This is a warning from the Ministry for the Climate Emergency: Air travel advertisements are promoting a climate crisis.
Discover how the aviation industry missed 98% of its climate targets and how its ‘green’ plan only applies to half the impact of air traffic.

Dive in to rising seas that are warming and becoming more acid and hostile to life and brace for more record-breaking extreme weather, turbulence and chaos.

Relax if you can with the roar of the aviation engines overhead with up to 20,000 planes in the air at one time.

Explore what’s left of coastal communities before the fact that you flew there helps consign them to a watery grave.

Join the ‘polluter elite’ club where just one percent of the world’s population is responsible for half of all aviation pollution.

Enjoy paying for our meaningless carbon offsets so we can carry on polluting as normal.

DID YOU KNOW?
Climate change could make nearly half the world’s sandy beaches disappear by the end of the century.

Sea life like you’ve never seen before: polluted, dead and washed up on the sand.

The smell will be foul and unbearable. Sick buckets provided.

Sick on the Beach
This travel brochure is brought to you by the Ministry for the Climate Emergency. We need to warn you that you may have been exposed to brain pollution from aviation industry advertising that can influence your choices and lead to dangerous disruption of your climate!²

If you think you have been exposed to brain pollution it is important that you take steps to protect yourself and the ones you love. Actions you can take include: pointing out that massive, polluting aviation growth is no way to reverse a climate emergency, supporting campaigns to end high-carbon advertising (in the same way tobacco advertising was ended) and, not flying. Where possible travel more locally and to places that don’t require flights or, if in business, save time, money and pollution by meeting online.

Join us on a journey through why the aviation industry and its adverts that promote frequent flying are a big problem.

As holiday seasons mingle with airport chaos, heatwaves and weather extremes, prompting authorities to issue climate health warnings, there are important climate and public health reasons to stop aviation industry adverts fuelling the climate emergency.
Of course not everyone can afford to go away. Globally, only a very small number of people fly regularly, and they are the ones who produce the vast majority of aviation pollution.

It’s estimated that only between two and four percent of the global population flew internationally at all in 2018, and that just one percent of the world’s population emits 50 percent of the pollution from commercial aviation.³

A mere 10 countries account for about 60 percent of total aviation pollution.⁴ But it is also true within nations. Wealthy people in all countries fly more than their fellow citizens with average or low income. Nearly half of the UK population, for example, took no flight abroad even in pre-pandemic 2018,⁵ overall just 15 percent of the population account for 70 percent of all flights.

What to pack?

GLOBAL HEATING
creates many new challenges to holidaying... But not to worry, we’ve got you covered!

MEGAPHONE
Allow others to hear you over the roars of planes above

MEDICINE BOX
Heat related illness relief and respiratory medicines advised

FACE MASK
Infectious diseases and air pollution levels will be extremely high

FOOD
Reduced food quantity and quality will lead to malnutrition

LIFE RING
Flooding is very likely, life rings can help avoid drowning

WATER FILTER
Warn off all of those water borne diseases

FLOOR PLAN
Know your exit points for when “natural disastar” strikes

A BRAVE FACE
It’s not going to be easy, but try to enjoy yourself
Aviation almost never meets own targets
but the Jet Zero approach is based on trusting it to do just that

**Zero industry solutions**

Industry measures to meet climate targets like the global industry’s Fly Net Zero plan, overseen by the aviation industry body IATA, and the UK’s Jet Zero plan rely heavily on offsetting plans that are practically flawed and lacking scientific credibility. When the airline Lufthansa offered customers the promise of ‘carbon neutral’ flying, in line with the IATA plan, the Swedish Advertising Regulator, Reklamombudsmannen, RO, ruled that the advert was greenwash that, “contains misleading claims about carbon neutrality” and, as a result, “an average consumer risks being misled about the climate impact of air travel”.

DID YOU KNOW?

Over 20 years the UK aviation industry missed 98 percent of its green targets

IATA’s scheme follows in the slipstream of the industry’s track record of failing to meet even its own environmental goals.

Recent analysis revealed that over a 20 year period, the aviation industry in the UK missed 49 out of 50 of green goals – or put another way, 98% of them. Jet Zero is expected to follow the grain of Fly Net Zero, going against the advice of the official climate policy advisors, the Climate Change Committee, which says the industry needs to manage growth in demand, and not assume that uncontrolled growth can happen with offsetting as a ‘get out of jail card’.

If offsetting worked, to meet climate targets, the industry would be faced with the choice of either spending $1 trillion on offsets by 2050, or radically reducing passenger numbers, according to other research. As even mainstream offsetting schemes show fundamental flaws, the remaining choice is to reduce flights and passenger numbers.

However, IATA’s plan imagines the number of passenger flights at least doubling by 2050.

“an average consumer risks being misled about the climate impact of air travel”

Sweden’s Advertising Regulator
Advertising wouldn’t be the multi billion industry it is if it didn’t influence people, and in ways that people are often unaware of and unable to control. For that reason it’s been likened to a kind of ‘brain pollution’.

To estimate its effectiveness a measure called ‘return on advertising spend’ (ROAS) is used, that looks at how much sales increase based on a company or industry’s ad spend. One recent estimate looking at the degree to which global car and airline advertising increased demand, suggests that in 2019, the airline industry’s additional emissions driven by advertising are significant. Greenhouse gas emissions attributable to airline advertising globally in 2019 are in a range up to the equivalent of 34 million tonnes of CO₂ – the same as burning 17 million tonnes of coal. Resulting from adverts for flights in the EU alone, additional greenhouse gas emissions in 2019 could be as high as 9 million tonnes of CO₂, roughly equivalent to burning 21 million barrels of oil.

Global aviation pollution was rising steadily with the expanding industry prior to the pause caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. Since, most airlines have scrambled to reassure their investors that they will return to pre-pandemic passenger levels and expand beyond this, adding new short- and long-haul routes.

Early attempts to do so did not result in good traveller experiences; with chaos ensuing as airlines attempted to operate with a fraction of their staff following massive lay-offs (despite receiving huge government bail-outs). Swathes of flight cancellations followed, raising the additional question of whether the industry should be advertising for more customers regardless given its ability to meet existing demand. Wider safety concerns for airline staff, and fraught relations between them and airline owners and management, paint a picture of an industry having a bad trip, and seeming to care as little for its own workers and passengers as the health of the planet.
The aviation industry has no credible plans to meet its climate targets

The global aviation industry’s proposed scheme for climate action, Fly Net Zero, is not a credible plan. Analysis suggests it will put nature at risk around the world and create conflict between the need to grow food for human consumption and biofuels for planes, without reducing aviation’s climate impact. IATA’s plan allows for at least a doubling of global air passengers by 2050, and attempts to “decarbonise” disregard aviation’s non-CO₂ climate impacts. These are so large that they roughly equal the impact of carbon dioxide emissions from planes. Ignoring them means only addressing half of the problem. Unconstrained airport expansion and flight growth could see the global heating effects of airplane contrails triple between 2006–2050.

Over the next decade, during a period when it is crucial to reduce climate impact, emissions and non-CO₂ effects are set to increase, only being “off-set” by mechanisms that are thought will, “do almost nothing to tackle the emissions from flying”.

From 2035 to 2050 the plan envisages a switch to biofuels, requiring three times as much aviation biofuel as the present global production of all liquid biofuels.

Such an increase would endanger global biodiversity, put more pressure on food production and prices, and increase the risks of land being grabbed from people who rely on it for their livelihoods. Other hyped technological fixes such as small, very short haul electric flights will still use huge amounts of energy and, research shows, play only a negligible role in replacing the bulk of flights. For example, current technology would limit a modest 9 passenger aircraft to fly on a journey of just 140km, in other words a short, simple train journey. In this context any industry wide claims of sustainability have to be considered greenwash. The same is set to be true of the UK’s Jet Zero plan.

DID YOU KNOW?
The aviation industry wants passenger numbers to at least double by 2050 but has a weak plan only addressing half its climate impact
There is no credible regulation of greenwash in aviation advertising

At the same time that the aviation industry has no credible plan to meet climate targets, there appears also to be no credible regulation of the industry’s greenwash in its advertising. Only a tiny minority of complaints ever get investigated. Even if they do, rulings typically happen long after the misleading claims have been made.

In July 2021 the UK’s advertising regulator, the Advertising Standards Authority (funded by the advertising industry), refused to investigate ads by Qatar Airways that made the sole unsubstantiated claim “Fly Greener” to millions of viewers via the advertising boards at the UEFA Euros 2020.

In November 2021 the same body, the ASA, refused to investigate ads by airline Easyjet, designed by ad agency VCCP London, that promoted ticket sales using greenwashing claims about “Zero Emissions Flight” and carbon offsetting schemes (despite its flights being thoroughly fossil fuel dependent now, and well into the future). The ASA said that because it was undergoing a review of green transport claims it could not investigate ads by specific companies. The complaint in question was passed to another regulator, the Competition and Markets Authority in April 2022, who have not confirmed to date whether or not they will investigate despite claiming to be cracking down on misleading green claims.

During 2021-2022 the ASA also refused to investigate green claims by major polluters including Chevron, McDonald’s, Standard Chartered Bank and Barclays, as well as any green claims made in ads by the fast fashion and energy sectors.

Our sources
2. Ministry for the Climate Emergency (2021)
4. Possible (2021) Elite Status: How a small minority around the world take an unfair share of flights.
7. Bombadvertising Sweden (2022) Airline Greenwash Grounded By Swedish Ad Regulator
8. Possible (2022) Missed Targets: A Brief History of Aviation Climate Targets
9. SourceMaterial (2023) The Carbon Con
12. New Weather Institute / Greenpeace International (2022) Advertising Climate Chaos: How much is advertising cars and flights fuelling the climate emergency?
15. Jayant Mukhopadhyaya and Brandon Grave (2022) Performance Analysis Of Regional Electric Aircraft, ICCT
Got ‘planes on the brain’?

Airline advertising is fuelling the climate emergency

Ministry for the Climate Emergency

#BanFossilAds