are being pushed to their absolute limit – all while the forecasted growth of the industry outrips any additional efficiency gains made. And even when efficiency has increased, history shows that this is usually accompanied with rising emissions, as cost reductions make flights cheaper so air traffic surges.[65]

Electric aircraft can only be considered as 'green' as the electricity they are powered with. With the world still a long-way off decarbonising electricity generation, adding additional load from an energy-intensive activity like aviation will make it harder to move away from fossil fuels. Flying is a highly inefficient means of transport, with take-off and ascent consuming large amounts of energy. The sheer weight of batteries is therefore a big constraint for electric flight. Currently this means that electric aircraft will only be viable for short flights under 1,000 km by 2050, which accounts for just 17% of aviation emissions. Medium and long-haul flights, which now make up the greatest share of aviation's emissions,[66] have little chance of being fully electrified.

The advent of **hydrogen-power planes** by 2035 is probably nothing more than industry hot air, and will come far too late to contribute to the urgent emissions reductions required.[67] For medium and long-haul journeys, hydrogen-powered planes will not be viable before the middle of this century, when emissions already need to be zero in wealthy nations. Even if hydrogen-powered planes do take off, they still wouldn't provide clean, green flights. Hydrogen produced from renewable sources will still emit nitrogen oxide (NOx) and generate contrails, which have a significant climate impact.[68] To make matters worse, hydrogen requires huge quantities of renewable electricity to produce, pulling clean electricity away from areas that are more widely used than aviation and serve more basic needs.[69]

Rather than reduce flights now, we should focus our efforts on developing new aircraft and technologies that will allow us to fly completely green in the future.

Agrofuels (biofuels) only account for around 0.01% of all aviation fuel currently used and, in the near future, will only replace a tiny fraction of aviation fuel.[70] Even if agrofuel production were to scale up enough to make a dent on aviation's emissions, it would create a raft of environmental and social harms. That's especially true for 'first generation' agrofuel from crops like oil palm, rapeseed or soy, which have not been ruled out by the aviation industry. While palm oil is being touted as the most viable option to create agrofuels due to its energy density, palm tree plantations are one of the leading global drivers of deforestation, biodiversity loss and human rights abuses. What's more, studies have shown that agrofuels can actually cause three-times more greenhouse gas emissions than the polluting jet fuel they replace.[71] While airlines are continuously lobbying governments for subsidies to scale up agrofuels production, these risk wasting public money on a false solution and could keep flights artificially cheap, stimulating more air traffic.[72]

E-fuels are synthetic fuels made from hydrogen and carbon dioxide with electricity that can be used with existing aircraft in place of kerosene produced from fossil fuels. At first sight, e-fuels may seem to be the ultimate means of decarbonising aviation, but there are several problems and constraints. Above all, the production of e-fuels is extremely wasteful of energy. In a scenario where 100% of the airliner fleet would use e-fuels in 2050, the resulting electricity demand would be 20% higher than the current total worldwide electricity production and 4.7 times the production of renewable electricity in 2018.[73]
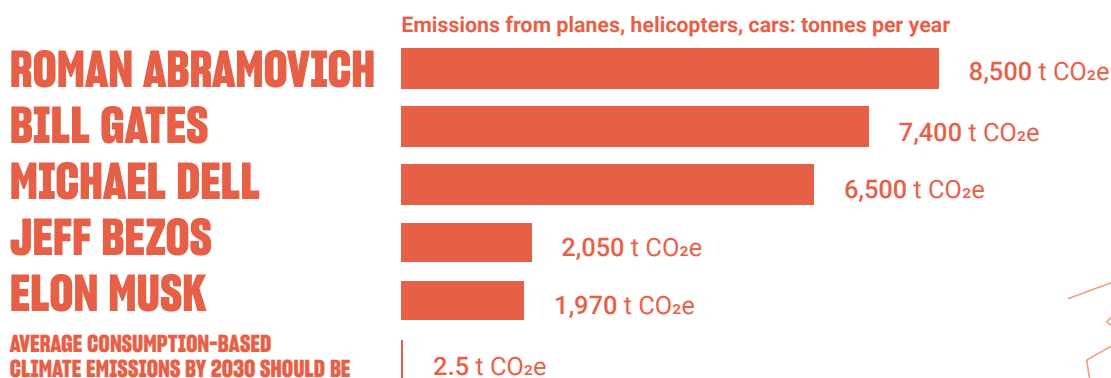
Offsets are sold by airlines to individual passengers with the argument to compensate for their emissions. But they are also the foundation of the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) UN-backed "climate strategy", the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA). However, the problem with offsets is that they do not do what they promise: a like-for-like carbon saving for hav-

ing already polluted. Leaving fossil fuels in the ground is the best way of keeping carbon out of the atmosphere. Offset schemes, on the other hand, are a huge mix of hard-to-measure, poorly monitored, short term, unreliable schemes that do little more than provide an excuse for business as usual.

The CORSIA scheme is the only international framework for regulating aviation emissions, but is fatally flawed. It is designed to keep aviation emissions at 2019 levels to allow "carbon-neutral growth". Its baseline, originally planned to be the average of 2019-2020, was shifted due to the Covid-induced slump of flights after heavy industry lobbying, further watering down the scheme. By 2030, CORSIA will only cover 12% of emissions as it includes only international flights and has many exemptions.[74]

CORSIA is set to rely heavily on offset schemes around the world. The problem is that offsets don't work. One study for the EU Commission found that **85% of the offset projects under the UN's Clean Development Mechanism**
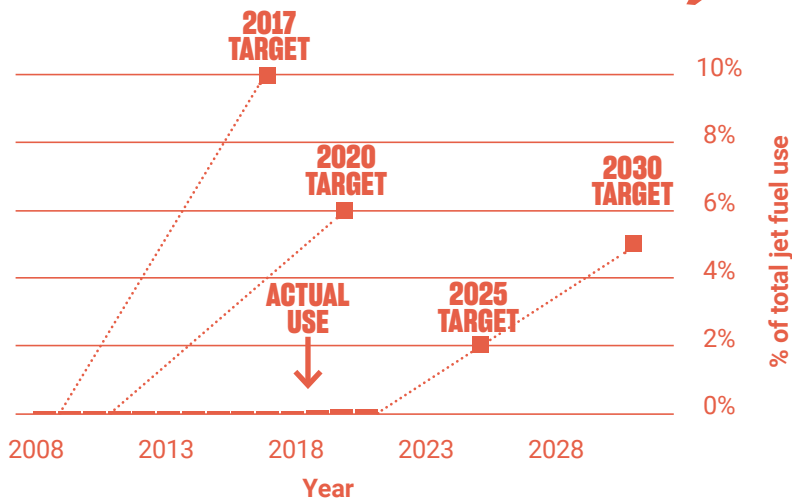
THE ULTRA-RICH POLLUTER ELITE

Emissions from planes, helicopters, cars: tonnes per year

ROMAN ABRAMOVICH	8,500 t CO_2e
BILL GATES	7,400 t CO_2e
MICHAEL DELL	6,500 t CO_2e
JEFF BEZOS	2,050 t CO_2e
ELON MUSK	1,970 t CO_2e
AVERAGE CONSUMPTION-BASED CLIMATE EMISSIONS BY 2030 SHOULD BE	2.5 t CO_2e

To stay below 1.5 °C of global heating, we have to cut average consumption-based climate emissions down to 2.5 tonnes of CO_2 equivalents by 2030. Roman Abramovich, one of the richest men on earth, consumes 3400 times this amount of emissions just with his planes, helicopters and cars. Others such as Bill Gates, Michael Dell or Jeff Bezos also emit emissions at a similar level with their jet-set lives.

Source: Wilk & Barros (2021): Private planes, mansions and superyachts: What gives billionaires like Musk and Abramovich such a massive carbon footprint. bit.ly/UltraRichFP

WORLDS APART: AVIATION'S ALTERNATIVE FUEL TARGETS VS. ACTUAL USE

2017 TARGET

2020 TARGET

2030 TARGET

ACTUAL USE

2025 TARGET

10%
8%
6%
4%
2%
0%

% of total jet fuel use

2008   2013   2018   2023   2028

Year

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), the airline industry's international lobbying body, regularly sets targets for jet fuel substitutes (e-fuels, agrofuels, …) – and the industry reliably fails to meet them. IATA's new 2030 target for alternative jet fuel of 5% is almost as high as the missed 2020 target and is 230 times current consumption (100 million litres, about 0.01% of all jet fuel used).

Sources:
IATA (2009): bit.ly/IATASAF2009
IATA (2011): bit.ly/IATASAF2011
IATA (2021): Fly Net Zero Media Kit.
bit.ly/FlyScamZero
Idea: Dan Rutherford

(CDM) failed to actually reduce emissions, and that only 2% of offset projects have a high likelihood of doing so.[75] In August 2021, the New York Times reported that 153,000 acres (61,000 hectares) of forests that were part of a carbon-offset project for the state of California burned down during a heatwave – which are becoming ever more frequent due to global heating – releasing carbon back into the atmosphere.[76] Offsets often lead to ecological and human rights issues, particularly affecting indigenous communities (see p. 56), and may have actually increased global emissions by legitimising ongoing pollution.[77]

With no technological fix on the horizon in the next decade, and offsets providing no actual emissions compensations, all these promises must be seen as greenwash from a polluting industry. This means that the importance of reframing aviation to reduce flights and systematically shift society away from frequent flying has never been more important and can deliver immediate emissions reductions.[78]

FLYING LIKE THE RICHEST EUROPEANS WOULD BLOW OUR CARBON BUDGET

If everyone flew as much as the wealthiest 10% of Europeans do, aviation alone would emit 23 billion tonnes (gigatonnes, Gt) CO_2 per year. That is two thirds of all global emissions in 2019.

Sources:
Transport & Environment (2022): Roadmap to climate neutral aviation in Europe.
Our World in Data: ourworldindata.org/co2-emissions

TOTAL GLOBAL CO_2 EMISSIONS 2019: 36.7 GTCO2

IF EVERYONE FLEW LIKE EUROPE'S TOP 10%: 23 GTCO2/YEAR
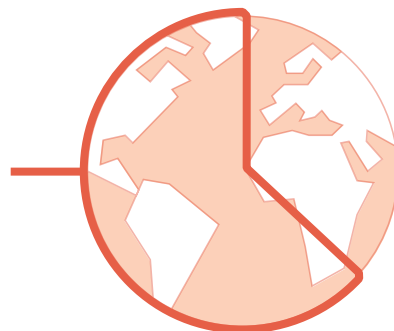
WHY NOW?

People are beginning to connect aviation, and the act of flying, with the climate crisis.[79] This presents an opportunity for all of us to place the criticism of aviation, and opposition to its continued expansion and greenwashing efforts, within a necessary wider criticism of the current economic system.

HOW IS AVIATION SEEN BY THE PUBLIC?

It's important to remember when answering this question that flying is something only a small fraction of humanity does – or has ever done. On a historical scale, it is also a relatively new activity, **the vast majority of people having never even stepped foot on a plane**.[80] As such, how aviation is seen by the public will vary greatly between those that fly frequently, those who have flown before but do not fly regularly, and those who have never flown. Other factors that can influence this view are ideology and knowledge about the climate crisis. Furthermore, airline workers and people with other connections to the industry, as well as people living near airports, will have specific perspectives on aviation.

To add another layer of complexity to understanding how aviation is seen by the public, surveys around aviation are often done by the industry itself. Thus, in many cases, aviation surveys are framed as gauging public perception on aviation, or flying, as a good or service. These questions pertain to consumer preferences over the specific airline, the convenience of the booking experience and the overall airport experience, rather than measuring the public sentiment towards aviation and the wider mobility system.

What's more, **the public perception of aviation is shaped by the aviation industry's advertising and marketing efforts** that insistently frame aviation – and the act of flying – as something desirable, accessible and attainable for all. As part of these marketing and advertising efforts, airlines have consistently downplayed the environmental impact of aviation and embarked on greenwashing efforts, such as IATA's Fly Aware campaign,[81] whose members include airlines, airports and aviation manufacturers. In fact, some airlines, such as Ryanair,[82] KLM,[83] and Green Airlines[84] have been penalised by advertising regulators for their greenwashing efforts that have misled consumers. In addition, we are increasingly surrounded by images of distant countries and romanticising photos of flights, which can increase the desire for long-distance travel, for example from travel magazines and content on social media from celebrities and influencers.[85]

Due to these factors, **creating a cohesive and representative understanding of how aviation is seen by the public is fraught with challenges – but there are also opportunities**. By creating stories and messages that speak directly to certain audiences, as well as across them, **there is huge potential for communications initiatives to nurture new narratives and reframe the practice of flying**, which we turn to in more detail in section three (p. 40) of this guide.

WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC THINK ABOUT AVIATION AND CLIMATE BREAKDOWN?

There are a variety of surveys that indicate shifting public sentiments towards aviation – especially in light of the climate crisis. The European Investment Bank's (EIB) climate survey explored what people were willing to "give up" to tackle the climate crisis. According to the survey, **72% of Europeans and US citizens, and 84% of Chinese citizens, believe that their own behaviour can make a difference in bringing down emissions**.[86] According to the survey, the easiest behaviour to adjust in light

MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE CAPITALISM BRINGS MORE HARM THAN GOOD

56%

TOTAL DISTRUST IN CAPITALISM

"Capitalism as it exists today does more harm than good in the world."

INDIA	74%
FRANCE	69%
SPAIN	60%
GERMANY	55%
UK	53%
USA	47%

In a 2019 global survey in 28 countries with 34000 respondents, 56% of people said that capitalism brings more bad than good to the world. In many countries, the majority was even much greater. Around half of people said the system is failing them, three quarters perceive an injustice and want change.

Source: Edelman (2020): The 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer.

of the climate crisis is to **give up flying**, with 40% of Europeans, 38% of US Americans and 43% of Chinese respondents agreeing.[87] These sentiments carry over to respondents' intended behaviours too, with 37% of Chinese citizens, 22% of Europeans and 22% of US Americans saying **that they will avoid flying due to concerns over the climate crisis.**[88]

These sentiments are also reflected on a global scale. According to global survey data from Ipsos Mori, one in seven people (14%) would use a form of transportation with a lower carbon footprint than flights **even if it were less convenient or more expensive.** Twice as many (29%), however, would **forgo flying in favour of a low carbon mobility option if it were as convenient or no more expensive than a flight.**[89] Survey findings like these show the potential for building new narratives through campaign communications and also

for making the case that the appetite for better mobility systems clearly exists. Optimism, however, must be tempered by the fact that research consistently shows that within the realm of aviation, there is a disconnect between concern over the climate crisis and the use of air travel, often referred to as the 'attitude-behaviour gap'. While the attitude-behaviour gap[90] has been shown in recent research to be sometimes overestimated, it may play a more important role in some concrete actions such as taking a flight.[91]

The phenomenon of **'flygskam' or 'flight shame'**, a societal trend originating in Sweden that encouraged individuals to stop flying to reduce their emissions, is testament to shifting public perceptions around aviation, where the act of flying can now be used to evoke feelings of moral responsibility and consciousness over its environmental im-

pact (often negatively labelled as guilt or even as "shaming").[92] The impact of flygskam on aviation demand has been found in Sweden, where it first arose, to France, Germany and also New Zealand.[93] **Tågskryt is the positive alternative to flygskam and literally means 'train brag', highlighting the pride of choosing a low carbon mobility option**. It has been found to encourage people to take the train, as well as talking about it online and offline.

Despite this impact, the power and influence of societal norms and social pressures around flying, the incessant advertising and how it rewires our brains, as well as narratives that connect flying to freedom and mobility, appear to remain dominant for many people. This means that advocating for individual behaviour changes alone **will not be an adequate strategy for shrinking the aviation industry over the long-term**, despite its important role in reducing demand for air traffic.[94]

Within particular countries, there are also signs that concerns surrounding the social and environmental impacts of global heating are shaping public sentiment towards transport policy. A recent survey conducted in the UK found 93% of respondents supporting the idea of better-integrated public transport coordinated by local government authorities. Specifically relating to aviation, **89% of respondents supported the idea of raising the costs of flights, particularly on frequent fliers.**[95]

While international survey data shows a clear trend around growing environmental concerns across the world, and that the public feels the aviation industry should be doing more to tackle the climate crisis, there are large swathes of humanity whose sentiments towards aviation are not adequately captured. Most of these people live in the Global South and the vast majority have never set foot on a plane. These communities are already feeling the impacts of climate breakdown today, despite contributing very little to global emissions. Where there is survey data, it is often framed around the consumer experience of flying, the aviation indus-

25

try's sentiment towards aviation growth throughout the Global South, or the potential of aviation to stimulate economic growth and development. These surveys show that often the sentiments and concerns of the communities that are directly impacted by aviation industry expansion in poorer countries are consistently ignored, underplayed and overlooked by the aviation industry.

WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC THINK OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SYSTEM?

The aviation industry must be placed within a **wider criticism of the global economic system** and issues such as **uneven power relations, poverty, inequality, corruption** and **environmental degradation.** The global Edelman Trust Barometer of 2020 found – for the first time – that the majority of people surveyed across 28 countries believe that **capitalism,** as it exists today, **does more harm than good in the world.**[96] The general distrust in capitalism was highest in Thailand (75%) and India (74%), with France following close behind on 69%. Only in Canada, Australia, the USA, South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong did the majority of respondents believe that capitalism does more good than harm – and only by a narrow margin, except for Japan.[97] Surveys like this highlight a growing global discontent with the status quo and emphasise the potential for alternative ways of living and travelling to take root.

The same survey also found that 57% of global respondents believed that **governments served the interests of a few**, rather than everyone.[98] This is particularly relevant in light of the gigantic bailouts airlines received dur-

ing the pandemic, with a Greenpeace survey finding that **93% of respondents saying that the aviation industry should not be a priority for taxpayer support**.[99] Another survey, conducted in the USA, found that a relative majority of 35% of respondents said that the government should not bail out the aviation industry, with only 31% of people believing it should (34% had no opinion).[100]

Added to this sentiment is the growing precariousness of the current economic system, with 83% of global respondents fearful that they will lose their job due to automation, globalisation or economic crises.[101] A survey from the World Economic Forum (WEF) of citizens from 27 countries found similar sentiments, with 54% of respondents stating that they fear losing their job in the next twelve months. Concern

over job losses in the next year was highest in Russia (75%), Spain (73%) and Malaysia (71%).[102] Internationally speaking, there is clearly an audience who would respond and relate to narratives confronting and criticising reluctant politicians and corporate power, as well as building solidarity with workers.

This general sense of distrust and dissatisfaction in the current economic system has given new life to alternative visions of the future. A survey of young people's attitudes towards capitalism conducted by the right-wing British think tank, the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), found that **67% of young Brits would like to live in a socialist economic system**.[103] The same survey found that three-quarters of those surveyed agree with the assertion that climate breakdown is a specifically cap-

DESIRE TO SHIFT AWAY FROM PROFIT AND GROWTH TO PROTECT NATURE

83%
of people want to do more to **protect nature**

74%
of respondents want to shift economic priorities **away from profit** and **growth** towards **well-being and environmental protection**

LESS GROWTH MORE WELL-BEING

PROTECT NATURE
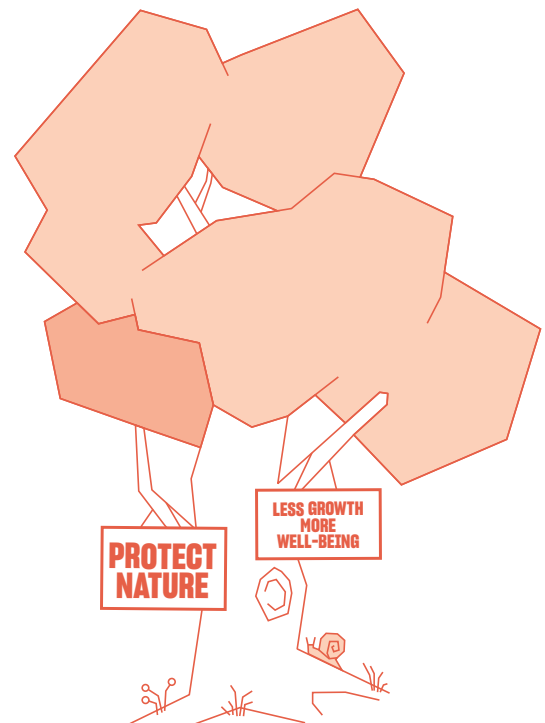
A 2021 survey in all G20 countries showed that a vast majority of people want put more focus on protecting our planet and to shift the economy away from its focus on growth and profit.

Source: Gaffney et al. (2021): Global Commons Survey: Attitudes to planetary stewardship and transformation among G20 countries.

italist problem.[104] An Amnesty International survey amongst 18-25 year olds across 22 countries identified a similar sentiment, with 41% of respondents citing climate change as the most important issue facing the world.[105] The Peoples' Climate Vote, the biggest-ever global climate survey conducted by the UN in 2021, showed that **for 64% of people throughout all 50 countries surveyed climate change was a global emergency**.[106] An Ipsos Mori survey from November 2021 found that climate change was the biggest concern for the British public with 40% of respondents saying so, ranking above the pandemic (27%) and Brexit, as well as healthcare issues (both 22%).[107]
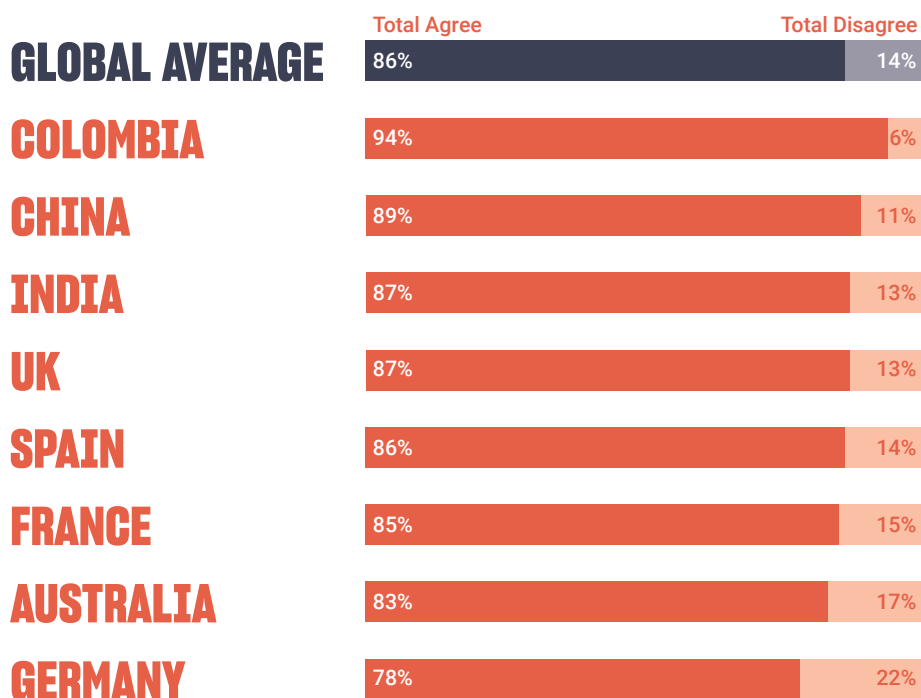
In a 2021 survey of all G20 countries conducted by Ipsos Mori for the Global Commons Alliance,[108] 73% of all respondents believed the planet was close to tipping points due to human activity. This was most pronounced in Indonesia (86%), Turkey (85%), Brazil (83%) and Mexico (78%). A large majority of 83% of respondents from across the G20 want to do more to protect nature, which was more pronounced in "emerging economies" than in the richest countries. Furthermore, 74% of respondents were in favour of shifting economic priorities away from profit and growth towards well-being and environmental protection.

In the wake of Covid-19, the appetite for an alternative future – new social and economic systems – was brought to the heart of public consciousness. A survey conducted by Ipsos Mori on behalf of the WEF found a deep and popular desire for change after the

pandemic, rather than a widespread return to how things were before the onset of Covid-19. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of adults, from across 27 countries, said they want their life to change significantly after the pandemic, with nearly nine in ten (86%) saying they would like to see **the entire world change significantly to become more sustainable and equitable**.[109] Russia and Colombia are at the top of the table of countries where the desire for change and an alternative future is the most pronounced, with 94% of respondents wanting significant change to the global system. Closely behind those nations are Peru (93%), Mexico (93%), Chile (93%), Malaysia (92%), South Africa (91%), Argentina (90%), and Saudi Arabia (89%).[110] People are also willing to embrace such changes themselves: In a Pew Research Survey in 17 countries from 2021, 80 percent said they would make at least some changes in their lives to reduce the impact of the climate crisis. In countries like Greece (62%), Italy (54%) and Spain (49%), large parts of the respondents were also willing to make 'a lot' of changes. In the same survey, 72% of people said they were somewhat or very concerned that the climate crisis will harm themselves at some point in their lives.[111]

PEOPLE WANT THE WORLD TO CHANGE AFTER THE PANDEMIC

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
GLOBAL AVERAGE	86%	14%
COLOMBIA	94%	6%
CHINA	89%	11%
INDIA	87%	13%
UK	87%	13%
SPAIN	86%	14%
FRANCE	85%	15%
AUSTRALIA	83%	17%
GERMANY	78%	22%

In a 2020 international survey, 86% of people said they wanted the world to change significantly and become more sustainable and equitable after Covid.

Source: Ipsos (2020): How Much Is the World Yearning for Change After the COVID-19 Crisis. bit.ly/IpsosChangeCovid

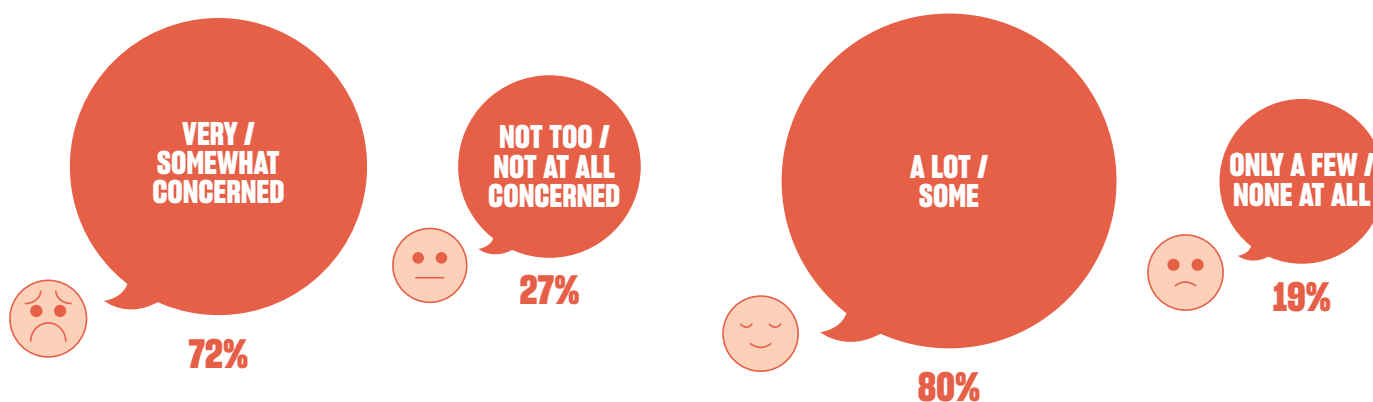# HOW THE PANDEMIC SHIFTED OUR VIEWS ON AVIATION AND MOBILITY

There is an appetite amongst the public for a better, more equitable mobility system – an appetite which may have increased during the pandemic. One YouGov survey explored how travel behaviours would change after the pandemic and found that in Italy, Germany,

CONCERNS ABOUT THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND THE WILL TO ACT

PEOPLE CONCERNED THAT GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE WILL HARM THEM PERSONALLY AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIFETIME

PEOPLE WILLING TO MAKE CHANGES ABOUT HOW THEY LIVE AND WORK TO HELP REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

VERY / SOMEWHAT CONCERNED

72%

NOT TOO / NOT AT ALL CONCERNED

27%

A LOT / SOME

80%

ONLY A FEW / NONE AT ALL

19%

People across the world are greatly concerned about climate change and willing to make sacrifices to address it, but there is less confidence in efforts to solve the problem, according to a Pew Research Center survey in 17 countries.

Source: Pew Research Center (2021): In Response to Climate Change, Citizens in Advanced Economies Are Willing To Alter How They Live and Work

India and the UK, around **a third of people said they would fly less after the pandemic** due to concerns over public health and the climate crisis. However, the survey also found the opposite sentiment in other nations, with 50% of Nigerians and 40% of Brazilians saying that they would fly more post-pandemic.[112] The latter, of course, has to be seen in light of how few people have flown in these countries to date. These travel preferences have obvious implications for how the public thinks about holidays, with the same survey finding that 40% of Italians would be more likely to holiday within Italy in the future. The same sentiment towards domestic holidaying was found in Germany, China, Thailand and the UK too.[113]

The forced changes to working patterns also shifted sentiments towards travel. One YouGov poll found that **half of business travellers state that the pause to aviation has had no impact on their working lives**.[114] Over a quarter of French and Dutch business travellers reported that their work lives had actually improved during the flight pauses caused by the pandemic.[115] The same survey also found that one in two business travellers felt there was no impact to their productivity during the lockdowns.[116] Due to the significant savings and benefits made from cutting business travel, the world seems unlikely to return to pre-pandemic habits, in spite of what the industry hopes. A Bloomberg survey of 45 large corporations based in Europe, Asia and the USA found that 84% plan to spend less on travel, citing lower carbon emissions as a top reason for this shift.[117]

There is a risk that the public perception of mass mobility options, such as public buses and trains, was permanently damaged by the global pandemic due to concerns over viral transmission. Yet surveys conducted during this period paint a more nuanced picture. Across the US, for instance, around half of daily commuters reported that they were using public transport services less frequently due to the pandemic.[118] But in Spain, the same survey found that nearly half (49%) of people's use of public transport has remained the same or even increased, despite the pandemic.[119] One study conducted in Spain found that nearly 90% of respondents were willing to use public transport once lockdown measures had eased – the highest willingness towards any of the transport options.[120]

WILL BUSINESS FLIGHTS TAKE OFF AGAIN?

40%
of business travellers want to take less flights after Covid

5%
of business travellers do not want to take any more flights

One YouGov poll found that: 45% of business travellers want to fly less or not at all after Covid. The same poll showed that half of them state that the pause to aviation has had no impact on their working lives. Over a quarter of French and Dutch business travellers reported that their work lives had actually improved during the flight pauses caused by the pandemic.

Source: YouGov (2021): Changes in Business Travel. bit.ly/YouGovSurveyResults
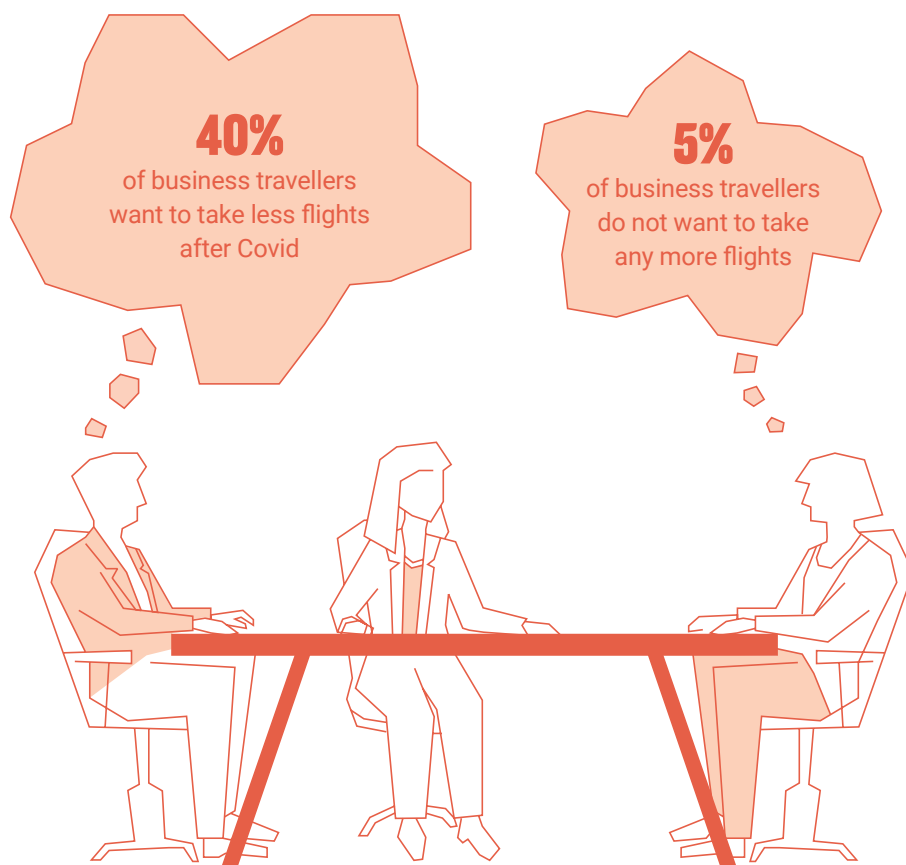
BULLSHIT FLIGHTS

A DEBATE ON LEGITIMATE AIR TRAFFIC

We know that flying is bad for the climate. Less obvious is that a lot of it is pointless and unnecessary as well. In the same vein as the anthropologist David Graeber's concept of 'bullshit jobs'[121] – jobs that are meaningless and harmful for society – we can therefore talk about 'bullshit flights'. These are **flights that are unnecessary, frivolous and also, not only because of their impacts, unfair**. They should be stopped immediately.[122]

Examples for bullshit flights could be flights for **weekend trips, ultra short-haul flights, very cheap flights, private jet flights, as well as billionaires' space flights**. Also, though slightly different, the 'ghost flights' undertaken by empty planes to protect airlines' landing slots. In contrast, there are also legitimate flights such as ones in case of emergency and for disaster relief, visiting family members on another continent or safe escape routes for refugees. Some flights may be difficult to classify, such as those for stays abroad for an extended period of time. Clearly the discussion surrounding flights touches other topics such as injustice which are also important to debate. Talking about them helps reveal the connections between individual flights and a system that supports bullshit flights, subsidises the aviation industry, and gives a free pass to wealthy super emitters.

Reducing air traffic in an equal and fair way means bullshit flights need to have their 'social licence' removed, through cultural change but also through targeted regulation and changes in corporate policy.

This planet is the only home we'll ever have. There's no place like it. And home is always, always, always worth it.

Mary Annaise Heglar

A MATTER OF CLIMATE JUSTICE

Aviation is one of the gravest examples of climate injustice. This makes reframing – and reducing it – a matter of climate justice.

We are living in times of ecological and climate injustice. **Those communities that have contributed the least to the climate crisis are already suffering the most from its consequences**. Without urgent action this will only get worse in the future. Rich countries in Europe, North America and the rest of the world must be the first to stop their climate-wrecking pollution and simultaneously support low-income countries in transitioning away from fossil fuels, while adapting to the increasingly frequent and severe impacts of climate breakdown.

This is the **climate justice story we often hear. And it is true – but incomplete. Climate justice must be much more than sharing efforts to reduce emissions and financing adaptation**. Achieving climate justice requires societies to prioritise a good life for all above profits for the few. Climate justice must be planetary justice, recognising the rights of all beings and the whole living planet, as well as understanding the **historic responsibility** for the climate crisis and the **deep inequalities** of the current system. This also implies the **struggle against all forms of discrimination** based on gender, origin, race, class, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

To achieve climate justice, where both people and planet thrive, we cannot tinker at the edges of the existing system. We must build a new economy that reflects the needs of all of humanity and the natural world, and at its centre, a different mobility system.

CLIMATE DEBT AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

Our world would be very different if we had never started burning coal, oil and gas. But who is 'we' in this case? It is the part of the world commonly referred to today as 'rich countries' or the 'Global North'. The nations that were first to in-

dustrialise and who have amassed vast wealth through fossil-fuelled growth, imperialism and globalisation. This part of the world is also where the bulk of political and economic power is concentrated – power that is more often used to block climate action and justice, rather than accelerate it.[123]

The countries of the Global North are responsible for 92% of climate-damaging emissions beyond the safe planetary limit of 350 ppm CO_2. The Global South is responsible for just 8%.[124] Overall, the US is the largest historical polluter, responsible for 26% of all the emissions ever released into the atmosphere since 1850.[125] Almost **two-thirds of climate pollution to date can be traced back to 90 major corporations**, many owned by private shareholders based in the Global North, such as Chevron, Peabody and Shell.[126]

Even today, many of the wealthy nations have per citizen carbon footprints that far outstrip the footprints of those living in the Global South. An average Australian citizen, for instance, has an annual carbon footprint of just over 15 tonnes of CO_2.[127] In comparison, the average carbon footprint of a Bangladeshi citizen is 0.56 tonnes a year, while a Ugandan citizen has an average carbon footprint of just 0.11 tonnes a year.[128] It follows that arguably **the most equitable way of reducing emissions would see the richest 10% globally take responsibility for 87% of the total emissions cuts needed**, while the poorest 50% of humanity are not yet required to cut their emissions at all.[129]

CARBON INEQUALITY WITHIN SOCIETIES

The divide between rich and poor, and between the powerful and disempowered, is not only geographical: there are huge disparities in carbon inequality within regions and nations. Disadvantaged and marginalised groups in these places suffer far more from the climate crisis and its consequences than the wealthy sections of society do, despite them doing the least to contribute to it. It is those who also suffer from other forms of discrimination: women, Black people, people of colour, indigenous peoples, economically deprived communities and those on the frontlines of fossil fuel extraction and climate colonialism. This is true in several ways:

➔ Firstly, they are more often **excluded from the benefits that come from burning oil, coal and gas and suffer more from the side effects of exploitation.** In other words, wealthy men fly and drive cars the most.[130] It is also predominantly men who run oil companies and rake in their profits.[131]

➔ Secondly, the groups mentioned **suffer the harmful effects of the fossil fuel system.**[132] Economically

RICH COUNTRIES OVERWHELMINGLY RESPONSIBLE FOR CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

40% USA

29% EU & UK

13% REST OF EUROPE

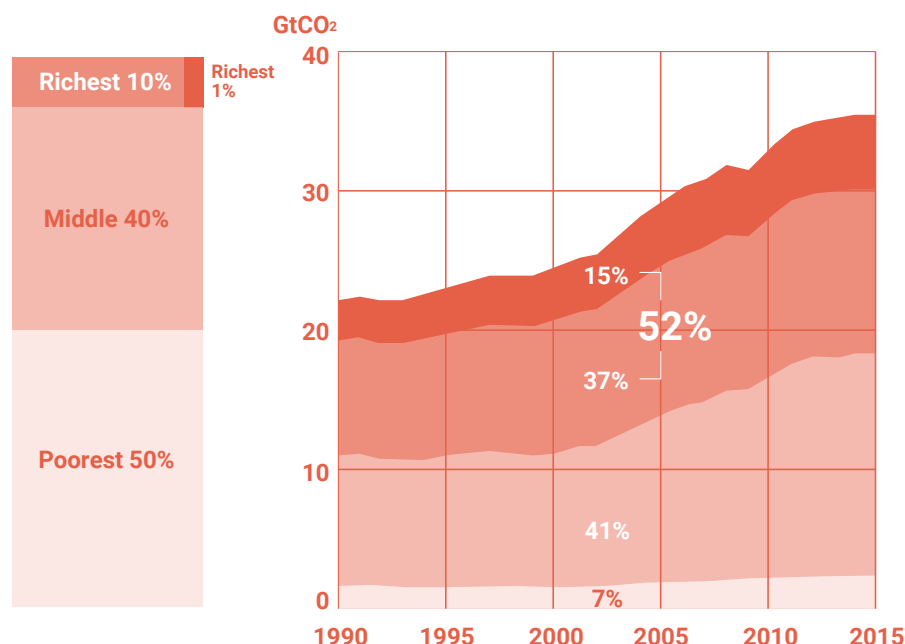**8% GLOBAL SOUTH**

10% REST OF GLOBAL NORTH
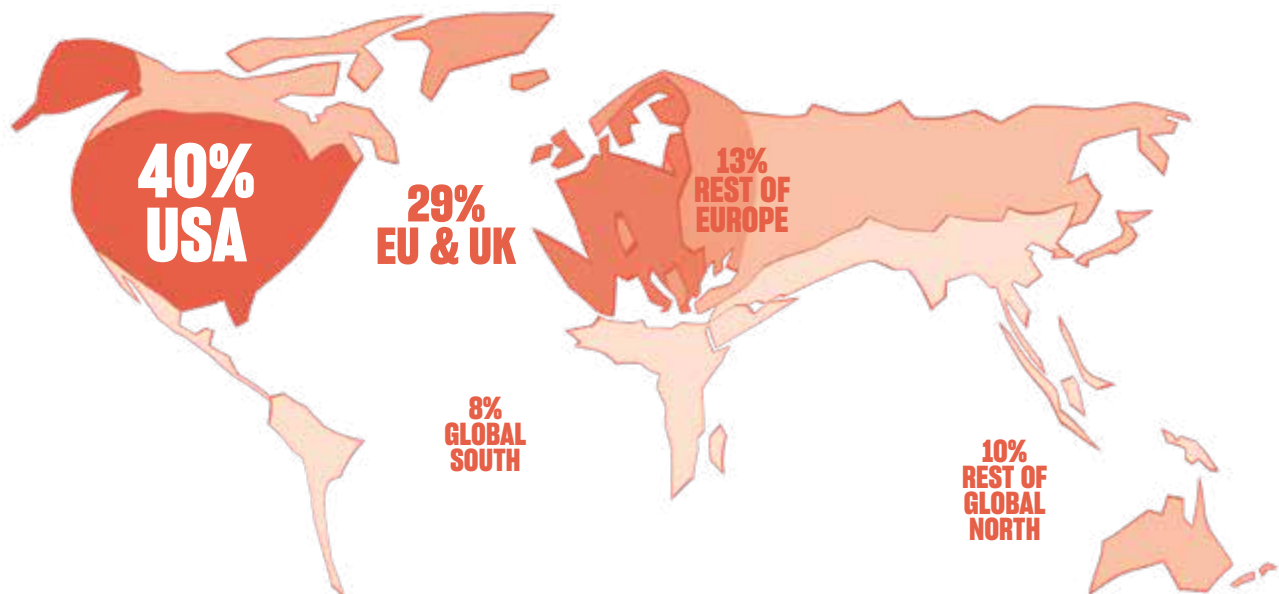
The countries of the Global North (USA, Canada, Europe, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Japan) are responsible for 92% of climate-damaging emissions beyond the safe planetary limit of 350 ppm CO_2. The Global South (Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia) is responsible for just 8%.

Source: Hickel (2020): Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary

RICHEST 10% CAUSE OVER HALF OF GLOBAL EMISSIONS

SHARE OF GLOBAL POPULATION

SHARE OF CUMULATIVE EMISSIONS 1990-2015

GtCO$_2$

Richest 10%
Richest 1%

Middle 40%

Poorest 50%

15%

52%

37%

41%

7%

1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015

Between 1990 and 2015, the richest 1% of the world population (c. 63 million people) alone were responsible for 15% of cumulative emissions, twice as much as the poorest half of the world's population. The richest 10% caused 52% of all climate-damaging emissions.

Source: Oxfam (2020): Confronting Carbon Inequality. bit.ly/OxCarbonIneq

deprived communities, Black people and people of colour are more likely to live next to refineries, polluting airports or busy roads. Indigenous lands often become **"sacrifice zones"**, areas destroyed for the extraction and processing of fossil resources.

➜ Thirdly, they are **more affected by the long-term consequences of global heating**, such as water shortages or crop failures.[133] These people do not have the means and financial resources to adapt to the increasing hostile environmental conditions.

➜ Fourthly, **the climate crisis is an amplifier of existing inequalities, problems and conflicts.**[134] Where conflicts ignite over resources and water, the living conditions deteriorate most dramatically for vulnerable groups and communities.

➜ Finally, it is marginalised people who suffer the direct **impacts of false solutions to the climate crisis**. For

example, when indigenous communities are driven off their land for offset projects or economically deprived communities have their livelihoods threatened due to land grabs for agrofuel production.[135]

How much climate pollution an individual causes depends above all on their income and wealth.[136] Between 1990 and 2015, the richest 10% of European citizens were responsible for 27% of the EU's total emissions – the same level of emissions from the poorest half of the European population combined.[137] While the latter's share of emissions is associated with essential needs such as food and heating, the excess emissions of the richest come from luxury consumption such as big cars and flights. And the emissions of the richest are accelerating: over the same time period emissions from the richest 10% of the European population grew by 3% and emissions from the super-rich 1% grew by 5%, while the emissions from poorer and middle income segments fell.[138]

Measures to deal with the climate crisis must not ignore or reinforce these inequalities and injustices within and between nations. Climate policy and action must tackle inequalities and create opportunities for a good life for all humans and non-human beings. There is no way around this: **climate justice must lead to a transformation of how we live together on this planet, how we make decisions, work, produce, consume, and how we understand our relationship to the natural world. Climate justice must be both global and local**.

CLIMATE JUSTICE AND REPARATIONS

The countries, corporations and citizens in Europe, North America and other regions that have the greatest historical

FRAMING CLIMATE JUSTICE

The UK project Framing Climate justice, hosted by PIRC, 350.org & NEON, brought together organisers from across the British climate movement to tell the stories that matter, and strengthen the fight for climate justice. The results of their research and testing suggest how we can communicate the values and content of climate justice more effectively. They **recommend a narrative about solidarity as the most effective way to convey core concepts and address shared values.**

The messaging they propose shows how the countries responsible for the climate crisis and most affected regions must stand shoulder to shoulder in this fight. This should be linked to the reference to corrupt elites who benefit from fuelling the climate crisis – while the consequences are borne by the poorest and most disadvantaged. Therefore, the solutions must take power and money away from the elites and transfer it to those who are excluded and most affected.
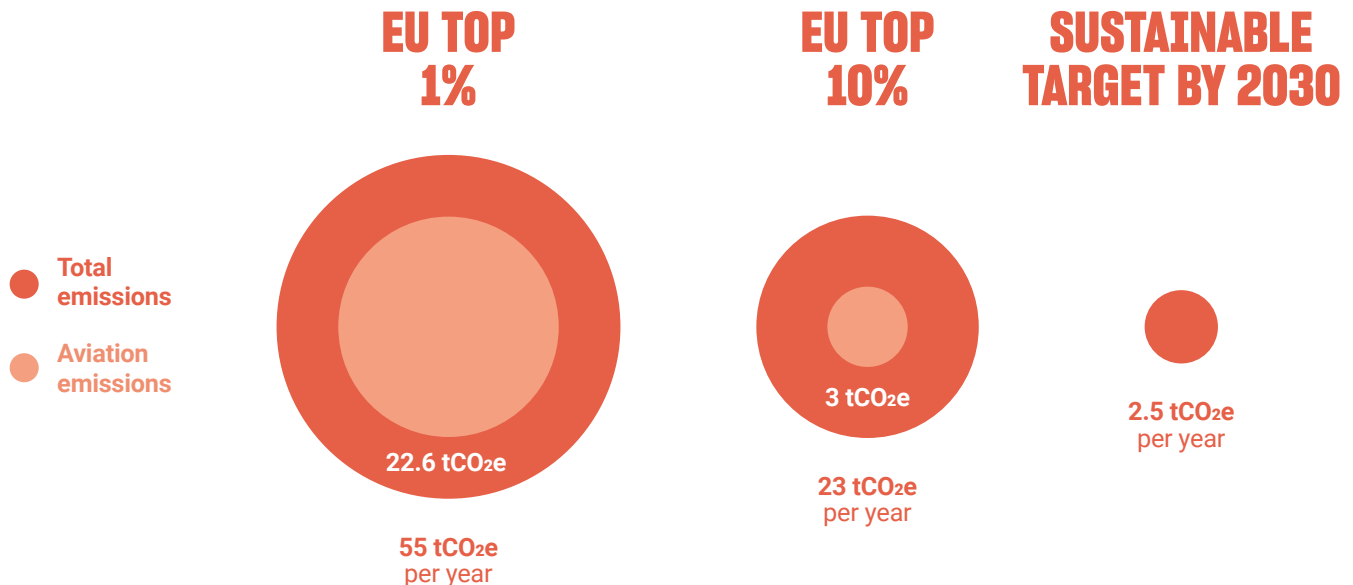
KEY FINDINGS CONCERNING BRITISH PEOPLE'S OPINIONS:

Many people have recognised that certain industries are harming the planet, consumerism is a problem, people are affected differently by the consequences of the climate crisis; and they agree that those most responsible must contribute most to the solution.

There are also common misconceptions, such as that we got into this crisis by accident or that the climate crisis is not related to other oppressions like sexism or racism.

Read more: **framingclimatejustice.org**

EUROPE'S 1%: SKY-HIGH FLIGHT EMISSIONS

EU TOP 1%

EU TOP 10%

SUSTAINABLE TARGET BY 2030

● Total emissions

● Aviation emissions

22.6 tCO$_2$e

55 tCO$_2$e per year

3 tCO$_2$e

23 tCO$_2$e per year

2.5 tCO$_2$e per year

To stay below the 1.5 degree limit, emissions per capita must fall to 2.5 tonnes by 2030. The richest 1% of EU citizens cause almost ten times as much with their flying alone: 22.6 tonnes according to a study from 2020. Even the richest 10% still cause much more flight emissions than is possible for 1.5. The poorest, on the other hand, hardly fly at all, also in Europe.

Source: Ivanova & Wood (2020): The unequal distribution of household carbon footprints in Europe and its link to sustainability. bit.ly/EUemispc

responsibility for the climate crisis must take the lead in rapidly reducing their emissions. But more so, existing ecological and climate debts must be repaid in order to repair the loss and damage that has already taken place. Even if no amount of money in the world can come close to truly repairing this damage, it is something we must commit to. This means, among other things, financial reparations by states and corporations in the North who have been profiting from the destruction of nature, livelihoods and futures, paid to communities in the South for whom climate breakdown is now an everyday reality.

Reparations must go beyond the financial. They must also include technology transfers, patent waivers and debt cancellation for the most vulnerable countries. Philosophers Olúfẹ́mi O. Táíwò and Beba Cibralic understand **reparations as "a systemic approach to redistributing resources and changing policies and institutions that have perpetuated harm – rather than a discrete exchange of money or of apologies for past wrongdoing."** This includes policies that would respond to the displacement caused by accelerated global heating and its consequences.[139]

Necessary changes and steps to tackle the climate crisis and adapt to it should not be imposed from above. Genuinely inclusive and democratic processes are needed and disadvantaged groups must be at the heart of these processes in order to remedy historical power imbalances and discriminations. And this is not only about humans. All sentient and non-sentient entities are part of our planet and therefore part of us: whether animals, plants, rivers or mountains. They too have a right to exist.

The goal of all this must be planetary justice,[140] **where everyone and everything on our planet has the opportunity to live a good life.**

TENETS OF PLANETARY JUSTICE

➔ Acknowledges the historical inequality of carbon emissions between the Global North and Global South, and the differentiated responsibility for addressing the climate crisis.

➔ Understands that the ecological crisis of our planet is rooted in centuries of injustices of colonialism, patriarchy, racism and capitalism.

➔ Tackles inequalities and creates opportunities for a good life for all sentient and non-sentient beings.

➔ Challenges powers that block necessary social change and equitable transformation processes.

➔ Ensures the rights of future generations and those not yet born to a healthy and thriving planet.

➔ Recognises that the climate crisis is not a future issue but has already been causing and is today continuing to cause damage that is particularly affecting vulnerable and marginalised groups.

➔ Applies an intersectional approach to the climate crisis, because matters of gender, class, race and others can determine the frequency and severity of climate impacts experienced.

➔ Understands that carbon inequality exists both between countries and within them too, with the richest citizens responsible for more emissions than the poorest.

➔ Realises that a real societal transformation is needed to tackle the climate crisis and alleviate its consequences.

➔ Advocates for reparations to do as much justice as possible to losses and damages caused by destruction of livelihoods; these go beyond monetary support and include the freedom of movement.

➔ Distinguishes between necessary activities and luxury activities to decide which sectors of societies and economies need to reduce their emissions first and fastest.

➔ Ensures that measures against the climate crisis are not dictated by geopolitical and economic power holders and do not perpetuate neo-colonial dependencies.

➔ Understands that all people and all life on earth has the right to be part of the democratic processes and procedures of winding down the old economy and creating the new one.

➔ Recognises that all life on earth, both human and non-human, deserves justice.

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Utopia is on the horizon. I move two steps closer; it moves two steps further away. I walk another ten steps and the horizon runs ten steps further away. As much as I may walk, I'll never reach it. So what's the point of utopia? The point is this: to keep walking.

Fernando Birri

3

TRACKS TOWARDS A FAIR PLANET

Now that our reframing journey has begun, and we know **why** we must guide the aviation industry towards a safe landing and lay down the tracks for a new economic system, it is time to talk about the **destination** we are all collectively working towards: an economy based on wellbeing and planetary health. The previous chapters provide facts and figures to argue in favour of changing our current mobility and economic systems, but a positive idea of what the future could hold that many can relate to is vital for bringing people on board. Successful communication campaigns are able to reflect the wants, desires and values of the audience, as well as evoking and galvanising the desire for change.

This chapter is **not a blueprint** for one single future, but **a compass** that can guide us towards a range of better, possible futures. Laying down the tracks towards a new economy is an act of constant co-creation. While there are many paths available, there are three broad qualities that it should include: **equity, wellbeing and living within the ecological limits of our planet**.

EQUITY

OVERCOMING INJUSTICES TO CREATE A FAIRER SOCIETY

Fairness and a regenerative approach to nature must be at the heart of our new economy if we are to all **flourish within ecological limits**. And this fairness must radiate within borders and across them, addressing the injustices of race, gender and class, as well as geographic disparities and ecological debt. By prioritising justice and meeting the needs of all, the new economy could create the space for more democratic and participatory forms of local decision-making.

Policies to address the legacies of global injustices will need to be global in ambition but led by local initiatives. They could range from new mutual and cooperative company ownership and governance models that ensure more equal sharing of economic benefits. They could also include policies such as Universal Basic Services (UBS),[1] where the building blocks of a good life – education, housing and health care and mobility amongst other things – are not governed by the logic of profit. There could also be a Universal Basic Income (UBI) to ensure that everyone has the necessary means for a dignified and more fulfilled life. This would also mean that the value we all create with our work is spread out equally and fairly, taking into account previously unpaid labour such as child rearing and caring for elderly members of our communities. It is important though, due to the scale of change required, that policies are not implemented just to stimulate more damaging and inequitable growth.

Economic activity could be geared towards promoting **human wellbeing**, rather than maximising profit. A wellbeing economy would reverse the current situation where those who undermine social and environmental value are highly paid and extremely privileged, such as executives in speculative finance and advertising, and instead ensure that people who are currently low paid and precariously employed, like the ones working in education, caregivers, cleaners and many others are more justly valued.[2] This is ensured, among other things, by a minimum income and a maximum income for all professions, which reduces the pressures of the growth and jobs treadmill as well as status consumption.

The benefits of the new economy must be shared equally across society, recognising and respecting planetary boundaries. Workers will have a greater say over their conditions of work and the direction their industry takes in the future. Deeper and more far-reaching **economic democracy** with thriving co-operatives, solidarity economy and new forms of ownership of production and mobility will help re-common and re-purpose those industries and businesses that are driving the climate crisis, pivoting them towards improving human wellbeing. Imagine if aircraft manufacturers could be put to the task of building wind turbines. Or car manufacturers instead building clean, affordable mass public transport. The land taken by agrofuel manufacturers could instead be reforested and rewilded.

WELLBEING

BUILDING AN ECONOMY THAT PROMOTES WELLBEING, NOT PROFIT

Working less for a wage and having more free time for the things we love could become the norm. This will also change our relationship with time and the concept of 'holiday', allowing us to travel longer and more sustainably. Proper workplace care provision will allow people more time to learn, give, take notice, be active and connect as citizens, neighbours, colleagues and volunteers – which are all crucial skills for bringing humanity inline with planetary boundaries. Work will be for the benefit of society, not for the benefit of shareholders and executives' bonuses. By doing **work that actually improves the wellbeing of people** alive today, and those that are yet to be born, work will have greater meaning and purpose. We might just begin to love Mondays.

Social and economic success is no longer measured in productivity and growth, but in the well-being and health of citizens and the planet. This requires **new indicators instead of the obsolete GDP**, which does not distinguish between meaningful and harmful economic activity. In its place are new yardsticks that reflect the diversity of human needs and respect other parts of the living planet and its limits. We will finally acknowledge that often less is more.[3]

PLANETARY HEALTH

THRIVING WITHIN PLANETARY BOUNDARIES

To thrive within the limits of the planet, the new economy must focus on **what people need to live a good life**, not what they are **being made to think they need**. After all, what we think we want is mediated and sustained by advertising and marketeers, all trying to sell us products and services we do not need, and which don't bring us substantial happiness, joy or meaning. No longer would it be seen as aspirational or acceptable to mindlessly consume goods that are not built to last or that cause excessive pressure on the planet, such as unnecessary flights. Instead, our societies would begin to value more free time with our friends and families, in accessible public green spaces and at our community farms – all of which can be reached by an electrified, high capacity and publicly-owned mobility system.

Our **obsession with economic growth**, relentless competition against each other and the worshipping of private property would end. Industries that cannot be aligned with planetary boundaries will be scaled down and phased out as part of a **just transition**, with workers retrained, reskilled and endowed with the tools needed to strengthen new and sustainable branches. By re-commoning the worlds of business and industry, as well as finance, and bringing democracy into every community, workers will be at the

heart of deciding how we best use productive industries to the benefit of all, not just shareholders.

Sufficiency is about reframing what prosperity is and what it means to live a long, good and meaningful life. This involves both setting upper limits to curtail the excesses of multiple large homes and countless foreign holidays, as well as lower limits to ensure that everyone in society has access to the goods and services necessary to lead a good life.[4] By focussing on what is sufficient to live well within limits, a wellbeing economy would challenge and transform our values and cultures, appealing to our intrinsic and shared values. People will no longer feel afraid or hopeless – they will feel like they can make a difference and that they have a say in how society responds to the many challenges it faces. They will be able to ask those 'what if' questions[5] and have the agency and tools to make necessary changes.

ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF SOCIETAL ORGANISATION

Defenders of how the global economy is currently organised often say that there is no alternative. The reality is however, that whatever your persuasion, there are many alternatives, and here are just a few examples, both practical and theoretical ...

Buen Vivir, also called Sumak kawsay, is a principle in the worldview of the indigenous peoples of the Andean region. It focuses on sustainable living within a community of human beings and the rest of the living world.

Commons are social systems consisting of a concrete group of people who share and use certain resources together within clear rules. Interest in the practice of 'commoning' is growing. Classic examples are grazing grounds or fishing grounds, but there are also digital commons such as Wikipedia.

Degrowth is a movement and academic field that challenges the paradigm of endless economic growth. It calls for an open, democratically planned redistributive reduction of production and consumption to achieve social justice, environmental sustainability and societal well-being.

Doughnut Economics is a framework for a sustainable economy in harmony with the Planetary Boundaries. The doughnut-shape visualises social foundations and an ecological ceiling between which a sustainable economy for humanity can thrive.

Eco-Socialism is a current of ecological thought that builds on marxism. It views the capitalist mode of production and consumption as the root cause of ecological degradation and human immiseration and calls for a transition towards a publicly owned and democratically planned economy.

Kurdish Democratic Confederalism is a project of democratic autonomy based on the works of Abdullah Öcalan. Goals include gender equality and ecology and has found its manifestation in the north-eastern Syrian Rojava. It has been operated in the midst of conflict and a complex emergency.

Open Localisation is a concept for transforming local places into open spaces for social and political solidarity. Rescaling and localising economic activity is meant to counteract harmful globalisation tendencies and enable for more autonomy, democracy, sustainability and multicultural forms of coexistence.

Prakritik Swaraj, or eco-swaraj, is an Indian form of societal and political organisation and can be simplistically translated as self-government. Important aspects are autonomy and freedom of individuals and communities and an ethic of responsibility towards others, including non-human nature.

Post-growth is based on the recognition of natural and social limits to economic growth and seeks to promote the development of different measures of societal well-being than economic growth. Alternatives to the current economy should be based on locally and culturally appropriate principles.

Ubuntu is a concept from southern Africa that can be translated as 'humanity' or 'humanness'. It is an understanding that an individual can only realise their true humanity in relation to other human beings as well as to the non-human world. Ubuntu suggests that it is our responsibility to care for others.

Wellbeing Economy describes a wide range of ideas and measures that work towards the common vision of an economy designed for the purpose of collective wellbeing. The key idea is quality of life and prosperity for all people and sustainability for the planet.

Zapatista Autonomy is central to the rebellion of the Zapatista movement in Chiapas in southern Mexico. It strives for indigenous self-determination as a radical and dignified alternative to the dominant extractivist system and its institutions.

Source: Kothari et al. (2019): Pluriverse. A Post-Development Dictionary.

Another world is not only possible,
she is on her way. On a quiet day,
I can hear her breathing.

Arundhati Roy

THE NEW NARRATIVES

The other world described in the last section may already be "on her way" – and most likely she will arrive on a train. This section develops five distinct ways to talk about aviation and the transformative journey we need to make. These new narratives are foundations with some suggested examples of how they can be turned into powerful messages. They are intended for others to build on and are open to being adapted and developed for different cultural circumstances and diverse campaigns. One narrative is never clearly separated from others; they overlap and inform each other. This also applies to our narratives, which together reveal the realities of aviation and invite people to picture alternatives, encourage imagination and ask the key question: 'what if?'.

PLANE GREEDY

about how the aviation industry puts itself above the needs of the many, how it is 'free riding' at the expense of people, nature and communities, and taking profits for itself while passing damage and costs onto others.

COMMON DESTINATION

about how a liveable planet is our only, viable, common destination. And why, on our shared planetary home, we don't need more air traffic and tourism to thrive. But having a tiny, wealthy minority of the world's population flying regularly, with even fewer capturing the profits, is a big obstacle to completing the journey.

GREEN MEANS GROUNDED

about why industry promises of change are greenwash and how mobility can become truly sustainable. The only way to lay tracks for ecologically and socially viable systems is to reduce air traffic and foster alternatives.

SAFE LANDING

about how times are changing and the aviation industry needs to face reality and find a safe landing for the people working within it. Climate breakdown, cultural shifts, the rise of virtual meetings, pressures on fuel and responses to the pandemic all mean change is inevitable and will happen by design or disaster.
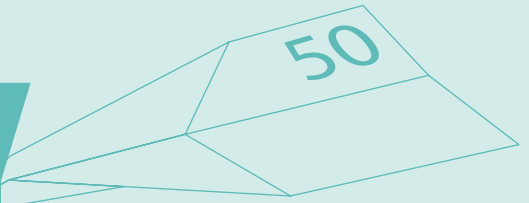
ENJOY THE JOURNEY

about alternatives to aviation, and how by travelling in other ways we can enjoy both our lives and journeys more, on the shared path towards a more just and sustainable society.

PLANE GREEDY

'WHEN DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

This narrative focuses on scandalous and nefarious practices of the aviation industry and seeks to spark rightful indignation. It can also be used to challenge economic arguments made by the industry. Instead it frames the industry as a drain on resources, the public and the planet that we cannot afford.

'HOW DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

Using this narrative for specific interventions e.g. around industry bailouts can be highly effective. For interventions around airport expansion, this narrative can help bolster local opposition by drawing on sentiments towards industry greed and evoking values of fairness and community.

The aviation industry is a polluting and plane greedy engine of self-interest, ripping-off people and the planet, even though it has lobbied hard to convince us that it brings big economic benefits. Their version is that they are a vital and indispensable source of wealth creation for economies, providing much-needed jobs and aspirational leisure opportunities. Reality in all aspects is very different from this tale. While profits are made for shareholders and top salaries are paid to senior management, the climate, workers in the industry, the public who pay their taxes and local communities are being short-changed.

A few get very rich from the aviation industry while its lobbyists push for ever more tax breaks, subsidies and bailouts. At the same time it opposes new measures to address the ecological and climate emergency, and often treats its lower paid employees appallingly. During the pandemic we saw this first hand (see story p. 44), with airlines handed billions in public money while simultaneously firing staff, challenging unions, putting workers on precarious new contracts and lobbying for weaker environmental rules. Also, at the peak of the pandemic, when big bailout packages were put together in most countries, leading economists from around the world found unconditional airline bailouts to have the lowest economic payoff and overall desirability.[6]

Bringing the aviation industry back down to earth from its privileged economic treatment will be vital in building a fair economy. Airlines serve at the whim of their financial backers and, despite their misleading marketing that says otherwise, their loyalties lie with their shareholders – many of whom are also part of the jet-setting polluter elite. Even where airlines are private and not run by governments, they are subsidised and supported by public resources, tax-free jet fuel, infrastructure and 'friendly' regulatory systems. All this amounts to billions in giveaways every year to a climate-wrecking industry that is ripping us off today, and tearing-up our tomorrows.

It's no surprise then that the needs of working people and their communities, as well as the disproportionate damage caused to the planet, are not a priority for the aviation industry. Instead, it's profit over people, and shareholder dividends over breathable air and clear skies. This isn't to say that a nationalised airline would automatically put the interests of the many ahead of the few, but shedding light on issues of ownership could broaden the industry's priorities beyond just profit, to social and environmental responsibility. Key to this is a more democratic organisation and decision-making involving workforces. Through the dynamics that this creates, windows of opportunity can be seized to protect livelihoods, further rights in the workplace and democratise the process of the industry winding-down through a just transition (see Safe Landing narrative, p. 58). But **to achieve this, it will not be enough to appeal nicely to politicians and industry managers – we have to stand up against their excesses and business as usual, be loud and put pressure on them.**

THE OLD NARRATIVE: THE 'ECONOMIC EXAGGERATION'

The story told by the industry is that air transport is one of the most important drivers for the economy and accessible to all. They would love us to believe that aviation is only responsible for a very small part of global emissions and that nevertheless, the industry has already done and continues to do a lot to become more climate-friendly. Aviation lobbyists argue with straight faces and no obvious irony that for the industry to become even greener, burdens such as a kerosene tax, carbon prices or harsh regulations must be avoided: only then can airlines and the rest of the industry invest in 'sustainable aviation fuels', electric aircraft and hydrogen. In order for them to take off, these technologies must be supported by governments.

This "economic exaggeration" argument tries to paint a picture of an industry indispensable to the global economy. It argues that millions of jobs depend on it directly, and many more indirectly. Without air transport, national and regional economies are cut off from the rest of the world, they say. That is supposedly why the airline industry deserves government subsidisation. The bailouts during Covid-19, therefore, they argue were necessary to protect jobs and reduce negative impacts on the whole economy. But, as we explain in this guide, these arguments are either false, misleading or greatly exaggerated.

PLANE GREEDY!

We can't afford airlines being plane greedy when a fair well-being economy needs companies to work for people, nature and the climate, not against them. Airlines have avoided accountability on reducing pollution, yet, governments continue to prop-up and support them, putting the financial burden of their subsidised existence onto the taxpayer.

Messages to help communicate the 'Plane Greedy' narrative include:

➔ **The aviation industry is 'plane' greedy, out for itself and ripping us off. It gets a free ride at others' expense:** for decades it has dodged paying its way and respecting the environmental rules that others comply with to protect people, nature and our collective future.

➔ **The industry is flying away with public money:** the aviation industry is flying off with public money and always first in line for public bailouts, while laying off workers and draining the economy, leaving more accessible and less polluting ways to travel underfunded and overshadowed.

➔ **The aviation industry allows a tiny, wealthy elite to pollute at the expense of all:** the industry feels entitled to more than their fair share of the shrinking amount of the pollution the climate can handle.

➔ **Airports and airlines are bad neighbours – they're making money from keeping communities awake at night and pumping out toxic fumes:** the mental and physical health impacts of airport operations fall heavily and unequally on local communities and aviation workers.

UNITED AIRLINES
SHOWERED WITH BAILOUT MONEY, BUT HANGING ITS WORKERS OUT TO DRY

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, parts of the world came to a standstill. Nowhere was this more apparent than within international aviation, where airports became ghost towns. With no planes taking off, aviation workers simply couldn't work – and without any work, the livelihoods of millions of families were thrown into doubt. In response to this forced standstill, governments handed airline operators billions of dollars to safeguard jobs within the industry, while the pandemic pushed the global economy into its worst crisis since the Second World War.

In the US, the government agreed to a bailout deal for the aviation industry totalling $25bn as part of the $2.2trn Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act.[7] The conditions of this bailout were clear: to allow airline companies to continue paying salaries and benefits to employees in the coming months to help them through the pandemic. There were a number of benefactors of the bailout scheme, including Delta, Southwest, JetBlue and American, but one airline in particular – and their actions following the bailout – is worthy of further interrogation: United Airlines.

United Airlines received a $7.7bn bailout as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, with

United Airlines is the third-largest airline in the world.

a further $2.4bn injection received at the beginning of 2021. Most of this cash has been provided as a grant, but United Airlines will owe the US treasury approximately $3bn. The grant element, however, is contingent on United Airlines keeping its 74,400 staff employed, helping them weather the COVID-19 storm and safeguarding their livelihoods during such a precarious time.

Yet while staff have been continuously warned that job losses are looming, the bailout money was quickly used to hand back billions to shareholders and millions to the airline's executives. Just two months after the bailout was finalised, United Airlines sent job loss warnings to nearly half of its US staff, approximately 36,000 employees.[8] The majority of this staff were set to be

Safe Landing aviation workers joined the climate protests during COP26 UN climate summit 2021 in Glasgow.

flight attendants (15,000) and customer service staff (11,000) and some pilots (2,250). Unions described this as "a gut punch".[9]

Throughout the pandemic, workers were receiving consistent reminders about the insecurity of their jobs and the uncertainty of the salary and benefits, even after United Airlines had spent $8.57bn on stock buybacks between 2014 and 2019 – cash that could have been used to protect workers during the pandemic.[10] It also committed to rewarding its top executives to the tune of $7.5m with profits expected to bounce back by 2023.[11] The exact number of job losses are currently unknown, but it's no wonder workers feel like that damage is already done: "I feel betrayed", said one worker from Texas, "we've served so many years to this company. We've been breaking our backs."[12]

But for what? Just for United Airlines' to announce the order of 15 supersonic jets in an ill-timed attempt to resurrect the days of Concorde from 2003.[13] In the midst of a climate crisis, and after threatening workers with job losses, such a strategy from a major polluting business is outrageous. When these planes enter circulation in 2029, they will offer just a 30% reduction in journey time while burning 5 to 7 times more fuel. Of course, United Airlines in-

sist that these planes will run on 'sustainable fuels', despite agrofuels only accounting for 0.01% of fuel currently used by aviation.[14]

The necessary pause in aviation caused by the global pandemic, and the reduced forecast demand for flights in the coming years, could be used as an opportunity to secure a just transition for aviation workers and those working in related sectors, as well as pivoting the aviation industry away from its dangerous growth path. Alongside securing the livelihoods of thousands of workers during the pandemic, the bailout money received by United Airlines could have gone directly to retraining and re-skill-

ing programmes to help its workers find employment in low impact, future-facing sectors. Conditions too should have been attached to the bailout money so it could not be used to line the pockets of shareholders and executives, but instead be put to transitioning workers out of polluting sectors and into clean ones, such as public transport. The continuing mistreatment of workers in the aviation industry at the hands of companies that have been lavished with public bailouts during the global pandemic highlights the vital importance of bringing workers and unions to the forefront of a just transition. Workers will be the ones that build the future.

COMMON DESTINATION

'WHEN DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

This narrative can be used to give more realistic global context on the aviation industry by highlighting the injustice and disparity of its impacts, especially concerning people and communities in the Global South. It unites by showing that a future of less aviation is for humanity's common benefit.

'HOW DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

This narrative is versatile and can be used for a variety of contexts and interventions. One area where it will be effective is in challenging the idea that flying is available to 'all' or that the aviation industry brings only benefits to poorer regions. By focusing on the inequality of use and impacts, issues of fairness and justice can be brought to the centre.

Our common destination is a world in which we can all thrive. This means we must lay the tracks for a fair and sustainable economy with mobility for all. It means less polluting travel by a minority of the world's population and new development directions for tourism-dependent low-income countries. This is because, as mobility changes, how and why we move around, and our ideas of travel and tourism, change too.

The narrative of aviation as a machine of progress stems from a narrow, flawed and partial idea of what such "progress" actually is: that life gets better for everyone as a result of technological development and economic growth. But this is like saying that everyone gets wet when it rains. It doesn't tell you if people have a roof to shelter under, or whether there is a resulting flood that sweeps your food crops away. For many there might be no progress at all, or things might get worse.

Communities want to determine their own, fairer future and many do not share the goal of flying more as part of it. Therefore, **transport infrastructure should be designed to meet local needs and ensure affordable mobility** to support local livelihoods, not those of a wealthy, global elite. In many places a decent bus service or safe, reliable trains would be much more needed than a new airport. New sustainable systems in poorer regions must also be financed and built with the help of richer countries. This is what recognising our common destination and the historical responsibility of the North for climate damage demand. **Only by working shoulder to shoulder, can we solve global crises.**

Importantly, there is not just one alternative to the development deception. Many other worlds are possible, what some have called a 'pluriverse'.[15] These range from the Latin American approach of Buen Vivir, to the wellbe-

ing economy, the southern African concept of Unbuntu and open localisation as a counter-dynamic to globalisation. Though varied, they are typically united by the common destination of satisfying people's true needs, while respecting the limits of the natural world and finding a new balance (see box: Alternative economic models, p. 39).

Aviation, on the other hand, has no limits. The desire to be internationally connected is real, but there are ways to meet it culturally and virtually without needing to climb on a plane regularly. The experience of the global pandemic has shown multiple possibilities for connection that don't rely on flying. It is tempting to ask, if you radically reduce aviation, what will replace it? But that misses an important point. Since the reality is that aviation brings more harm than good, then having a smaller flight industry makes things better. That's also because aviation is neither

THE OLD NARRATIVE: THE 'DEVELOPMENT DECEPTION'

The industry claims that air transport is a catalyst for sustainable development and essential especially for countries in 'growing markets' in Africa, Asia and Latin America. This argument rests on the idea that economic growth spurred by aviation will create prosperity and unlock the potential of regions where many people cannot fly yet. It claims that for communities around the world with no or poor road infrastructure, or remote island states, air transport has a role to play. Their position is that even if not all people have the possibility to fly yet, this will change. Rather than a plaything of rich elites, they argue that aviation is becoming democratised.

They will use this to defend expansion in other regions, and also say that the benefits of connectivity must be protected by subsidies from governments if the aviation sector is to realise its potential as a connector for people, trade and tourism and be a driver for sustainable development. Implicit is the suggestion that the whole world is on a journey to levels of consumption seen in wealthier parts of Europe and North America, and that every country should share the same future of full integration into a global economy based on deregulated trade and uninhibited aviation. It says that accessible and affordable air transport and good connectivity to the rest of the world are a right, no one in the world should be denied.

COMMON DESTINATION!

Our common destination is a fair world not trapped in climate breakdown, in which people and the rest of the living planet can thrive. It prioritises the needs, desires and livelihoods of all people, and recognises that the current aviation industry and its expansion costs us all and hurts marginalised communities around the world.

Messages to help communicate the 'Common Destination' narrative include:

➜ **Our common destination is a world we can all thrive in: aviation expansion means expensive infrastructure that doesn't meet local priorities.** Worse still, it damages the natural world and the health and livelihoods of surrounding communities.

➜ **Cutting back aviation creates new opportunities:** less flying opens possibilities and frees resources to imagine and design transport to meet the needs of local people and livelihoods.

➜ **Transport choices should be shaped by the communities who need and use them:** rather than being imposed, like airports and motorways, communities should be able to participate in the co-creation of transport systems that meet and respect their needs.

➜ **The global majority suffer for the profit-driven aviation expansion and privileged flying of the few:** the disturbance, pollution and climate upheaval caused by aviation hurts most those who fly least. Building the infrastructure of the aviation industry tramples over the interests and needs of local communities, typically generating resistance and conflict.

➜ **False solutions put more pressure on the poorest:** greenwash projects like offsets and agrofuels often have negative consequences for local communities in the poorest countries, especially for indigenous peoples, like taking land needed to grow food.

HUNDREDS OF NEW AIRPORTS AND RUNWAYS ARE PLANNED WORLDWIDE
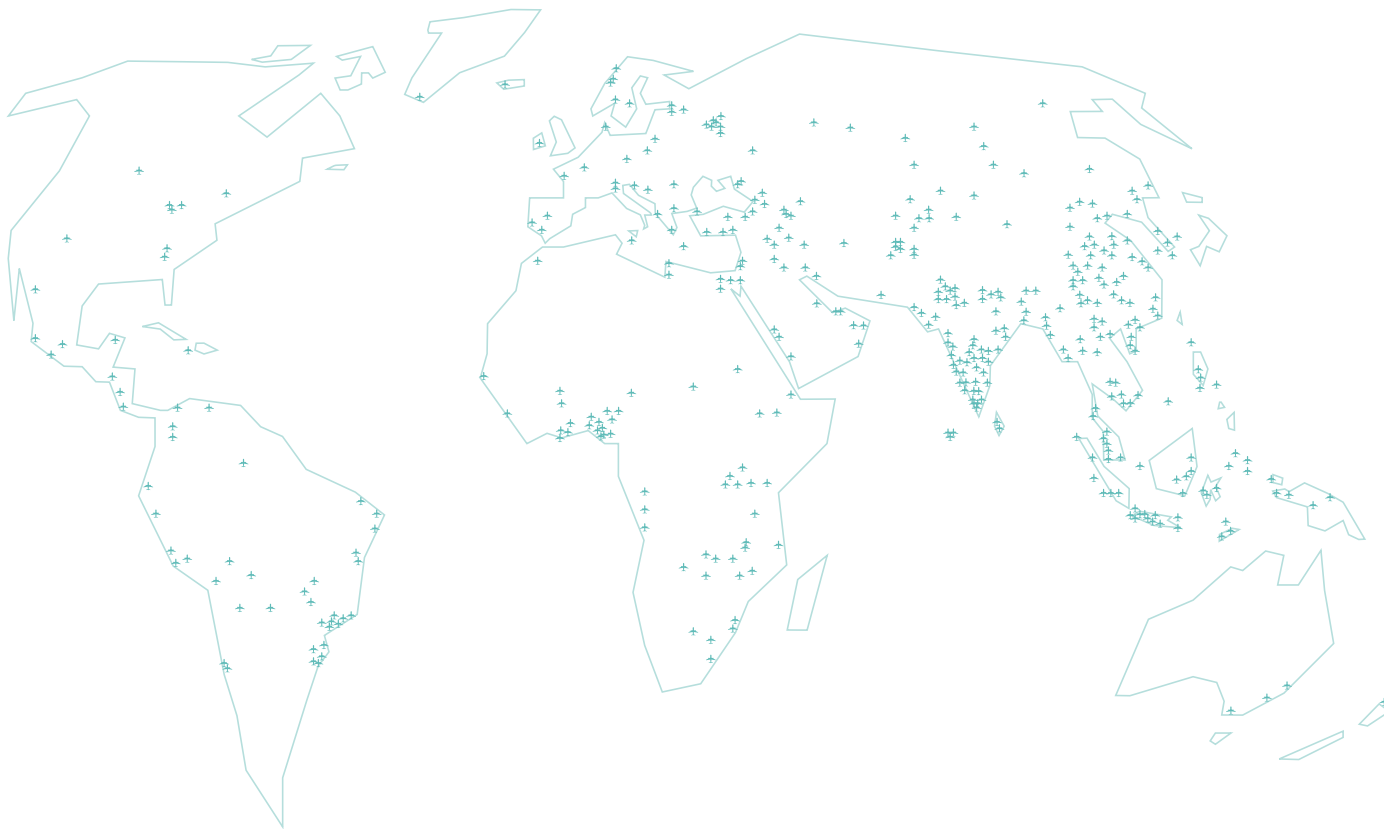
Worldwide, 423 new airports were planned or under construction in 2017. 223 of these are in the Asian-Pacific region alone and 58 in Europe. Additional runways thought to number 121 worldwide (28 in Europe) are also planned or under construction. What this map does not show are a further 205 planned runway extensions, 262 new terminals and 175 terminal extensions – in total more than 1200 airport infrastructure projects, often leading to noise and health issues, loss of homes, biodiversity and fertile lands – and always fueling the climate crisis.

Sources: Centre for Aviation: Airport Construction Database CAPA (numbers from 2017)

fair nor equally accessible for all. In terms of flights per person, Europe, North America and other regions of the Global North largely outnumber most countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa – an unequal distribution that will not change significantly in the coming decades, even according to the industry.[16]

Aviation lobbyists claim, being connected to the global aviation network is the only path to having a fully functioning economy. But building and expanding airports and the fossil fuel infrastructure it depends on does not mean that local people themselves enjoy greater mobility. Poorer people often live in the vicinity of airports or where they are to be built and are therefore seen as mere obstacles that stand in the way of industry profits.[17] Here, local people don't even think about flying. Instead, new and expanding airports mean danger to local livelihoods such as soil and water, which, unlike the luxury activity of flying, are the building blocks of all life.

The number and size of airports here is disproportionate with the amount of people that actually use them.

Darío Solano, Fundacion Cultural La Negreta, Dominican Republic

Stay Grounded members around the world, like Gabriela Vega Tellez and comrades here in Mexico City, protest against the destructive construction and expansion of airports.
© CPOOEM

Tourism is the cause of many flights, and is a problematic industry for several reasons. Many places in the Global South turn to tourism for income because other opportunities are closed to them by an unfair and unequal global economy. Some jobs are created, but **tourism can be a damaging and extractive business for local people and economies when it becomes rampant,** just like mining and agriculture. Hotels can put a strain on local water supplies and other natural resources, employees often rely on subsistence wages, and profits tend to leave the local economy in the hands of foreign management and shareholders. Tourism dependency is also a major obstacle to global sustainability and social equity. Reducing reliance on tourism and building economies to meet local needs, is part of the journey to a fair wellbeing economy.

Here, we dont even think about flying.

Gabriela Vega Tellez, Coordinadora de Pueblos y Organizaciones del Oriente del Estado de Mexico, Mexico

Those hit hardest by the legacies of colonialism and economically unfair globalisation, and who are facing the consequences of climate breakdown already today, also suffer the most from 'green' colonialism that comes with the push for greenwashing of the aviation industry. For offsetting schemes sold to passengers and advertised by the industry with green lies, local communities are often forced off their land. The same

happens for the cultivation of crops for fuel substitutes, which are supposed to give well-meaning people a good conscience – but in reality do more harm than good. Corporations grab poor people's land so that their profits can keep flying high.

Instead of deepening a system that serves the few, we need a common destination: a fair planet where people and the rest of nature can thrive.

"WE HAVE A RIGHT TO BE HERE"

NEIGHBOURHOOD RESISTANCE IN VILA NAZARÉ, BRAZIL

When Alex, a mid-40s resident of Vila Nazaré, talks about the community where he was born and raised, his voice changes. His grief and anger becomes palpable as he talks about the way his neighbourhood was demoralised and ultimately torn apart. About 2,000 families were forced to give up their homes to make space for the extension of a runway at Porto Alegre airport. Only Alex's family and a few dozen others could stay because their houses were just a few metres outside the newly declared 'safety area'.

For the past 16 years, Alex has been president of the institution Criança Feliz Nazaré ("Happy Child Nazaré"). He takes care of the children but also the whole community; as a skilled electrician, he likes to help out wherever he can. He is also a well-connected community leader and has been a driving force in the resistance against the airport expansion being pursued by Fraport, a German airport company. For Alex, this struggle is not about the loss of property, it is about a social network that grew for the last 60 years and then fell victim to the business plans of a foreign company.

It all began with the Brazilian government envisioning more tourists for the state of Rio Grande do Sul and greater access to the global economy. They put out a call for tenders to determine the so-called 'development' of the airport, meaning a bigger terminal and a longer runway allowing larger aircrafts to land, and Fraport won. Fraport's business is to run profitable airports and generate value for their shareholders, among them the German federal state of Hessen and the city of Frankfurt. To the company's management, the eviction of communities in Vila Nazaré was never more than a potential reputational risk that they hoped would fly under the radar.

To the residents of Vila Nazaré, however, it was clear from the onset that they would not benefit from the airport expansion. At first the community stood united against the relocation plans. No one wanted to leave as the alternatives offered were undesirable: two different housing areas, both on the outskirts of Porto Alegre, further away from their jobs, with worse transport connections and with huge problems of drug related violence. The commu-

nity also doesn't want to be divided. "I don't want to be separated, I've known these people for over 30 years. Why do they want to separate us?", said Vânia Soares. The residents organised events, held demonstrations and tried to talk to the municipality. But their sense of unity crumbled after massive intimidation by the staff of a subcontracted firm carrying out the eviction, threatening house visits by heavily armed military police and also physical confrontations. At some point, further protest became too dangerous: Alex feared for his life and had to go into hiding for over a month. In the end, most of the families were forced to relocate, and their houses were demolished.

At a shareholders meeting in 2018, Fraport's CEO tried to justify the evictions saying that the settlement was illegal and that the residents had no right to live there, even though Brazilian law grants customary rights to communities who've occupied a piece of land for a certain amount of time. Public consultation was organised by the Federal Public Ministry only once, but local residents did not get a chance to engage with Fraport representatives as the two

Most residents of Vila Nazaré have never stepped foot on a plane coming and going from Porto Alegre airport.
© Christian Russau

Daniel Alex da Silva Dutra stands in the rubble of a house in Vila Nazaré.
© Christian Russau

The community actively opposed its forced displacement.
© Christian Russau

men who came did not even sit down at the table, refused to respond to questions and quickly disappeared. At a second shareholders meeting in 2019, Fraport rejected responsibility for the eviction altogether, claiming it was a precondition to the concession and therefore the responsibility of the Brazilian government.

The case of Vila Nazaré raises important questions: who profits from the so-called 'economic development' that airport expansion projects promise? What must be done to ensure the rights of disadvantaged communities when facing displacement? And what rules of engagement are legitimate for investment by foreign corporations in line with a more equitable global economic model moving forward?

For Alex, it is clear that Fraport is responsible for the destruction of his community. Their primary aim is to make money – the lives and livelihoods of local community members were simply inconvenient hurdles. There were suspicions that they took advantage of rampant corruption in Brazil, using connections to corrupt elite circles of politicians and business people. As such, former and remaining residents of Vila Nazaré demand compensation. Money can't make up for the loss they have suffered, but it can help rebuild parts of the community's infrastructure and livelihoods that Fraport destroyed.

New airports and airport expansions hardly, if ever, benefit local communities – in fact, they are often to their detriment. Responsible investment requires free, prior and informed consent where the people – not governments or foreign corporations – get to decide what economic development looks like.

GREEN MEANS GROUNDED

STOP THE GREENWASH

'WHEN DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

This narrative can be used to counter the idea that air traffic can soon become environmentally and socially sustainable. Use this to counter industry greenwash, which the public easily understands as a form of hypocrisy. The narrative also shows how grounded alternatives are the only way to make mobility sustainable and how we can achieve the necessary transformation.

'HOW DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

Whenever you encounter misleading industry propaganda, use this narrative to show what sustainable travel really is and what can be done to achieve it. It can also be used to show ways to guide air traffic towards a safe descent path and how this is beneficial for people and the planet.

Flying is the fastest way to fry the planet.[18] **Taking one long-haul flight generates more carbon emissions than many people around the world emit in an entire year.**[19] Before Covid, the climate pollution of air traffic was growing faster than in most other sectors – still, after the pandemic the aviation industry wants to continue growing as before.[20] Rising emissions do not stop the industry from promising people they can fly with a clear conscience (see box: the old story – the 'Green Lie'). Technologies like the ones touted by airline executives and politicians alike are not enough to solve aviation's pollution problem, and offsetting, being used to lure increasingly climate-conscious people back to flying, is neither reliable nor as effective as the industry pretends it to be. Becoming green means getting air traffic volumes down from their high-altitude, pollution-filled flight and bringing sustainable alternatives back on track.

To prevent climate catastrophe, emissions need to be reduced immediately. But the stock of aeroplanes used by the industry is replaced only slowly, with planes in operation for decades. This means it is the industry which exists today that matters, not some promised future one.

That same industry now pushes greenwash to create the false impression that it can continue with business as usual. All their arguments are flawed: small, short distance, prototype electric planes cannot even dent the scale of conventional, polluting flights. Also, all fuel substitutes have numerous problems associated with them: hydrogen planes won't be here for decades; producing synthetic fuels requires gigantic amounts of renewable energy, which is needed more in other areas than aviation; and agrofuels have adverse side effects and constraints – plus they only account for around 0.01% of all aviation fuel

currently used. The industry routinely missed its own targets on non-fossil fuels – despite all the promises and shiny advertisements.[21] While new technologies are necessary and should be developed, they're not an excuse to keep today's amount of air traffic. Even if they do eventually arrive for flying they will always have limits.

In a fair mobility system within a wellbeing economy the priority will be for grounded transport that benefits the majority. Having only a small part of the population fly, using a lot of renewable energy to make flying "greener" is like stealing those resources from the majority, and it slows down the transition to greener mobility for everyone. It will take clear direction, public pressure and support for sustainable alternatives to prevail over the excesses and expansion plans of aviation. But there is some good news: we can now lay the tracks for a fair and sustainable mobility system (see narrative Enjoy the Journey, p. 62). On

THE OLD NARRATIVE: THE 'GREEN LIE'

The industry would like you to believe their propaganda that aviation has been leading the way with efforts to improve its environmental performance. It says it was one of the first industries to set ambitious global targets and develop a strategy to reduce its impact on the climate. It also claims that this is bearing fruit, asserting that for decades now, air transport has been becoming increasingly efficient, something that is only accelerating. This will happen according to the industry because new technologies are being developed at a rapid pace and will soon mean that we can all fly climate-neutrally and with a clear conscience. Examples given include: electric flying, hydrogen and 'sustainable' aviation fuels. For these things to succeed, says the industry, three things are needed: stable growth to secure funding for green technologies, public support to accelerate development and deployment, and 'technology openness' instead of rules that slow down innovation. Aviation also argues that it is also taking big steps to improve air quality and reduce noise. Green flying, we are told, is on the horizon. As we show in this guide, these arguments can look impressive until they are checked against the facts, and then they tend to fall apart.

GREEN MEANS GROUNDED!

To lay the tracks for a fair economy and sustainable mobility we must be open and honest about the limits of technology and the reality of needing to stay grounded. There are many alternatives to flying, but they must be fostered and become the new normal. To achieve this, we need to stop the greenwash and implement a broad set of measures – but it is possible, and what we win as a result is a fairer and healthier world.

Messages to help communicate the 'Green Means Grounded' narrative include:

➜ **The only green plane is one that stays on the ground.** Commercial scale flying takes a huge amount of energy and resources. Grounded alternatives are more efficient and sustainable.

➜ **Offsets are a licence to pollute.** They legitimise business as usual, don't work, may actually increase global emissions and lead to new injustices.

➜ **Fossil fuels substitutes are just drops in a fossil fuel ocean of aviation pollution.** It is unlikely that they will cut pollution from air traffic in any meaningful way, regardless of industry hype which distracts from the need to reduce flights now.

➜ **Hydrogen planes are like unicorns.** Much discussed but mythical, notorious and the subject mostly of industry fairy tales. The reality is that they are unlikely to happen in time or at any kind of scale able to deliver substantial cuts to pollution.

➜ **Renewable energy is scarce and should not be wasted for excessive flying.** We will need all the renewable electricity we can get to decarbonise the grid and provide sustainable grounded transport for all. We should not waste it for inefficient e-fuels so that a few privileged ones can continue to fly as before.

➜ **To reduce air traffic and make mobility fair and green, we need a diverse approach.** Taxes and market measures are important, but will not be enough. We need limits and bans on flights, as well as an end to the expansion of flight infrastructure and airports – and a cultural shift.

In India, train travel was an obvious and easy alternative to flights. Most places are well connected through trains and the train culture here is something to be experienced.

Vivek Gilani, cBalance

Flights not only harm the climate, but also have local effects such as noise and air pollution.
© dsleeter_2000 /
Climate Visuals

Satirical advertising poster ('subvertising'), highlighting airlines' lack of credible climate plans and their greenwashing during the COP26 2021 climate conference in Glasgow.

Trains are not the only alternatives to flights. But in some regions of the world, many flights can already be replaced by train journeys.

average, a train ride emits only a small fraction of the emissions of a flight. Night trains are climate-friendly and take us from one city to another while we sleep. Also bus journeys cause far less pollution than planes. For overseas journeys, ships, especially sailing ships, are a slower and more sustainable option. And finally, many journeys can be avoided simply because they are not necessary at all. In order for us to travel grounded and sustainably in the future, many things will have to change. A shift in work culture that allows for longer travel will be necessary and we will need to make ecologically sound behaviour so normal that we don't even think about other options. This requires better structures such as smooth booking systems and fair prices for all. But also, some major new infrastructures will be needed. Wherever they are built, for example new train lines, which are very necessary in some parts of the world, it must be done with meaningful community engagement, and the utmost consideration and care for local residents and nature.

To turn the tide, a single strategy will not be enough. Instead, a package of measures is needed to reduce air traffic and put us on track for sus-

tainable mobility.[22] One step is ending the numerous frequent flyer reward schemes that encourage unnecessary flying. Another would be addressing the financial privileges and tax exemptions granted to aviation; pollution taxes, like a carbon tax, are necessary and long overdue. And because we all currently indirectly subsidise cheap flights and frivolous frequent flying by the rich, taxes on jet fuel and airline tickets would be a socially just measure. However, the tax system also has to target the status of flying as a luxury activity directly. Frequent flyers can be charged a progressive levy, instead of being subsidised at the taxpayers' expense as they currently are. But without setting absolute limits across the board, changing the price of flights alone is not enough to reduce them sufficiently nor cut pollution; the rich can always buy their way out of responsibility.

Limits are a normal part of everyday life that we accept for our collective safety – speed limits on roads, alcohol limits for drivers, pollution limits in water. Along these lines, the most effective way to reduce air traffic is to directly cap the number of flights. This can be done by ending short-haul

routes, where alternative transport could easily be used or built, or by limiting the amount of departures per day on specific routes. Setting absolute caps and bans is fair because nobody can use their money or privilege to get around it. A straight ban is also needed for private jets. There is no justification for allowing a few rich individuals to pollute the atmosphere we all share, at the cost of our collective future. There also needs to be a halt to the destructive construction and expansion of airports around the world. Building new infrastructure now for an industry that actually needs to shrink is nonsensical. Just the opposite, airports in many cities need to be scaled back or even closed and repurposed to the benefit of all. This all needs to be part of a **larger societal shift to create affordable, green and grounded mobility.**

Air transport as it exists today is a symptom of the very worst excesses of the current economic system, from inequality to ruining the planet that is our only home. The remedies lie in system change and collective behavioural change – we need both, and we need them now.

"WE ARE STARTING TO ENTER OUR FORESTS AS IF WE WERE THIEVES"

Greenwashing projects around the world destroy nature and livelihoods. Two particularly harmful examples from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Paraguay involve carbon offsets and agrofuels.

We know that flying harms our climate – but the aviation industry does everything it can to obscure this. While there are a multitude of ways that the industry is guilty of greenwash, there are some false solutions particularly causing exploitation and suffering in the Global South. Two of them are carbon offsets and agrofuels. Airlines that are offering these are selling a fantasy. Not only are they used to justify polluting practices, they also bring disruption to many regions in Africa, Asia and Latin America, turning upside down the lives of those that have never stepped foot on a plane.

Carbon offset projects provide carbon credits for the aviation industry and its customers, allowing them to continue polluting without a second thought. One example of these dubious offset projects is found in the Mai N'dombe province in the western Democratic Republic of Congo. Projects located here are part of one of the world's highest profile emissions reduction schemes, REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation).[23] The REDD+ scheme was negotiated under the UN-FCCC and aims to reduce climate-heating emissions through improved forest management in developing countries, for which carbon credits can be sold.

Forest in Mai N'dombe was allocated as a REDD+ project as it was supposedly at risk of deforestation, with the US company that runs one of the schemes, Wildlife Works Carbon (WWC), claiming that a new logging licence was set to be given the green light in 2010. However, on closer inspection, it has been illegal to issue new licences anywhere in the country due to a moratorium that has been in place since 2002.[24]

WWC is not afraid to bend the truth. The company has consistently claimed that without REDD+ the area would become completely deforested, with all its old growth trees felled to make way for small-scale farming and food production. However, the reference area WWC used to make these claims is over 600 kilometres away and is in no way comparable to the project area. Actually, forest loss might have even increased during the WWC project. Despite all of this carbon credits are sold to companies like airlines claiming that this specific scheme compensates carbon emissions when, in fact, it more likely represents no actual emissions reductions at all.

Offset projects like this also negatively affect the communities that live on or around the project sites – many of which are already feeling the impacts of climate breakdown. They have lost permission to use forests further than two kilometres from their villages and are now facing additional threats, such as violent conflicts. These conflicts range from an inherent distrust between park managers and the local community, to physical violence. A 2016 report on protected areas in the Congo Basin, some of which are being considered for REDD+, showed many incidents of violence. In 21 out of the 24 protected areas for which there was information available there were records of such incidents, including serious human rights abuses. As the chief of a village in the forests of Mai N'dombe put it, before their homeland became a protected area "life was not complicated, as all the solutions could be found in the forest; but today, we are starting to enter our forests as if we were thieves."[25]

Such cases can be found around the world and also linked to other forms of greenwashing. One of them is the production of biofuels, or rather agrofuels, which the aviation industry is touting as a remedy to drive down their emissions. In fact, agrofuels create a whole host of problems too (see p. 22). One agrofuel project that encapsulates the injustice and hypocrisy of the aviation industry

Residents of the villages in conservation project regions lose access to their forests and are often not sufficiently informed about the projects.
© Rainforest Foundation UK

is the ill-named "Omega Green" project in Paraguay. This gigantic agrofuel refinery, one of the world's largest to date and the first agrofuel plant of its kind in South America will produce primarily aviation fuels form soybean oil, animal fats from the beef industry and pongamia oil.[26]

Potential pollution from the biofuel refinery, as well as increased construction and shipping along the river pose a serious risk of significant adverse impacts and also seriously affect the livelihoods of the local fishing community. Social conflicts have emerged since access to the affected Santa Rosa community has been enclosed by the company implementing the project. One resident, Ezequiel Pereira, sums up the situation bluntly: "Our dilemma is: do we die by starvation or do we die by poisoning?". To rub further salt in the wounds of the local communities, the Omega project owner agreed a deal with the Paraguayan government to exempt the company from all taxes. This means that 100% of the profit will be taken out of the country and away from the people of Paraguay.

"Biofuels and especially biofuels for aviation satisfy the demand of a global minority, while the demand in Paraguay itself is extremely low. Omega Green, like all extractive projects, brings more destruction, pain and extinction to our people. The project is dominated by interest and profits of big foreign investors and businesses, while threatening local ecosystems and impoverishing and sickening the peasant and indigenous population," urges Inés Franceschelli from local research centre Heñói, who co-authored a case study[27] on the project.

The cruel irony of Omega is that Paraguay has an exceptionally low demand for aviation fuels. In fact, Paraguay is the lowest emitter of CO_2 by air transport in South America, and the second lowest emitter per capita after Venezuela.[28] But regardless of this, the global demand for agrofuels has brought destruction, pain and extinction to the Paraguayan people, who above all demand healthy and sustainable food, not crop fuels for other people's planes.

Offsets and agrofuels do not offer solutions to aviation's pollution problem and also have other dynamics in common: they are destroying the lives, livelihoods and futures of communities around the world just so the aviation industry can claim it's "going green". But when one sees through the greenwash, it becomes clear: the real solutions lie elsewhere, and they will need to involve less flying.

Social conflicts have emerged since access to the affected Santa Rosa community has been privatized by the company that owns the project land. Gate impeding access, for both visitors and residents. © HEÑÓI

SAFE LANDING

'WHEN DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

This narrative can be used to talk about the urgent need for a planned industry descent, and to counter the misleading 'jobs hypocrisy' by the aviation industry and governments. It can also be used to make the case for a widespread, fair and rapid transition, ensuring aviation workers are secured a future in other sectors better aligned to an economy based on wellbeing. You can work with it as well to drive home the message that the world is changing unavoidably in ways that mean a much smaller aviation industry.

'HOW DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

Use this narrative both as a response to impossible industry expansion or to shape the debate around the aviation industry's future, its need for managed shrinkage, and to plan for workers, within and outside of the industry. It will support demands for a plan from government and industry for conversion and to protect workers and the planet.

The aviation industry is set to shrink for many unavoidable reasons and needs a safe landing. Many things were forced to pause during the pandemic from 2020 on, and aviation was one of the sectors hit hardest. Many took this time to reflect on how we, as a globally interconnected society, could move forward and make things better. Ideas of work, travel and leisure have been altered and there is a collective energy to slow down and make space for new ways of living, working and coexisting with one another this will include changes to work culture, including radical reductions in flying for work, a new willingness to travel and connect in different ways and to appreciate nearer destinations. Already before the pandemic, a social trend was spreading from Sweden that is often re-ferred to as 'flight shame' – but it actually represents a responsible approach to travel and the desire to treat our planet in a sustainable way. These things highlight that there are many reasons why the aviation industry urgently needs to plan responsibly for its own safe landing and a reduction in scale. This makes a **just transition for people working in aviation absolutely vital.** All this makes the self-serving story told by the industry that it can maintain high quality jobs on a large scale no longer tenable (see box: the old story – the 'Jobs Hypocrisy').

Internationally agreed targets and measures to prevent climate breakdown are increasingly becoming a big reason for change too. At the industry's current scale, and planned expansion, there is no meaningful prospect of re-placing the dependence on fossil fuels in the necessary time frame. There are also reasons to doubt this can happen at all considering problems with alternatives. Many other reasons reinforce the inevitability of change. The experience of the pandemic, although traumatic, opened the eyes of many to the possibilities of saving time, human energy, money and pollution. Expectations about flying for work shifted almost overnight.

Beyond the immediate shocks to aviation, are those on much longer time horizons that have an impact on every aspect of our societies and economies. Trends towards automation and further digitisation (which bring their own, different problems), as well as the likelihood of future pandemics

THE OLD NARRATIVE: THE 'JOBS HYPOCRISY'

The aviation industry likes to claim that it supports tens of millions of jobs worldwide, although it admits only a fraction of these are people working directly in aviation. The other jobs are said to be employed in the industry's supply chain and in the aviation-based tourism sector, or result from employee spending. The industry also argues for the quality of its jobs saying that they give purpose, fulfillment and offer long-term security.

They invoke that for many to become a pilot or stewardess is their dream. To harm aviation would be to destroy the dreams of children. For those whose dreams have supposedly already come true, the industry claims to take good care of them with good wages and conditions. This is why, they argue, it was so important that airlines and other parts of the airline industry were supported by governments during the pandemic. Securing jobs in the sector means that air travel can take off again after the pandemic – and all of us with it. The common realities of long anti-social working hours, job losses and industrial unrest do not feature in this old story.

SAFE LANDING!

Changes are already happening that are only the beginning of a larger social, cultural and economic transformation. The most important question, especially for people working in aviation , is whether it will be through design or disaster, whether the industry will crash or make a safe landing.

Messages to help communicate the 'Safe Landing' narrative include:

➔ **Change will happen by disaster or by design** – let's choose design. Ensuring a safe landing means reducing the industry sustainably – or we risk a crash.

➔ **Delaying change is reckless, exposing working people to growing risks** – the longer the industry fails to plan for change the more likely disasters and other things outside its control will force change far more painfully.

➔ **The workers who built the aviation industry of today deserve a prosperous and protected future** – that means creating political pressure through the workplace, challenging heel-dragging politicians and organising public protest to ensure alternative opportunities.

➔ **We bailed out the airlines from our own pockets, now it's their turn to pay back with action** – to lay the foundations for a just transition for their workers, coughing up the cash for re-training programmes and pivoting their business models away from its fossil-fuel addiction.

➔ **The first stage of transition is putting the brakes on expansion** – both in terms of the size of the aviation industry and its workforce. Those workers that have just joined the industry must be supported in finding fulfilling work elsewhere, as a long and enduring career in the industry is not possible.

and ever-increasing climate impacts, means that tourism, and the aviation industry that props it up, will change. And this change must come through design, where economies, businesses and communities are given the support to pivot and diversify, with the objective that tourism is no longer seen as one of the only available routes to prosperity for poorer countries.

Being proactive is vital. This entails bringing the long-term job security, safety, health and the future livelihoods of people working in the industry, and the communities they comprise, to the heart of demands for change. Those working in aviation, tourism and related industries need a just transition – where they are given the skills, training and confidence to find secure, well-paid jobs in the 'green collar' economic sectors of tomorrow. **This transition can even create more jobs**. A report for Possible shows that for every job lost through a reduction in air traffic in the UK, about three new ones could be cre-

ated.[29] Transitioning workers away from fossil-fuel dependent livelihoods is not an argument for delaying the changes required. When it comes to averting the worst impacts of climate breakdown, speed is crucial. But we must **ensure the just transition is targeted, led by working people, democratic, and part of a society-wide push to put us on track for a fair economy.** At the global level, a just transition must also address the historical responsibility for the climate crisis, by making sure that large emitters support the countries most affected by the climate crisis in the transitions they choose.

While we deliver the controlled descent of the existing aviation industry, airport expansion must be ended. At the same time, we must switch new training and employment in the aviation sector to other branches, and ensure that those who retire or gain employment in other industries are not replaced. Compensation must be made available for those who have joined the

industry at great expense to themselves when there is no longer a lengthy career available to them. All of this needs to be supported by governments, instead of repeatedly propping up the aviation industry with taxpayers' money.

This will bring new opportunities for some, depending on skills and experience, but will leave others more precarious and exposed. Then there are shifts which many, if not all, parts of the economy must deal with. And, the longer that the aviation industry delays making plans for a just transition and conversion, the more it exposes its own workforces and investors, both public and private, to growing risks. For both economic and social reasons, we need to plan for a better future before abrupt, uncontrollable changes are forced upon everyone. Let's land the plane safely, and lay tracks for the new journey ahead. **We need change by design, not by disaster.**

Demonstration against the expansion of Barcelona Airport in September 2021.
© Ni un pam de terra

PEOPLE UNITED, AIRCRAFT NOISE SUBSIDED

It's Thursday afternoon and night is falling in the coastal area of Castelldefels, just 20 minutes from Barcelona. From the terraces of the bars, always full of neighbours eager to enjoy the sea breeze while having a drink with friends, a lively murmur rises. The scene is ideal, until the murmur suddenly stops. The noise of an aeroplane's engines, as loud as roaring thunder, forces conversations to stop. You can't understand a word someone else says as the aircraft passes by at low altitude to land at the nearby El Prat airport.

Beyond other types of impacts – climate, health and biodiversity amongst others – the exponential increase of air traffic in Barcelona has aggravated the impacts of an unsustainable mass tourism model. The expulsion of residents for the transformation of their houses into tourist accommodations, the increase of rental prices or the substitution of daily commerce with shops and services for tourists are some of the main problems faced by the residents of Barcelona and surrounding towns.

These impacts would only increase if the Barcelona airport expansion project was to be approved. For Daniel Pardo, an activist in Barcelona representing Asamblea de Barrios por el Decrecimiento Turístico (Neighbourhood Assembly for a Degrowth in Tourism), the increase in capacity at El Prat would be devastating. "The statements made by public officials claiming that an increase of 30 million passengers a year would not increase the number of tourists are absurd. Of course they would. And, with it, the number of tourist accommodations needed – and therefore of evictions and expulsions," he laments.

Precisely because of the potential repercussions of the airport expansion, the groups in Barcelona that defend another model of city development took to the streets in September 2021 in a historic demonstration that brought together some 90,000 people. The massive public resistance was one major reason for the Spanish government to decide to withdraw the project. The fight against touristification is one of the many social struggles that have helped to stop the expansion. The networking between movements for environmental and climate justice, housing rights, labour rights and social justice over the years have served to achieve this great collective success.

The victory of citizens against this megaproject only confirms the strength of social demands for a transition to a fairer system. More and more trade unions are also beginning to re-orientate their focus towards environmental sustainability and care for the planet as the basis of our livelihoods. This is accompanied by a questioning of a "business as usual" in sectors that are no longer sustainable. This includes tourism in its current extractive form, which is dependent on obscenely cheap air transport.

"Mass sun and beach tourism is a sector that is highly dependent on aviation and very vulnerable, as the Covid pandemic has shown. We need to focus on more inland and local tourism, based on sustainability, respect for the territory and on more sustainable mobility options," says Carlos Martínez, member of the Secretary of Environment from Comisiones Obreras, the biggest Spanish trade union. In a paper published in January 2021 together with the biggest Spanish environmental NGOs, Comisiones Obreras argues for reducing dependency on mass tourism and air traffic and against new infrastructures that extend this model, especially with public money, such as airports or high-capacity roads.

Even though it is probably hardest for them – more and more trade unionists and workers realise that air traffic cannot continue as before Covid. This is also reflected by initiatives in other places than Barcelona: Internationally, but with a UK focus, the group Safe Landing represents 'climate concerned aviation professionals' including pilots, engineers, and cabin crew, and calls for rapid adoption of regulations to reduce emissions and a plan to support workers during any transition. In France, a group of aerospace engineers called Supaero Decarbo recently proposed an 'Industrial Alliance for the Climate' to take charge of a transition that could otherwise result in short-term jobs losses. Just to name two.

The struggle around the expansion of Barcelona's airport is not over. Barcelona continues to be a city threatened by an unsustainable conception of tourism and mobility. It's becoming increasingly clear that social movements such as Asamblea de Barrios por el Decrecimiento Turístico and future-oriented trade unions have contributed to building a global discourse of opposition to the current economic model and to the proposal of another system that puts people and life at the centre. So we can have a world in which conversations between neighbours do not have to stop because of the noise of aeroplanes and people's income does not depend on jobs that destroy the earth, our only home.

ENJOY THE JOURNEY
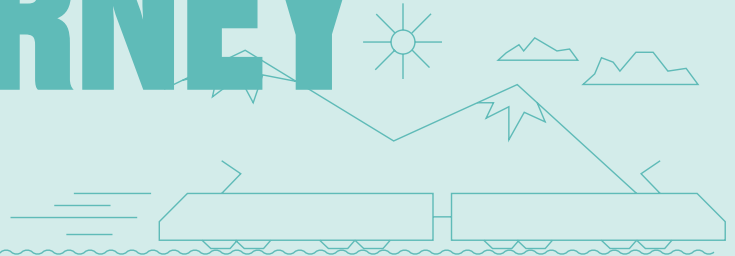
'WHEN DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

This narrative should be used to excite, inspire and evoke the desire for different ways of travel as an alternative to flying. It can be used to counter industry advertising around the lifestyle benefits of flying, but can also be used proactively to invite others to think differently about travel, holidays and adventure.

'HOW DO I USE THIS NARRATIVE?'

This narrative will be effective for post-pandemic interventions, looking to take advantage of the disruption of old travel habits and building upon many of the new habits and behaviours that the pandemic has motivated. Also, this narrative can be used in combination with other new narratives to offer a 'solution' and counter prejudices that going green is a sacrifice.

The idea of travel, specifically when voluntary and chosen, presses lots of positive buttons in people. Adventure, escape, romance, curiosity, pilgrimage, rejuvenation, refuge, making remote human connections – all of these can motivate travel. Travelling for work may also entwine some of these dynamics and add in a few others such as things to do with status, responsibility and trust.

However, the often uncomfortable realities of taking flights are just one thing that leave many thinking that there must be a better way to get around. Also, rising awareness of aviation's harm to the natural world, the damage it does to the very places it promises to take you to, and the care for loved ones threatened by looming climate breakdown, makes contributing to air traffic increasingly hard to enjoy and justify.[30] **Ever more people want to travel responsibly even**

if doing things differently is not without challenge: insufficient funding has resulted in alternatives to privileged and artificially cheapened air transport being systematically neglected. In poorer, rural areas and especially in the Global South, even basic transport systems are lacking. Major investments and innovation are needed to make travel that is essential affordable, comfortable and accessible for all. But travelling differently can be less damaging and more enjoyable also for those who would normally currently fly.

Therefore, inspiring people to find positives in other forms of travel is key. Whether for work, leisure or the many other reasons, not only is it possible to travel better and more responsibly without flying, sometimes people can even 'travel' more comfortably by connecting with others without actually moving

from where they are at all. This is very different to the old story told by the aviation industry about how indispensable it is for connecting people (see box: the old story – the 'Freedom Fallacy').

Few things compare to the pleasure of just sitting on a train and watching the landscape shift and transform before your eyes. To see the world outside your window change on long journeys as you cross time zones, latitudes and altitudes. On spacious trains, you can stretch your legs and go to the dining car to break up the journey, enjoying the often decent on-board food and engaging in conversations with other travellers. And night trains let you board in one city and wake up, rested, in another, as if by magic. Train journeys can also be once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Who wouldn't want to take a trip on the Trans-Siberian Railway – given enough

THE OLD NARRATIVE: THE 'FREEDOM FALLACY'

The industry argues that flying is freedom and that airports are our gateway to the world. They say that aviation brings people together like no other mode of transport enabling people to visit friends and family, and experience the world's cultures. According to aviation advocates more and more people have started to fly in recent years and this means that flying is being 'democratised'. This is meant to lead to greater global tolerance and understanding of different cultures, and mean that positive economic effects from globalisation are made possible through affordable and convenient travel.

The picture painted is that flying is fast, comfortable and affordable. Air travel enables you to enjoy distant, exotic and new countries. It is exciting and adventurous. As individuals, those who can afford it are offered the opportunity to broaden their horizons. This overlaps with the industry story that aviation benefits human progress in poorer regions of the world too, when people from Europe and North America fly and spend their money there. This 'freedom', they say, only comes at a small cost because air travel is allegedly only responsible for a small part of climate change, which is often exaggerated. What the old story leaves out is the pleasure derived from other, slower ways of travelling, the frequent discomfort and inconveniences of flying, and how its local and global impacts take away key freedoms from many.

ENJOY THE JOURNEY!

Our new economy is about well-being for all within natural limits – that means modes of mobility that allow people everywhere to find much more joy in the journey. The benefits of remote work are plenty, and people are rediscovering the numerous opportunities for relaxation and adventure that are closer to home.

Messages to help communicate the "Enjoy the journey" narrative include:

➔ **Travel as if there was a tomorrow** – take low-impact journeys that you can enjoy, because it will help mean that our children and future generations will also be able to continue travelling and enjoy their journeys.

➔ **Discovery on your doorstep** – travelling more locally can open up adventure and discovery on your doorstep, getting to know the varied communities, history, cultures and places around you.

➔ **Moving with meaning** – by choosing to travel better, you are safe in the knowledge that your choices are not heating up the planet or supporting an industry that is actively undermining the habitability of our climate.

➔ **Don't travel when you don't want to** – if flying was already a burden, something you had to do for work, then not flying by connecting virtually is now easy and common, saving time, energy, cost and pollution.

➔ **It feels better being grounded** – travelling overland gives a much greater sense of time and connection, it is more sociable by train, there is time to adapt and arrive in tune with a place, and no jet lag.

time? But there are still more adventurous ways to travel on the ground: a trip by ship, perhaps by sailboat, to cross the ocean is something not many people can say they have had the adventure of doing. And if you want to be sporty, a cycling trip or a multi-day or even multi-week hike can make the journey itself the central part of a holiday.

So called 'staycationing' – holidaying at or nearer to home – is another part of the new picture, although it has already been an established habit or necessity for many. It allows people to rediscover neighbouring regions and contribute to local economies closer to where they live. Different types of 'active travel' holidays also grew in popularity alongside reviving night train services that, in Europe for example, opened up new ways to travel longer distances without flying. These alternative holiday ideas allow people to form deeper connections with time and place, directly challenging the need for air travel sustaining human connection.

Especially where work is concerned, for those people who were able to do their job from home during the coronavirus pandemic, many discovered that they could save time, money and carbon by 'travelling virtually' instead of commuting, whether that was by car or plane.[31] This was especially the case where flying was concerned. Business travel as it used to be, pre-pandemic, is dying out. Now, either from the perspective of individuals expected to travel, or organisations formerly requiring their employees to fly, the pause in air traffic due to the pandemic has established different expectations, and allowed some pleasures to be rediscovered.

As a result, an appealing narrative to tell is how when we travel, we can enjoy the journey better. **Enjoying travelling sustainably means travelling differently and in many cases less frequently**, but with meaning, purpose and the knowledge that your travel choice – or the reason to forgo travel altogether – is contributing to a safe climate for your community, family and countless others around the world.

Travelling to places closer to home often involves a slower and more comfortable journey.

BRINGING NEW NARRATIVES TO LIFE WITH CULTURAL REFERENCES

As well as real life case studies, you can illustrate your narratives with popular or deep cultural references that help bring them to life and connect with people on a different level.

What works will depend on what is known or familiar to your context and audience – but cultures are full of examples that can be drawn on for different circumstances. Brainstorm which ones might work for you. Here are a just a few to give a flavour:

Icarus – Icarus is a figure from ancient Greek mythology who, to escape imprisonment made wings with feathers fixed by wax, but flew too near the sun, melting the wax, and crashed to his doom – a tale of how flying too high without respecting natural limits leads to disaster.

The Tortoise and the Hare – being obsessed and overconfident with how fast you can get from one place to another can lead to a fall, slow and steady wins in the story of the tortoise and the hare who agree to a race.

The Subtle Knife – in Philip Pullman's award winning His Dark Materials book trilogy (also a film) it tells of how a knife that allows people to pass easily between worlds also lets lethal spectres enter the world. In an interview the author said the idea partly came from looking at airline contrails in the sky.

Snakes on a Plane – airline disaster movies are a whole film genre to themselves, and a constant reminder of how vulnerable people are when flying and how unnatural it is. Snakes on a plane became an iconic example of the genre.

Indigenous myths and folklore – are full of flying monsters, threats that fill the air posing danger to life on the ground. There are monsters like the Kanontsistóntie's from the Native American Iroquois and Wyandot mythology. These are human eating disembodied flying heads with fire in their eyes and long unkempt hair. A similar creature exists by different names in many South East Asian cultures – possibly more horrific for dragging its own entrails along – known as penanggalan in Malay ghost myths, or leyak in Bali and kasu in Laos.

LAYING TRACKS FOR INDIA'S FUTURE

In these days of climate emergency, train travel is a powerful way to slow down.

Vivek Gilani, cBalance

When plans were announced to expand Karad Airport in Maharashtra, India, this triggered a major protest in July 2011. Nearly 1,000 farmers protested against the acquisition of their land, marching from the airport to the sub-divisional office (SDO), where they submitted a memorandum and demanded a meeting with then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Prithviraj Chavan, to discuss their grievances. One of the demonstrators was peasant leader Ashok Thorat who said: "No one from Karad has ever demanded expansion of the airport. There are no industries in Karad, so commercial air services were never introduced at this airport since inception. The farmers are serious about not giving up the land."

It's not only Karad. India is a site of many resistance struggles against socially and environmentally damaging large-scale projects – including many airports.[32] But the country has also been characterised in recent years by a rapidly changing economy and thus also mobility. As in other parts of the world, a greater number of people have started to fly in India over recent years. Still, train travel is an obvious and easy alternative to flights. Vivek Gilani,

Managing Director of social enterprise cBalance was an aviation enthusiast – until he discovered what flying does to his carbon footprint. Now he advocates for grounded travel, especially trains: "Most places are well connected through trains and the train culture here is something to be experienced. I enjoy my train travel. From the special 'tiffin' or travel food that one carries from home and co-passengers still readily share, to the diversity of language and conversations and the changing landscapes and sounds at each station, there's much to enjoy."

Gilani has also applied his principles in his work at cBalance, which focuses on sustainability issues, and implemented a general no-fly policy for staff. "On the rare occasion one of us does need to fly it is the exception – a one way flight because rescheduling is not possible or a flight for health reasons. Since our work is in environmental stewardship, it is inspiring to many that our small team of young people do not default to flights for our travel needs." Gilani and his colleagues experienced that their work is deemed more credible because cBalance is known to walk its

talk. Sometimes customers and partners are surprised that even the head of the organisation has taken the train. "Once, the CEO of the company we were conducting a workshop for went around his whole office telling everyone that I travelled by train all the way from Mumbai only for the workshop," says Gilani.

When cBalance staff travel as a group, they use that time and space to plan or to pause. "We play board games or just simply get to know each other better, or catch up on sleep or reading. Occasionally we will also have conversations with the fellow passengers about politics or our work. The longest train travel I've done was from Bangalore to Delhi, which is about 35 hours of travel time. I had to go to Delhi for a workshop immediately after finishing one in Bangalore. The 35 hours was 'my time' to recoup and re-energize myself before I took up the climate-healing work again. Mostly, trains are a reminder to me to humanise myself – especially if I've been flying too high in my head about who I am. It really grounds me."

Of course, train travel, like any mode of transport, is not without downsides – neither in India nor anywhere

Dharampur station on the Kalka Shimla railway line in northern India.
© Deepangkar Goswami/Flickr, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

else. But there are particular issues in every country. Talking about India, Gilany says: "An implicit obstacle I see is class descrimination. In India, trains are the most used mode of transport and the so-called high society needs something else that differentiates them from the general public. Train travel becomes the common persons' transport. They see this as antithetical to the pursuit of their personal prosperity. From a climate perspective, as well as from a social justice perspective, I think we've seen enough of the damage done to realise that we all need to make better transport choices, irrespective of where we hail from."

Over the next few years, Gilani does not want to take any international flights and find a sea route to Europe and the USA: "I'm hoping that through our work we find many more colleagues, collaborators and clients within India who cut back on flying. We are all surrounded by people who push us to be and do what the world defines is normal! But we need to stay focused and understand that slow travel is the way forward. Slow, not in terms of time, but slow, as a way to look at humanity through a different lens like a worm through the earth versus a missile through the sky. Slow as a way to enrich the earth through our life on it."

Back to Karad: in July 2019 small-scale farmers began protesting, continuously through days and nights, with a sit-in in front of the district's planning administration against the airport expansion. The farmers who started the sit-in (Thiyya Aandola) announced they would continue their protest until the government meets their demands and cancels the project.

The farmers claim that the expansion will not help the development of the district. On the contrary, it will lead to their impoverishment: for expansion of an existing airstrip into a fully-fledged airport next to the city of Karad, fertile and irrigated farm-land will be grabbed. Vinayak Shinde, the spokesperson of the affected villagers and activist of Shramik Mukti Dal, says that 1,335 hectares of farmland cultivated with an irrigation-system are under threat. Critical infrastructure for the irrigation system is located on the land to be acquired. Shinde said: "Residents of the villages of Warunji, Kese, Munde, Padali, Gote and Supane have worked to develop this irrigation scheme for more than 50 years. If the land acquisition is carried out this will be a huge loss for about 25,000 people who depend upon this agriculture."

On 19th September 2019, after 53 days and nights, farmers ended their protest. The farmers maintain that the airport expansion project is illegal. Still today, they are trying to stop expansion, but the government of Maharashtra is not fulfilling their demand.

India already has one of the largest train networks in the world.

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A JOURNEY IN(TO) 2042

What might a long journey look like 20 years from now if we prioritised a just mobility system within a wellbeing economy? How will the world have changed and what does that mean for each of us? There are many possibilities for this – and arriving there will depend on our collective ability to implement the futures we dream of. Below is a particular vision from the perspective of a young European on their first sabbatical in two years. Countless other visions are thinkable, possible and welcomed as we build our new economy of wellbeing.

Birdsong greets you as you wake after a good night's sleep. Today's the day. You're finally travelling again. Your suitcase is packed and waiting. You leave your room and head downstairs to the shared dining room and kitchen. Mika, your housemate is still having breakfast. You sit beside her with a bowl of porridge. "There are some of the Algerian dates left," she says, "they taste amazing in the porridge." *Algerian dates,* you think, *are something very special, but I'm already looking forward to fresh strawberries from the community garden next door. And all the fruits waiting for us this summer. I will not miss the dates at all even before winter returns. And, who knows: maybe the cooperative will get some in anyway. There will, without doubt, be another big delivery of tropical fruits and goods via the North-South Solidarity Co-op next winter.*

The sky is clear blue and calm as you close the door and look up. Unusually, there is an aeroplane contrail. *Maybe that was another humanitarian emergency flight,* you think. There have been several recently that took off from the nearest air-port in the capital city, 50 kilometres from here. The capital is one of the few cities that still has an operating airport.

Today you don't take the cargo bike you usually ride, when you run errands for your family and the rest of your housemates. You attach your small bike trailer to your bicycle, so that you can transport your suitcase comfortably, get on the bike and head towards the train station.

You look at your watch and realise that you will be at the station far too early. *But never mind, you think, it's a great place to spend time.* When you arrive at the station, you go to the bakery and buy two sandwiches. *Bread tastes much better today than it did thirty years ago*, your father always says, remembering his youth. *The thing is, there's hardly any bad bread any more since we started dedicating more time to making our own food*. The same goes for vegetables. The old, revived varieties are not only more resistant to the erratic weather, but tastier too.

Abdullah is working in the bakery today. Thanks to him, there are fresh flatbreads twice a week. After a short chat, you go into the large waiting room in the station, find a seat in the waiting room, intending to read a book. But suddenly you find yourself watching the children playing in the childcare area at the other side of the hall. Their parents are probably waiting for their train in the small café next door.

It's amazing that I have the chance to make this journey, you think. The last time you made such a long journey was two years ago. Three months via Spain and Morocco and Mauritania all the way to Senegal. First by night train – it was

CAFÉ

BAKERY

incredibly nice to wake up, open the blinds of the cosy sleeping compartment and see the Mediterranean Sea stretching out before you, sparkling blue. From Malaga you travelled by train and the last part by electric bus. Senegal was exciting. You hadn't planned it, but when people there told you about a new eco-airship line from Dakar to Yamoussoukro in Cote d'Ivoire, you spontaneously decided to head there. When you asked a woman outside the train station where the nearest hotel was, she kindly invited you to stay at her family's home. In Abidjan, you stayed with acquaintances of your friend Claude, who grew up near the city. And in a bar a group of friends talked to you all night about football, excited to learn that Didier Drogba was the coach of your favourite club. He is still a hero in his home country – even though he was a much better player than coach.

Your train is about to arrive. You fetch your bike, and roll it into one of the two bike wagons. Inside, you hang it on a hook and put the trailer in the spacious storage area. You take your suitcase with you and find a seat in the next coach.

As the train departs and the station building with its green facades slowly moves away, you watch as your town shrinks, drifting further and further away. It is criss-crossed by lush green and gleaming beautifully as the rooftop solar panels that adorn most homes glitter in the sunlight.

Few vehicles drive on the road next to the railway line, mostly trucks or delivery vans. *Some goods are simply more flexible to transport by road. But I'm glad that hardly anyone has their own car nowadays*. The stories of hours wasted in traffic jams and horrendous accidents that older people often tell today sound terrible, but alien. *Fortunately, we can enjoy the roads almost entirely to ourselves these days*, you think, remembering the last neighbourhood street concert where you danced all night with neighbours and friends.

"Where are you going?" asks the woman sitting in the seat across from you. "That's a big suitcase!"

"To Kathmandu," you say.

"Oh, are you on sabbatical?" she asks, introducing herself as Mia.

"That's right, I'm going to travel for half a year. I've never been away that long before. And I haven't been that far either. I'm really looking forward to it."

"Well, you're still young. After this trip, you'll have a lot to tell your friends. You know, when I was your age, travelling was different. We called it 'tourism'. We got on a plane, flew to the other side of the world, sometimes just for a few days, and we often spent most of our time there, just in the hotel. Pointless. But the worst part was work. I had a job where I had to fly to another city every few weeks. It was so stressful and I was exhausted all the time. But when the Great Pandemic hit, things started to change …
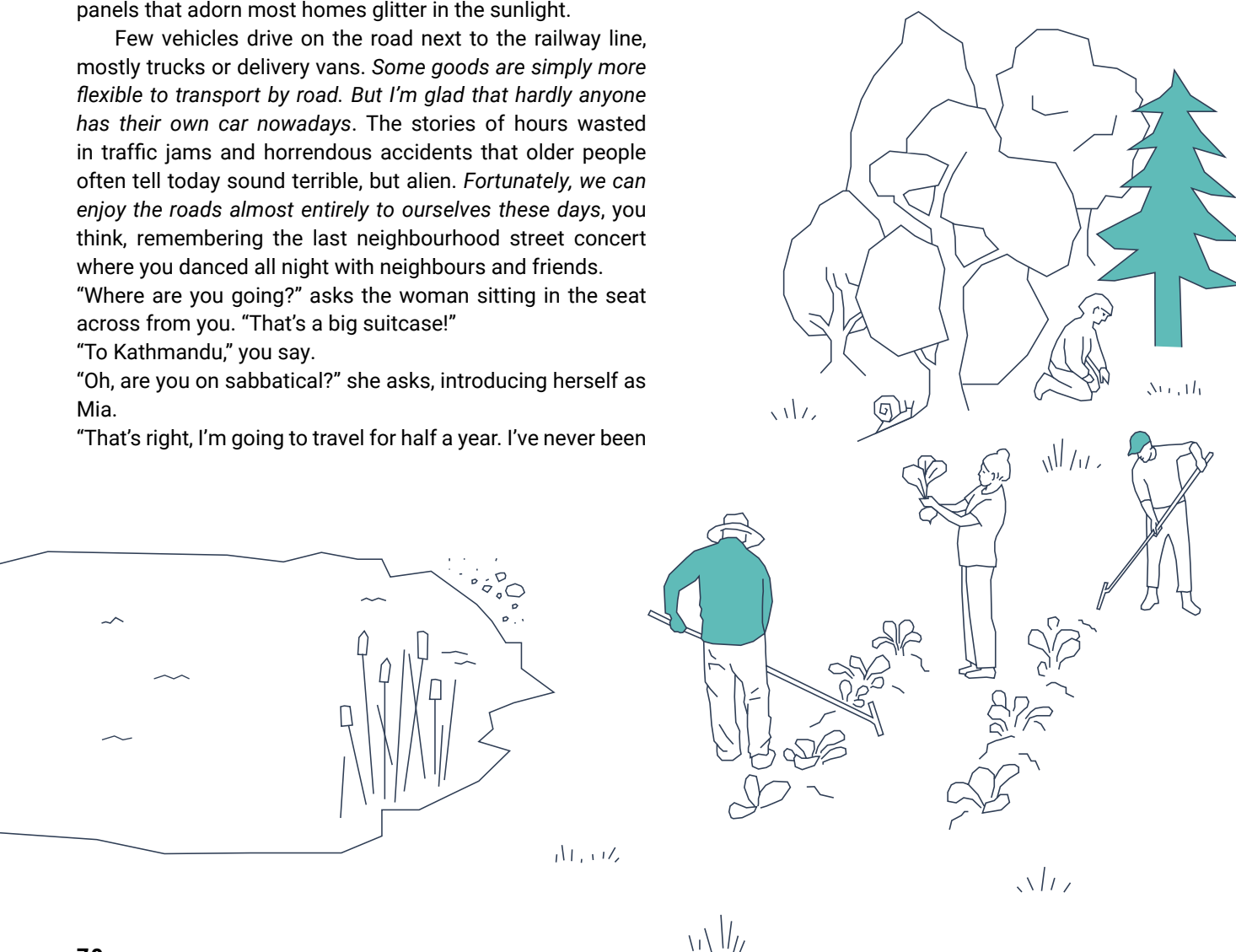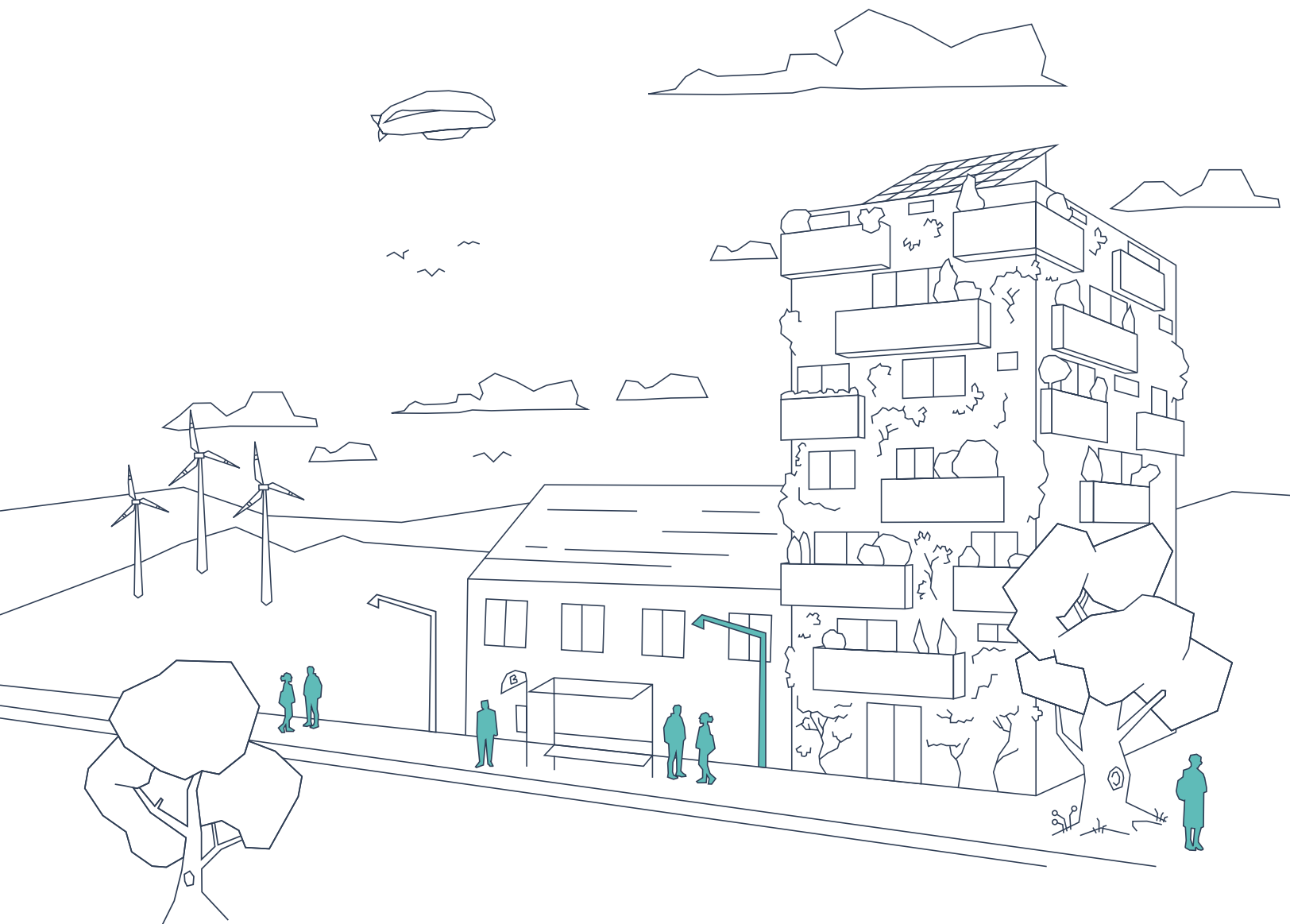
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A great message doesn't say what's already popular; a great message makes popular what needs to be said.

Anat Shenker-Osorio

4

HOW TO USE NEW NARRATIVES

Many readers of this guide will be experienced campaigners working in diverse situations around the world. You might fight for change through organising and mobilising support, movement building, lobbying and influencing politicians, critiquing and opposing those with economic or political power, or with other strategies. The tools presented on the following pages are intended to be suggestions to help you; not a list of instructions that you must follow rigidly. We have tried to make them as practical and widely applicable as possible, but some will simply not suit your circumstances. The intention is for creative campaigners to pick and choose from these tools as ingredients and use them to make up your own recipe for success in your environment. We will also introduce a few theories that may help explain why people support or oppose a cause, and link them to the new narratives to illustrate how they might work in practice, but there are no hard and fast rules. Use these tools alongside your own experience and local knowledge.

HOW TO THINK ABOUT YOUR AUDIENCE

With a strong set of new narratives and detailed case studies to support your messaging, you will want to put some time into considering your audience. Following your communications strategy and plan, you should have a strong idea who you wish to target and what you want them to do. In order to reach them effectively, you will need to pay attention to what makes them tick. Where do they get their information? Who do they listen to and trust? What are the core values that drive their decision-making? Changing hearts and minds is complex. Psychologist and economist Daniel Kahneman's work on confirmation bias revealed our tendency to believe things that are supported by what we already believe, and concludes that we have to work hard if we are to use data to change our minds.[1] If it is difficult to change how we think and act ourselves, then it is even harder to alter the deeply felt opinions of others. And opinions are felt, because our emotional response is more immediately available to us than our reasoning – which brings us to the power of storytelling in campaign strategies.[2]

The reason people are triggered by certain campaigns and not others is because of the stories they tell and how that story connects with the audience emotionally. Just like when we form friendships, we first respond to how we "feel" about someone before taking the time to find out more about them. Many relationships fail at this first hurdle and many campaigns too. The aim is to get people to have an emotional response to the story you tell, creating a connection with them based on shared values. Fairy tales and myths are good examples of how shared values enable communication: evil figures are easy to spot and many times we root for the hero or heroine. In campaigning, it also often helps to find shared 'heroes' and 'vil-

Panel during Degrowth of Aviation conference 2019 in Barcelona. © Christine Tyler

lains'. Similarly, metaphors and similes help audiences to feel connected to an abstract idea by making it familiar, calling on established stories and biases to signal how an audience should feel about the subject.

Thinking about unfamiliar issues takes energy and effort that many people are not willing or ready to expend; part of the campaigner's job is to make it as easy as possible.

It is worth noting here that this work will be difficult; you are up against an army of highly motivated and experienced corporate public relations people whose job is to maintain the status quo. Your campaigning work will need to be dynamic, experimental and extremely tenacious, looking for timely interventions where your message will land well and draw attention to your cause. It is much easier to communicate business as usual than change. Old narratives have been constantly repeated to keep things as they are and – as with any firmly established set of ideas – they will be hard to overthrow. Industry narratives, for example, focus on futures that avoid fundamental change; they usually look like exactly the past only fueled by seemingly limitless green energy.

Huge efforts are now needed to introduce alternative visions of the future or ways of acting in the world. Breaking through the constant chatter of today's 24 hour news is always a challenge – perhaps more of an art than a science – but with strong messaging and a good story to tell, you are more likely to succeed. **Alternative paths to the future need to be clear, understandable and desirable if they are to replace the drumbeat of today's global capitalism.**

Society is made up of a variety of people with a multitude of identities, life goals and personal histories, but the key to thinking about your audiences is where, when and how they overlap so that your messaging can have the broadest possible impact. After all, global brands use this to great effect to sell consumer goods using simple, repetitive branding and messaging that might use the same approach, positioning and slogans for decades. **What are the common values that can be used to encourage people to both change their own behaviour and to support systemic change?** There is some useful academic work in this field that is worth covering briefly here – and for those interested in delving more deeply, there are references throughout.

The American social psychologist Jonathan Haidt's **moral foundations theory**[3] proposes a fundamental group of human base values we all share. These are described as:

1 **Care/harm: our long evolution as mammals with attachments to and empathy for others underlies virtues of kindness, gentleness and nurture.** The Common Destination and Safe Landing narratives speak most to these values, reminding us of our shared humanity, the harm our failing economic system does to people and the planet, plus the need to care for the people in industries that must change.

2 **Fairness/cheating: the evolutionary process of reciprocal altruism generates ideas of justice, rights and autonomy.** The Plane Greedy and Common Destination narratives link strongly to this and can be used to reveal how a minority of wealthy companies and individuals are impinging on the global majority in a damaging way.

3 **Loyalty/betrayal: means standing with your group, family or nation. Our long history as tribal creatures with shifting coalitions, this underlies patriotism and self-sacrifice – "one for all, and all for one."** The Plane Greedy and Green Means Grounded narratives speak to these values, revealing how false companies can be in their pursuit of profit, while Safe Landing can be used to draw attention to looking after the staff team in an inevitably changing future.

4 **Authority/subversion: our long primate history of hierarchical social interactions generates leadership and followership, including deference to legitimate authority and respect for traditions.** This value could be used with Safe Landing to stress what we can achieve through high quality governance and regulation. Plane Greedy might be used here to suggest that avi-

ation wants to be a special case, almost above the law. Green Means Grounded can be used when airlines and governments are not complying with climate targets and regulations. Enjoy the Journey could also be used to stress a return to local travel, local natural beauty and traditions.

5 **Sanctity/degradation: shaped by ancient traits of disgust and contamination, this underlies religious notions of striving to live in an elevated, less carnal, more noble way.** The Enjoy the Journey and Safe Landing narratives fit with these values, encouraging us to live more harmoniously with each other and with nature.

What differs is how dominant each value is for which person. Surveys of tens of thousands of people around the world have shown that **values such as care and fairness are broadly more important to left/liberal people,** while more **conservative people tend to value sanctity, loyalty and authority.** The recent global campaigns to reduce single use plastic successfully brought together different generations and income groups by using trusted spokespeople to deliver the message and by appealing to shared values about the destruction of pristine environments, which speak to both the values of care and sanctity.

Basic Human Values: The concept of common values is also explored in the work of Shalom Schwartz,[4] who researched what motivates people across 82 countries and came up with **ten values that hold up surprisingly well across cultures** (see graphic below). The UK-based thinktank Common Cause Foundation's work on values examines this in detail, explaining how people do not always act in line with the values they hold to be important because of the need to trade-off between

BASIC HUMAN VALUES
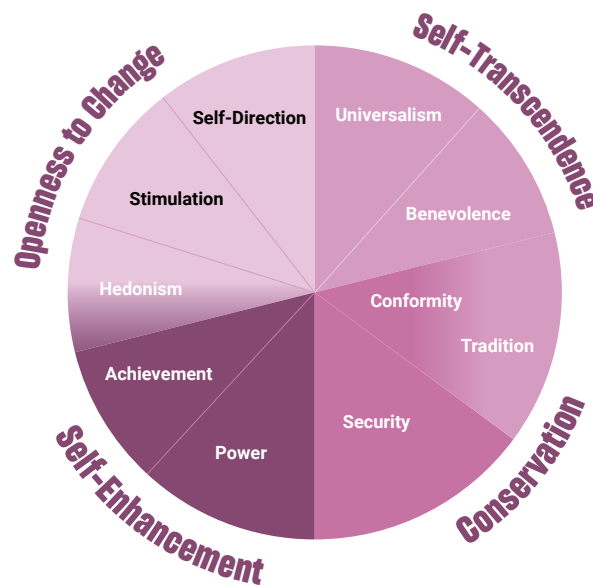
The Basic Human Values theory developed by Schwartz identifies ten foundational human values, each distinguished by underlying motivations or goals which are recognised by people in all cultures. For example, the self transcendent values benevolence and universalism are associated with pro environmental behaviours. A particular value can conflict or align with other values.

Source: Schwartz (1992): Universals in the Content and Structure of Values.

different, sometimes conflicting values. For example, people may vote for a political party that does not really reflect their values out of loyalty.[5] Cultural or societal attitudes also add to the complexity of action aligning with values: for example, a person might keep using their car despite the knowledge that it is harming the environment because of a lack of public transport infrastructure.

In addition to understanding a little about our common values, it can be useful to grasp the idea of a **'common sense'** as described by Antonio Gramsci, which is how any dominant culture agrees on a shared understanding of what is good, bad and normal.[6] He calls this **cultural hegemony**. The mainstream view developed over decades by the aviation industry promoting flying as good, normal and bringing benefits to all could be described as cultural hegemony. Our new narratives are an attempt to shift this – and our global experience of the pandemic illustrates how common sense and therefore cultural hegemonies can sometimes shift very quickly. For example, during the pandemic, working at home shifted from being a minority activity and even unprofessional to being mainstream and entirely acceptable. We can do the same with flying, making it a rare activity done only when no other viable option is available.

When deciding how to campaign on this issue – and particularly if you have limited resources – it is useful to look at the work of veteran UK campaign strategist, Chris Rose, and his useful guide to campaigning[7] about the importance of going to where the audience is and seeing the issue through their eyes. If a campaign is to succeed, he believes it must appeal to enough of the population to tip the balance towards something becoming the new common sense. This can mean focusing on a particular aspect of an issue where a broad range of people can find enough common ground to get the effect you need. He suggests not to waste time and effort trying to convince hard set opponents who have already harnessed their identities to something you are trying to change. Looking at flying, it will be important to find out which – perhaps small – part of the whole issue is the touchstone for most people. This could be the Safe Landing narrative, which builds on growing awareness of climate change and maintaining a pristine environment but also looks to the future of existing industries and their employees. This appeals to values from across the spectrum.

Several of our new narratives focus on a positive future where human wellbeing and flourishing is paramount, such as Enjoy the Journey, Safe Landing and Common Destination. To understand the importance of looking at the softer side of life, such as relationships and creativity, it is worth noting the ideas of US academic Tim Kasser. He looked at how **materialism and consumerism have a negative relationship to wellbeing and human flourishing**.[8] These latter "intrinsic" values, he suggests, are hard to realise beneath the daily battering from advertising and media messaging, which is why – although individual action is useful – widespread changes also need to be supported by policy and effective regulation. Another source of work on these elusive but inherently rewarding values is the work by the Common Cause Foundation[9] who lists examples such as community, love for friends and family and creativity as "intrinsic" and public image, power and how we are seen in the world as "extrinsic values". Our new narratives are positioned to strengthen these intrinsic values, building on ideas of fairness, collaboration and acting for the greater good. In doing so, they follow the approach of **transformative communication**, working with messages and campaigns that strive to promote the positive compassionate values in people and society while effectively pursuing concrete goals.

SPECTRUM OF ALLIES
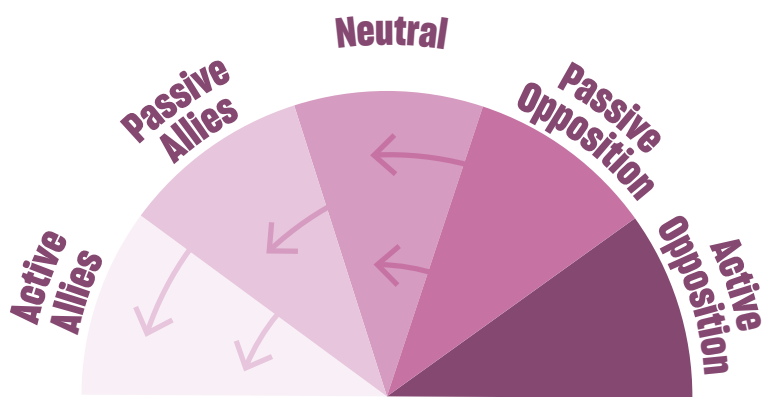
Movements do not usually win by overpowering their opposition. Instead, they need to increase their own base of support and mobilise people who have been so far neutral to their cause. The concept of the Spectrum of Allies helps campaigners think about who their active supporters are, how passive supporters can be mobilised, and how opponents' support is composed and can possibly be weakened.

Source: Beautiful Trouble: Spectrum of Allies. bit.ly/BT_SpectrumOfAllies

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE OR SYSTEMIC CHANGE? IT'S BOTH!

Often, behavioural changes by individuals and large-scale systemic and political change are presented as separate paths to sustainability. Many campaigns rely heavily on one pathway or the other, but research shows that the two approaches actually support one another.[10] People tend to change their behaviours when others around them change theirs. This is especially true in the case of close relationships, such as family and friends. The behaviour of influential people such as celebrities and politicians can also have a great influence on what we see as desirable or negative.

Research shows that people rate the credibility of 'climate change communicators' higher when their carbon footprint is smaller.[11] Especially when it comes to mobility and travel, individual actions can boost or undermine political messages. Just think of a politician flying short-haul in a private jet to a climate conference and giving a big speech about how we need to reduce our emissions and that everyone needs to do their share. People like few things less than hypocrites.[12] Behavioural changes by individual pioneers can serve as positive examples and initiate ripple effects across communities. Once a critical mass is reached, what is seen as normal and desirable starts to shift, thus creating the basis for the acceptance of institutional and political change. In this sense, one could also speak of **'cultural change'**. When triggered in the right way, reflecting on behaviours related to one's values or identity can actually increase support for climate policies.[13]

On the other hand, changing institutional structures and the policies that underpin them can in turn facilitate or make possible necessary changes in individual behaviours. Switching from a flight to a night train, for example, is only possible when such alternatives are available. All this makes clear: behavioural change and system change is no "either/or" – they cannot be separated and we need both.[14]

The often posed choice between individual change and systemic change is a false division.

HOW TO APPLY WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT REFRAMING AVIATION

This section focuses on using the new narratives of aviation within the climate crisis to get out there and make a difference with your campaigns. This will involve working out which of the new narratives work well for you, finding good stories that fit your context and will appeal to your audience. Making the most of media opportunities, understanding when and where to use the new narratives successfully, and building capacity to ensure the whole network can share skills and learning effectively. Appealing to intrinsic values as discussed earlier may also be useful, and the Common Cause Foundation offers some excellent detailed examples of how to analyse your communications to check if they are based on intrinsic values.[15]

This section may seem basic to experienced campaigners, but it is always useful to return to first principles and check that you and your work has not become siloed or stuck in some way. This is an opportunity to explore new creative ideas and to exchange them with others in the network. New people often bring interesting insights, so try to remain open and take a step back to reexamine your campaign and communications approach as if it is brand new.

STEP BY STEP: HOW TO INTERVENE EFFECTIVELY.

Identify your goals and strategy. Be clear about what you want to achieve so that you can ensure your strategy and communications plan lays out how to reach your goals. Decide who you plan to target, your timeframe and what you want to achieve. Consider the new narratives and work out which ones are most useful to you, given your goals and target audiences. Choosing your new narratives will help you determine what messaging is most likely to succeed. This gives you something to measure against to monitor your success. Try to put actual numbers in where possible, even if you are guessing to start with.

This campaign canvas from MobLab here on the right side helps you ensure you've touched on all the essentials of an effective campaign, from vision and strategy to storytelling and metrics.

Vision

What is the long term vision for what you want to achieve with this campaign?

....
....
....

What needs to change?

Based on the problems we've identified that contribute to the current situation, what needs to change?

....
....
....

What's the story?

What are the key elements of the new narrative we want to create?

....
....
....

Goals

What is the specific goal for this project?

Objectives

What do we need to do to bring this about?

Campaign canvas sheets like this one from MobLab helps you ensure you've touched on all the essentials of an effective campaign, from vision and strategy to storytelling and metrics.

Source: Mobilisation Lab: bit.ly/ML_CampaignCanvas

LOOK BACK AT PAST SUCCESSES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS – AND LEARN FROM THEM

It is also useful to collate past communications – for the last year or couple of campaigns and then ask yourselves 'what worked, and why did it work', and 'what didn't work, and why not':

➜ What goals did you set and did you achieve them?

➜ Did you reach your target audience(s) and how consistent and effective was your messaging?

➜ Was your campaign messaging and imagery diverse and inclusive enough?

➜ How strong were the images used? How could you improve them?

➜ How detailed and how honest was your monitoring? Were the results as expected or disappointing and – if so – do you know why?

The report The Illusion of Green Flying sparked discussions about aviation and the future of mobility.
© Christine Tyler

PREPARE A CAMPAIGN STRATEGY USING THE NEW NARRATIVES

Decide **which audiences** you need to target in order **to achieve your goals** and set your **timeframe**. Consider the new narratives and work out which ones are most useful to you, given your goals and target audiences. Choosing your new narratives will help you generate strong, engaging messaging and content. Clearly identify the target of your campaign – what or who you are against – so that you can focus communications and actions in the right place and also identify potential partners and allies. Within your main goals, you may want to include smaller goals along the way and specific "outcomes", which are often more easily quantifiable. These are useful for you to measure against to monitor your effectiveness. Try to put actual numbers in where possible, even if you are guessing to start with. Your aim might be to stop a local airport expansion and your lobbying outcome might be to recruit 5 local councillors to your cause and your organising aim might be to double your local activist group to 100 members and hold monthly demonstrations at each council meeting.

PREPARE YOUR COMMUNI-CATIONS PLAN

How will you tell people about your work and convince them to support you in order to achieve your goal.

Creating effective communications strategies is highly dependent on the audience you are targeting and the context in which these interventions will take place. Despite the need to tailor communications strategies, there are some general principles of best practice that transcend contexts, audiences and aims. Here are some pointers to help you write your own communications plan:

➜ **Try to use simple and understandable language** to speak directly to your audience and avoid technical jargon about the climate emergency, the aviation industry or broader topics such as economics or finance. Use everyday words and metaphors that are connected to people's lived realities that show the severity of the problem. For example, 'saying the aviation industry is good for the economy is like saying dynamite is good for a barbecue!'

➜ **Use language that is consistent with the worldview, values and goals you want to convey and reinforce.** Talk about good things in positive terms and about bad things in negative terms (e.g. 'strong climate targets' instead of 'tough climate targets').

➜ **Try to create the right images in people's minds with your framing.** For example, instead of talking about 'air travel', say 'air traffic'; while the word 'travel' evokes images of beaches, the sea and piña coladas, 'traffic' tends to make us think of traffic jams and aircraft noise.

➜ **Be accurate. Avoid exaggerating for effect – the truth is powerful enough.** Many people really struggle with numerical information – so keep statistics to a minimum and as simple as possible. When you do use data, keep it short, ensure sources are reputable and referenced and use graphics if possible.

➜ **Maintain some sense of being near to current experiences or 'proximity'** by using examples of what is happening now and around your audience to keep what you are saying grounded in the present and in your experience or locality. Avoid talking about 2030 and 2050 (e.g. for climate targets) wherever possible.

➜ **Stay positive by talking about the opportunities and benefits of achieving your goal** – whether it's more breathable air, less congested roads and fewer sleepless nights, or the enjoyment of travelling more slowly and meeting

people in their own surroundings, make the benefits real. Try to avoid catastrophic framings that create fear and paralyse action.

➜ **For those who are organising, you can also stress the joy and sense of community that can come from constructive, collective action** – describe what is to be won from addressing the excesses of aviation and direct people as to how to take action.

➜ **Play with humour and creativity.** Although this may not be suitable for every occasion, funny metaphors, cartoons, memes, creative changes of aviation ads, actions and videos that make people laugh often work well.

➜ **Appeal to people's shared values** and explain why they should care, how it impacts them and how they can take action. This is an essential part of a storytelling arc, appealing to the sentiments and values that people hold dear, and taking them with you.

➜ **Tell stories.** Find stories that appeal to the widest audience possible and fit within the new narratives you have chosen to focus on. Use metaphor and simile to bring the issue alive.

➜ **Use images – they are powerful (see box on p. 87) at communicating messages and appealing to emotions.**

Whether you want to stir up anger in your audience about unjust developments, expose the destruction caused by air traffic, or generate hope with a glimpse of alternatives and better mobility, images are vital.

➜ **Avoid the opposition's framings wherever possible** – using the opposition's language, such as phrases like 'carbon neutral' flying or 'decarbonising' aviation might implicitly legitimise offsetting schemes and single tech-solutions, despite their problematic nature. Put your view and framing first and assert your stance with your own language and terminology, not theirs. Of course, it is not always possible to avoid certain suboptimal terms. For example, when criticising them, it may also be necessary. In this case, make sure to contextualise appropriately.

➜ **Be careful about getting into detailed discussions that can reinforce the negative influence of mainstream economics.** This means not talking about the 'true costs of flying' as they are incalculable and impossible to monetise. In fact, monetising costs in certain cases, such as children's educational attainment, may detach from the more human, lived experience elements of your communications strategy. What's more, small disagreements or mistakes in calculating costs, may leave your comms interventions vulnerable to attack and side-tracking away from your narrative.

An activist from the Stay Grounded network giving an interview disguised as a penguin. © Stefan Müller

- **Keep an open, discursive tone that encourages agreement on shared values.** Lecturing and hectoring people will turn them off your cause.

- **Address people as citizens with agency and extended responsibilities rather than as passive consumers.** Remember they are all also employees, parents, friends and neighbours i.e. human.

FINDING SPOKESPEOPLE AND ALLIES

Successful communication needs an authentic voice telling a story that is understandable and believable. Does your team know what they stand for and what they are trying to achieve? If you ask them to write it down, would they all say the same thing? The Elevator Pitch is the imagined way you would describe what you are trying to achieve if you were in an elevator with an influential person and had just that short time to communicate your message. So what is yours? And who is best at delivering it? People facing the public and media must be able to speak clearly, with confidence and in an engaging way to give you the best chance of communicating successfully.

The Stay Grounded Multiplier Network is intended as a place for campaigners to share knowledge, resources, experience and expertise. It will also be a great place to make the most of powerful voices who may not be close at hand but are willing to co-create or collaborate as an ally on certain projects. Sharing others' stories will strengthen your own campaigning and using voices from other affected regions and countries is important in communicating the global nature of this work. Finding strong spokespeople and sharing them is one of the most important ways in which you can work together to amplify your messages. For example, the UK's Bristol Airport fight against expansion was not only a successful collaboration between local environmental groups; it was also able to call on collaborators in Canada once they realised that the site was owned by a Canadian teachers' pension fund. When working with people from other countries and cultures, it is important to be respectful of their culture and precise about their geography. Avoid talking about the Global South as if it is a single homogenous place. Instead, be specific about the country and climate impact you are referring to.

It is really important that spokespeople are comfortable in front of a camera and microphone, and in front of a crowd. These skills can be taught, but some people are also naturally effective in this role and may be found in any part of an organisation, so remain open-minded and try out different spokespeople in a variety of situations. Think about who your target audiences are and who they might be likely to listen to. This doesn't mean they have to look or be the same type of person, but it is really worth trying out different people with different audiences to see who gets the messages across best.

Who is best placed to speak to the new narratives? High-profile people are good for attracting large audiences but can also be liked/disliked by different groups. Try to find stories in your locality that illustrate each of the new narratives and spokespeople willing to talk about the issues from their perspective. For example, if you are campaigning against a new airport, it might be effective to line up someone living nearby whose home might be affected by pollution to use the Plane Greedy narrative to target the airline's unfair behaviour, alongside an economist to counter arguments about financial impacts using the Green Means Grounded narrative about the need to fund real alternatives. You can support these with hard data, infographics and further interview options from your organisational representatives, but "real" people who are not seen to be working for a campaign group will appeal better to the public. The Stay Grounded Multiplier Network will enable you to link up different regions to illustrate how actions in one place can affect people elsewhere. Find some positive stories of change, such as local companies or organisations who are no longer flying and use them to encourage others to follow suit with the Enjoy the Journey and Safe Landing narratives, setting out new patterns of behaviour and new potential policies for a sustainable future.

BUILDING CAPACITY – INTERNALLY AND WITH ALLIES

Capacity building means increasing both numbers of active people and supporters, and the skills they bring. A regular skills audit can help you to see where your strengths lie and to identify any skill gaps. It is worthwhile for even skilled practitioners to keep enhancing and updating their skills. You might find you need to bring new people into the team, train existing members in new methods or look for specific tools. Get to know your fellow network members and find out who is best at what. Few campaigning groups have the luxury of recruiting people with the perfect experience, so it's sensible to be honest about what you are good at and where you need to ask for help.

Before and during COP26 Climate summit in Glasgow, the **COP26 Coalition** showed how effective co-creation and collaboration can be, successfully bringing together hundreds of organisations working across climate issues, including environment and development NGOs, trade unions, grassroots community campaigns, faith groups, youth groups, migrant

The coordinators of indigenous Mexico valley organisations, CPOOEM, holding a solidarity protest in Mexico City.
© CPOOEM

The Degrowth of Aviation conference in Barcelona in 2019 brought together campaigners and activists from all over Europe.
© Christine Tyler

and racial justice networks. This gave them the resources to put on larger events, pool media impacts and attract delegates from the formal proceedings who would otherwise have been fragmented and forced to choose between causes to support. Collaborating not just within the network but also locally with other campaigning groups that may not overlap completely with your work but can align on a single campaign can be effective and good for morale. Unions and other worker groups – particularly from the aviation industry – that may not be formally participating in your campaigns, may provide valuable input and be happy to support, comment or take part in certain activities. Building and nurturing these relationships is an important part of campaigning for a just transition and is how the Safe Landing narrative works on the ground.

The climate movement **Extinction Rebellion's** ways of working are interesting to examine, as they represent a shift away from centralised decision-making through a genuine prioritising of wellbeing, a simple set of principles within which activists can self organise, and a willingness to learn and evolve in order to flourish. Despite their huge success, their form of direct actions have also been criticised as non-inclusive and outright dangerous for non-white activists due to police violence. Therefore, it may also be useful to organise various anti-racism trainings to improve your team's awareness of socio-cultural dynamics within the movement. Although anti-racism training will not change behaviour overnight, it can help to embed attempts to bring different perspectives into working practices and to normalise sensitivity to other people's experiences. In many countries, especially in Europe, the climate movement reached a new level of mobilisation through movements such

as **Fridays For Future**. Networking with national chapters or local groups of existing environmental organisations can help you reach committed climate activists, for example to coordinate decentralised action days.

The **citizens' assembly movement** may also be a good collaborator, enabling the impact of aviation to be discussed in depth and in a well informed, calm environment. These events can be costly if well organised by trained practitioners with a broad representative group of people participating. But they are generally seen to be fair – and can be a good way to engage a wider section of the community.

Look for good training programmes or workshops within your budget. Free or low-cost options can be found. Ask for recommendations from other NGOs and ask a local professional to give you support for free via work-placed information platforms such as LinkedIn. Local colleges might offer a free place on a suitable course and some local TV or radio stations offer media training – after all, they all want good content for free, which is what you are providing. Your own social media or newsletters might be a good place to ask for resources and/or skilled volunteers from people who are already on your side. Many NGOs have developed toolkits for campaigning and communication such as Earth Defenders,[16] who encourage campaigners to share tools, ideas and what works with each other via an interactive platform. Others – such as Project Inside Out[17] – offer DIY workshops you can run to improve your skills based on evidence of what works. The movement-building network NEON also has a toolkit[18] and other training resources that are free to use on areas such as organising and spokespeople.

TAKE IT TO THE MEDIA

The media today is less a discrete channel for information and entertainment, and more a constant thread running through our daily lives, thanks mostly to mobile phones and social media. The huge range of ways to get messages across to audiences now includes:

➜ Organisational websites
➜ Traditional local, national, regional and international news organisations
➜ Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, and so on)
➜ Paid advertising (Google AdWords, print or online banner ads)
➜ Direct communications (newsletters, direct mail)
➜ Public events – in person and online
➜ Press releases to news services
➜ Graphics online or in situ (billboards)
➜ Radio or TV interviews
➜ Videos or vlogs on Youtube, Vimeo, TikTok
➜ Publications – reports, briefings, booklets, maps (all physical and online as PDFs)

Some of these activities can be self generated and disseminated to interested parties on your mailing list or through partners and supporters. However, **if you want your campaign content to be reported in the media by third parties, then you must think about how to make it newsworthy in some way**. It may be that you have new research with reportable numbers, a survey or poll, or someone is involved who is well known enough to 'make' news, or that you have an action which is provocative or sufficiently interesting. Rarely is it enough just to have a point of view or opinion to convey.

SOME TIPS ON WORKING SUCCESSFULLY WITH EXTERNAL MEDIA:

➜ **Think like a journalist;** put yourself in their shoes and ask which story in their paper should be kicked out in order to insert your own? Have you got a new fact, are you revealing something for the first time, or you doing something on a significant date that might attract attention?

➜ **Make it easy for them to report** what you are doing by building a relationship with them so they can trust you and try to give them what they need. If you can provide information, quotes, film clips and images in formats and to a length that fits their remit and timetable, they will be more likely to use it.

➜ **Use 'cheat sheets' for spokespeople** to ensure messaging is consistent; make sure everyone has a few solid quotes and your key messaging to hand.

➜ **Find a famous person or a social media influencer** who supports your cause, and ask for their help with a specific event or campaign action.

➜ **Concentrate on high quality content rather than quantity.**

➜ **If you cannot contact journalists online, call them** as this is the only way to ensure you have their undivided attention, particularly if time is pressing.

➜ **In addition to mainstream media platforms,** there are many more easily accessed **progressive media platforms** that you can strengthen by supporting, and that every subject has its own specialist media outlets.

➜ **You can always say no to an interview** – or ask someone to call back for a quote to give you time to think about messaging. Do not allow yourself to be pressured into talking about something you don't understand or is not part of your campaign.

Reaching the right audience can also mean going to new places.
© System Change, not Climate Change!

TAKING ACTION

Campaign actions are not just about getting a single photo opportunity and publishing information on the day that appeals to your existing constituency. They should be designed as **part of a planned campaign strategy** that contributes to broadening appeal, widening your networks, amplifying your messages, reaching new audiences, and starting conversations around a reduction of air traffic (or other issues) in unexpected places. Shifting norms must involve including new people in your sphere of influence.

Stick to the new narratives, but follow your own campaign plan. Find your own stories and bring them alive with relatable spokespeople and colourful metaphors. For example, if you are fighting airport expansion, work with local people to tell their stories of pollution and damage to homes and families using the Common Destination narrative; call for airlines not to be Plane Greedy by showing with graphics what the money paid to aviation could do locally if spent to benefit everyone; use the Green Means Grounded narrative to talk about reducing air traffic and creating better mobility systems; show real examples of a better life without airport expansion; and get some well-known supporters on board early to inspire followers.

Timing can be key – it is much harder to stimulate interest in your chosen topic if the media's attention is drawn elsewhere to a big story. Sometimes you may be able to link your work to the hot issue of the day by offering a comment to local media, using trending hashtags and commenting online via blogs and social media. If not, then prepare campaigns that are not particularly timely and can be launched on a quiet day with punchy headlines and strong photos. Find out which days are important in your calendar: they may be local government decisions, new publications, actions or shared calendar events that give opportunities for using the new narratives. For example, find out which time of year is busiest for air traffic in your own region and plan some work looking at how to travel better. Find people who travel by train or bus and bring their stories alive with short film clips, blogs and images.

TEST, TEST, AND TEST AGAIN

Do not rely on those inside the organisation to tell you that the messaging is good; they are firmly inside the bubble and will probably agree with you. Go to friendly outsiders and ask them to judge your work. Ask people who reflect the audience you are trying to reach.

You could do this face to face in your local area by talking to people on the street in an organised way. Asking open questions (questions to which people cannot respond simply yes or no) is useful when gathering information. Use those people in your team or support network who are comfortable engaging with the public in a non-confrontational way.

Social media can be useful to test messaging. Facebook or Twitter ads, for example, allows targeting by interest or key word, as well as the usual demographic criteria. Forums and Groups are also good ways to test responses – and sometimes to find supporters. Look out for large, active groups where your message will be of interest in each of the new narrative areas. For example, there are social justice Facebook groups, sustainable transport groups, environmental groups, and local issue campaigning groups that might align with your work. You might try different posts using each of the new narratives to see which has most appeal to which group. Do they get what you are saying? Did they read or watch to the end? Did they share your work or tell anyone else about it? Do they remember anything about it afterwards? And then change what you are doing in response; do not feel offended or disappointed (although you might feel either or both) – just go with what works and move on.

Use available analytics software (Google analytics for websites, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter analytics for posts here) to track visits, impressions and engagement levels of your messaging. Online polls are also a good way to get feedback on communications, to find out who is listening and what they are hearing. These can be done to your mailing list if you have a newsletter, or during online events if you hold these – instant responses to simple questions.

Use the data collected as feedback to hone your messaging, adjust language and images, tone and style. **Theory is useful to guide your work, but you will only know what works with any given audience by trying it out.**

Using the new narratives to communicate means adopting some new language and thinking carefully about continuing to use old language. The box on page 86 covers some suggestions of terminology, phrases and keywords that are useful for our new narratives – and those that might be best avoided. These are suggestions and should not be taken as prescriptions. Dictating the use of language is always tricky, because circumstances and contexts can vary so enormously. In some contexts, such as short news clips, using the most well-known phrase is often the best course of action. We have tried to give some reasons for our choices here, but you will have to make your own decisions about which are useful to you in your own location, situation and media opportunity. Don't be afraid to use your own initiative and experiment in the different spaces you are in.

PHRASES AND WORDS TO HELP YOU STRENGTHEN YOUR MESSAGING

CONVENTIONAL PHRASING	STRONGER MESSAGING	WHY
Air travel	Air traffic	reminder of the misery of traffic; evokes pictures of congestion in the sky and loud engines
Jet fuel; aviation fuel	Polluting fuels; dirty fuels	reminds people of the impacts of fossil fuels and the need to move away from them
Aviation emissions	(Climate) pollution, toxic fumes; dirty gases	link to impact on people and nature, show that emissions not only heat up the climate, but also have other effects
Aviation expansion/growth	More runways, more air traffic and more pollution	point out and be clear about the impact on people, livelihoods and nature
Carbon neutral flying	Greenwashing of aviation; greenwashed flights	Show that there is no such thing as climate-friendly flying; highlight the industry's false promises
Future effects of climate change	The reality of today's climate crisis; looming climate breakdown; loss and damage that is happening right now	Shorter timescales bring home the impacts and makes the climate crisis tangible
Air miles	Climate destruction reward scheme; polluter pyramid scheme	Remind people that these schemes are incentivising damage Budget travel
Low-cost airlines, budget travel	Externalised cost travel; cheap for you, expensive for the planet	Reminder of the real loss and damage through aviation and climate destruction; cheap flights means someone else paying the price
Frequent flyer	Frivolous flyer, excessive flyer	Remove elite glamour and reframe as more damaging
Everyone who flies	The minority of people who take flights	Remind audience it's a small minority that flies
Alternative fuels / sustainable aviation fuel (SAF)	Jet fuel substitutes; SAF – scarce aviation fuels; agrofuels, crop fuels, fuel instead of food (for biofuels)	Remove the positive framing of "alternative" and show that kerosene substitutes are not sustainable; point out that agrofuels can compete with food production
Democratise flying	Profit-driven expansion of the aviation industry	Emphasise the real driver behind more flights
Decarbonise aviation	Reduce air traffic	Decarbonisation through technology will not be possible for decades – let's rather talk about what is realistic
Tourism	Mass tourism, extractive tourism	Tourism dependency is an unsustainable form of 'development'
Tax free	Tax exempt, tax privileges, subsidised by taxpayers	"Free" is positive framing for something that is a problem
Climate change, global warming	Climate crisis; global heating; (looming) climate breakdown; destruction of our life support systems	"Change" and "warm" are positive framing for something that is a major problem
Private jet flights; shopping weekend trips by plane; space trips etc.	Bullshit flights, frivolous flights	If you want, call flights that you find unfair, frivolous and unnecessary "bullshit flights", and differentiate them with legitimate flights (e.g. from a migrant visiting family once in a while)
Give up flying; renounce flying	Slow travel, better travel, grounded travel; responsible decision; climate-conscious travel	Show positive aspects or what can be gained from not flying

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF IMAGES

Visuals are so important it is hard to overstate. Controlling your own images is best, using photography, film, and infographics. But this is not always the case – particularly at short notice. In this case, **use open source, creative commons sites**[19] **to find eye-catching imagery**. This means the artists or photographers have given explicit permission for their content to be used by others for free. Do not just take and use images without permission and ensure that citations and credits[20] are correct. There are also numerous paying sites – sometimes it might be worth paying for an excellent image you need and photographers also need to earn a living. However, volunteers in your own field can also often provide great imagery and film clips, given a clear brief and a commitment from your side to credit them and their work clearly. Remember that the image must be striking and not just accurate. In other words, an image of the correct site that is difficult to read or poorly lit is not as effective as an image of a similar site (accurately labelled) that is stunning and will draw attention. **Images are easier to remember than text** and are even more important now that many audiences will be looking at news on smaller devices such as phones and tablets. They simply will not see the detail in an image, but will be drawn to its graphic impact.

Examples of images that work: a picture of a demonstration with many people in the background and one or a few clearly recognisable people to symbolise emotions and broad support at the same time. **But be careful not to use too many images of protests and "typical activists" as they can also put many people off**. Instead, show (geographically close) impacts of the climate crisis and positive solutions.[21] If you are campaigning against a project, either an image of the site of already happening destruction – or one of untouched nature or a community that could be destroyed for the sake of a project – can be a good fit.

Try to avoid using images of planes in the sky as these are the images the industry uses to promote frequent and unsustainable flying. If your intervention is around the future of mobility and transport, try and use pictures of that future: trains, trams, buses, slow travel options, or other forms of mass mobility. **If using images of planes is unavoidable, make sure that they are either grounded, or their nose shows to the left and/or downwards.** Images of planes ascending are very common and used to show progress and hope – this is something we must challenge and try to avoid reinforcing visually. In western cultures, "up" is associated with good and "down" as negative; and because of the reading direction in most languages, we perceive left as the direction for "past" and right as "future".[22]

Take particular care with graphics where type must be readable – if you want someone to see the header without zooming in, for example, test that it is big enough on your own phone. Make sure also that graphs use colourways and fonts that enable people with dyslexia and other common reading conditions to read them easily. **Infographics are such a key part of campaigning materials** that it is worth finding people in your team or – if you have the budget professionally – to make them work well. A strong infographic will live on and on, and is highly shareable. Make sure sources are widely trusted and clearly marked as they give credibility.

Activists form a red line against air traffic growth at Vienna Airport.
© Christian Bock

SOURCES

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

We've reached our final destination. This train, errr, guide ends here. But while this may be the end of this guide, it is the start of the reframing journey. Up to this point, we have covered why aviation needs to be reframed and why now is the time to do it; we have set a course to where this path could potentially take us; and we have explained how reframing can be practically applied by you through the networks you are embedded within. You now have the tools to embark on your own journey, one where you will challenge the dominant narratives, build collaborative relationships with like-minded campaigners and, in some way, lay the foundations for a better mobility system and a new economy.

So, here we are, changing. The reframing train is sat at the platform and the seats are filling up. People are conversing and laughing, the atmosphere full of possibilities. As we pull out of the station and gather momentum, the shifting landscape outside of your window offers glimpses of different futures and alternative worlds, yet to be born. Your fellow travellers see these alternative futures too. Although they may have different end-points, you are all going in the same direction. The real work is yet to begin, but you have the tools to bring those new worlds – those enticing futures – into existence.

RESOURCES AND FURTHER READING

This guide covers only a specific and small part of communication for social change and climate justice. See the following websites for more resources on impactful communication, effective campaigning, visionary framing and more.

Beautiful Trouble: **beautifultrouble.org**
Center for Story-based Strategy: **storybasedstrategy.org**
Climate Visuals: **climatevisuals.org**
Digital Charity Lab: **digitalcharitylab.org**
Earth Defenders Toolkit: **earthdefenderstoolkit.com**
Framing Climate Justice: **framingclimatejustice.org**

MobLab: **mobilisationlab.org**
NEON – New Economy Organisers Network: **neweconomyorganisers.org**
New Economics Foundation: **neweconomics.org**
PIRC. Public Interest Research Centre: **publicinterest.org.uk**
Project Inside Out: **projectinsideout.net**
Rapid Transition Alliance: **rapidtransition.org**
Seeds for Change: **seedsforchange.org.uk**
The Commons. Social Change Library: **commonslibrary.org**
Training for Change: **trainingforchange.org**
350.org – Resources: **350.org/resources**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Common Destination: a guide on reframing aviation to ensure a safe landing and lay the tracks towards a fair planet.

The aviation industry has spent billions over decades to paint itself in a positive light, and it is easy for people to fall into the trap of discussing the future of the industry on its own, rigged terms.

This guide seeks to help escape this trap and provide a toolkit to cast the aviation industry in a light that illuminates its realities: the inequality of aviation within and across borders, the lives and livelihoods destroyed through airport expansion and industry offset schemes, the greenwashing efforts of an embattled industry hanging onto the status quo, and – most importantly – what is to be gained from laying the tracks for more equitable and climate-safe mobility and economic systems around the world.

A better world is possible and there are alternatives: to air transport, to unsustainable ways of life and to the failing current economic system.

STAY GROUNDED