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UK Aviation

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- **WWF-UK is not opposed to flying. However, we believe aviation must operate within environmental limits and do its fair share to tackle climate change. New runways or airports are unnecessary and incompatible with carbon targets.**
- **UK aviation is at the forefront of global competitiveness. London is the world's best connected city and already has plenty of airport capacity for the future.**
- **The UK does not need more runways or terminals. WWF/AEF research shows there is already ample capacity for substantial increases in both passengers and ATMs within the South East and nationally to 2050.**
- **London airports are not 'losing out' to other European hubs. Surveys show that Heathrow remains the world's leading international airport with greater connectivity to both existing and emerging markets than its competitors.**
- **Businesses are not demanding airport expansion. Business flights have been declining year on year. Progressive, competitive companies like Lloyds TSB are flying less in favour of rail & videoconferencing, saving money and carbon.**
- **Aviation is one of the fastest growing sources of carbon emissions globally. The Committee on Climate Change is clear that an unconstrained expansion scenario is incompatible with meeting our legally binding climate targets.**
- **WWF believes the UK must put climate change at the heart of aviation policy, make better use of existing capacity, reform slot allocations to be more efficient, and reject unnecessary new runways at Heathrow, Stansted & Gatwick.**

Climate change must be at the heart of aviation policy

Aviation, one of the fastest growing sources of carbon emissions, must be controlled. The CCC is unequivocal: unconstrained expansion of airports is not consistent with the Climate Change Act and our legally binding climate targets. The best basis for the planning of future aviation policy is the CCC's 'likely scenario' which allows for a 60% increase in passenger demand and 55% increase in Air Traffic Movements to 2050, compared to 2005 levels.[1]

The Government should fully include aviation emissions within the Climate Change Act to protect the integrity of the Act and send a clear signal that the industry must do its fair share. The Government should re-affirm that aviation emissions must be at or below 2005 levels (37.5MT CO_2) by 2050, which is the industry's own figure.

[1] Committee on Climate Change, Meeting the UK aviation target (December 2009)

There is already enough capacity for more 60% more passengers

WWF/AEF research shows that major new expansion of airport capacity in the Southeast is not necessary. There is already sufficient available capacity of runways and terminals, even in the Southeast, to meet demand to 2050 in line with the CCC's recommended limits to growth.[2] Following BAA forecasts, there will be less than a 1% shortfall in Southeast runway capacity by 2050 based on larger planes and increased airplane loading at Heathrow[3].

Use existing capacity better

There is no 'capacity crunch'. Department for Transport forecasts have been constantly revised downward and are based on flawed assumptions of high GDP growth, low taxation, and lower oil prices than today. True demand is likely to be substantially below government figures.[4]

Sustainable growth can be ensured through better use of available airport capacity. Heathrow can accommodate an extra 20 million passengers[5] without adding any new flights as there is spare terminal capacity and departing flights are only 75% full.[6] Other major London airports have spare capacity (25% at Gatwick, 45% at Stansted and 15% at Luton)[7] that should be filled in preference to building new airports or runways. Reform of runway slot allocations would be a cost-effective way to break airline monopolies in the best interests of the UK economy.

Competitiveness is not under threat

The UK is not facing a crisis of competitiveness in aviation. London's 6 airports make it Europe's leading 'hub' city and one of the most desirable and important places to do business.[8] London airports give better connections to the key business centres of the world than any other European city.[9] Heathrow is the world's busiest airport for international passenger traffic;[10] offers unrivalled connectivity to 20 of the world's 27 key business destinations (including BRICS); has more flights to key markets than the combined total of its two nearest rivals, Charles de Gaulle and Frankfurt; has more flights to Asia than any other hub airport;[11] and has 3000 flights each year to Hong Kong, Asia's premiere hub.[12]

Better use of existing capacity, by shifting flights with lower economic value from Heathrow to other London airports, would open up more routes to emerging markets and allow for significant growth and competitiveness while keeping within environmental limits.

Businesses are flying less, not more

Competitive businesses are flying less, not more, in order to be successful. Business passenger numbers have dropped each year since 2008,[13] and over 10 years in percentage terms.[14] Hafl of FTSE 500 companies reduced their flying in the recession and do not intend to return to previous levels of flying.[15] Leading UK companies such as BSkyB, Lloyds TSB and Vodaphone have cut business flights in favour of cheaper, more efficient rail and videoconferencing: on average, cutting flights by 41% over two years, saving £2.4 million and 3,600 tonnes CO_2 each.[16]

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[2] AEF/WWF, Available UK airport capacity under a 2050 CO2 target for the aviation sector (July 2011)
[3] BAA forecasts for Terminal 5 inquiry
[4] AEF Air Passenger Demand Forecasts Briefing (June 2012)
[5] Civil Aviation Authority data (2009) compared to total Heathrow capacity including Terminal 5
[6] BAA monthly data (2010-2012)
[7] Gatwick, Stansted and Luton airport passenger and ATM traffic data (2011)
[8] Cushman & Wakefield, The European Cities Monitor (2011)
[9] AirportWatch, International Air Connectivity for Business (August 2011)
[10] Airports Council International, International Passenger Traffic (as of December 2011)
[11] AirportWatch, International Air Connectivity for Business
[12] Department for Transport, Transport Times Aviation Conference (18 April 2012)
[13] CAA passenger survey data
[14] DfT transport statistics (2011)
[15] WWF, Moving on: why flying less means more for business (July 2011)
[16] www.wwf.org.uk/oneinfive