

# Debunking Some Persistent Myths

about Air Transport and the Environment

**01**  
MYTH

**Air transport was excluded from Kyoto and doing nothing on the environment.**

**FACT**  
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Domestic aviation is included in Kyoto. International air transport was excluded but with a commitment to find a solution through ICAO by the 2007 Assembly.

Airlines took environmental performance seriously long before Kyoto. Over the last 40 years emissions per passenger kilometre have decreased by 70%.

**02**  
MYTH

**Air transport is a major source of Greenhouse gas emissions.**

**FACT**  
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Air transport contributes a small part of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions - 2%. By contrast, the air transport industry supports 8% of global economic activity.

The entire transport sector is responsible for 20% of total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Road generates 80% of total transport emissions, while air is responsible for only 12%.

Even if all air travel stopped, the result is only a 2% global improvement in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. But the impact on global economies would be disastrous.





### 03 MYTH

**Air transport is the most polluting form of transport.**

### FACT ↗

**Airline fuel efficiency improved 20% in the last decade**, nearly 5% over the past 2 years alone.

Today's modern aircraft consume, average 3.5 litres per 100 passenger kilometres. This is similar to a small compact car but with 6 times the speed.

Next generation aircraft-the Boeing 787 and Airbus A380 are targeting fuel efficiencies below 3.0 litres per 100 passenger kilometres.

### 04 MYTH

**Air transport is getting a free ride by not paying tax on fuel.**

### FACT ↗

**Air transport pays entirely for its own infrastructure** - a US\$42 billion annual bill. Airlines pay when they land, when they fly and when they park. This is completely different from both road and rail.

On top of that air transport is a cash cow for many governments.

**In Europe** every rail journey is subsidised between €2.4 and €7.4. But every air journey contributes between €4.6 and €8.4 in government revenues and avoided expenditure.

**In the US**, the average tax on a US\$200 ticket air ticket is 26% - a level of taxation similar to alcohol and tobacco. In total this contributes US\$15 billion to US government coffers.

### 05 MYTH

**Air transport growth is not sustainable.**

### FACT ↗

**Air transport is essential.** Air transport brings people to business, products to markets, tourists to holiday destinations and unites families and friends around the world. In short, air transport made the global village a reality.

80% of aviation emissions are related to flights over 1,500 km for which there is no alternative mode of transport.