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From John Stewart, Chair of AirportWatch

I was hoping to be writing this on a train somewhere between Chicago and California, but it was not to be. The American tour, though, is still going ahead with Dan Glass and myself being skyped into the events. It is proving fascinating. I'll write something longer about it after it finishes at the end of the month.

The big message coming out from the UK aviation industry these last few months has been the call for expansion. It's featured in this bulletin with stories about expansion plans for Luton, the opening of an extended runway at Aberdeen and in the accounts of the party conferences. In particular, the industry is highlighting the 'lack of capacity' in the South East.

The timing of all this is not surprising as the closing date for responses to the Government's Aviation Scoping Document – the first step in the development of a new aviation policy – is approaching. Our challenge is clear: we are going to have to fight this new onslaught from the aviation industry. The excellent papers we collectively have produced and submitted to the Government are a great start.

The final paper on "International Air Connectivity for Business" is featured below. It is a critical piece of evidence because, using credible research, it challenges the mantra of the aviation industry that the UK is not well-connected by air to the key business centres of the world. New runways may be off the agenda – and that is a huge plus – but the relentless push for growth continues. That is now the battleground.

New report shows Heathrow has better business connectivity than any European rivals and is "In a Class of its Own"

At the end of August, a new report was produced by AirportWatch with help from WWF UK, showing that Heathrow's links to the main business centres of the world dwarf those of its European rivals. "**International Air Connectivity for Business**" shows that Heathrow has 990 departures each week to key business destinations in Asia, Latin America, North America and Europe, more than the combined total of its closest rivals, Charles de Gaulle, Paris and Frankfurt airports.

Heathrow is in a class of its own as far as international business connectivity is concerned. London as a whole is better connected to the world's business centres than any other European city.

The report reveals that London airports combined (Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted) have more than double the number of flights to key business destinations each week compared with those of Paris, Frankfurt, and Amsterdam.

Its publication came just after the Government announced its response to the recommendations of the Committee on Climate Change, where it predicted a 2% annual growth in passenger numbers to 2050, significantly lower than the 3.7% growth seen in the past twenty years. The Government's analysis assumes capacity constraints on UK runways and terminals which is welcome. But their claim that these constraints could lead to UK passengers switching to Continental airports seems very far fetched, given the clear lead that London airports already have over their competitors, in providing the best business connectivity.

International Air Connectivity for Business



How well connected are UK airports to the world's main business destinations?

Jean Leston, Acting Head of Transport at WWF, who financed the report, said, “The Government is right to stress the importance of international air connectivity to business. This report shows just how well connected the UK is to the international business community”.

The other key finding of the report is that most flying from Continental airports is not inter-continental but short-haul within Europe, largely for leisure purposes. The report concludes that it is not so much a question of lack of capacity for UK airports, but how best that capacity can be used, making the most of our superior business connectivity while capping emissions from aviation. The report is at

http://www.aef.org.uk/downloads/Business_Connectivity_Report_August2011.pdf (16 pages)

Party conferences: Industry gung-ho for growth

Carol Barbone, from SSS writes: The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Conservative party political conferences have been attended in force this autumn by the aviation industry, keen to press its case at every opportunity, and in far greater numbers than usual.

Not unexpectedly, jobs and growth arguments were used by the airlines, airport operators and their allies as a springboard to present the industry as a potential saviour of the UK economy – provided, of course, that the Government changes its tune and decides to support airport expansion and encourage the aviation industry to grow by reducing the taxes on air travel. For many industry representatives, ‘airport expansion’ was a metaphor for ‘Heathrow expansion’ – underlined by the comments made by big union guns at several fringe meetings. Boris Johnson’s henchman, meanwhile, was pressing the case for the idea of an estuary airport to be explored further.

Environmental concerns were presented as having been largely solved with the forthcoming entry of aviation into the European Emissions Trading Scheme which will allow ‘permits to pollute’ to be bought and sold, ostensibly with the aim of tackling climate change – even though everyone knows the scheme needs to be tightened to make real progress and a way of addressing the non-CO2 effects of aviation emissions needs to be found.

The problems of noise were dismissed with the line that ‘aircraft are quieter now than they were 40 years ago’ even though there are far more of them. No heed was paid to surface access, air quality or community issues by the industry which considers the environmental box to have been fully ticked with the imminent arrival of the ETS (interpret this as ‘local concerns don’t count’). Air Passenger Duty increases, meanwhile, have largely been portrayed as ‘an attack on hard working families’ and the main reason for the drop in passenger numbers at many airports, conveniently ignoring that some airports, such as Heathrow were busier than ever this summer. The arrival of the EU ETS, meanwhile, will be reason enough (claims the holiday sector) for abandoning APD altogether to avoid a double environment tax on the hardworking families who might otherwise be deprived of holidays in the Caribbean or Australia. It is already being cited as the cause for the drop in some flight and holiday numbers – completely disregarding the effect of exchange rates, job cuts and fear about what’s around the corner as influencing factors on people’s holiday choices. There were exceptions, though: Birmingham Airport is very keen to scoop up the overspill from Heathrow and is pressing strongly for a higher rate of Air Passenger Duty to be applied to the big south east airports to encourage passengers to switch to the less-congested regional airports (for which read Birmingham).

As in previous years, Stop Stansted Expansion’s own representations enabled a more balanced debate at all three conferences, much to the ire of the industry, correcting misinformation and generally redressing the balance in front of key Ministers and MPs so that the industry didn’t have things all its own way. The Campaign for Better Transport and AEF were present too, and Chris Crean from Friends of the Earth was spotted in Birmingham, pressing their arguments on aviation issues with conviction and competence in a manner which thoroughly upset the self-righteous ranting of some quarters of the aviation industry. At times the industry’s attitude caused even the

Aviation Minister Theresa Villiers to put her foot down and point out where the aviation industry's reputation for arrogance had come from. We're standing firm on the no-new-runways policy since that's our electoral mandate, she said at one meeting, adding that abandoning APD increases would cost the Exchequer around £1.5bn and would have to come from another area: which one should it come from - the NHS? Touché Theresa!

BAA's desperate battle to delay the forced sale of Stansted continues

From Carol Barbone: The airport owner's latest ploy is an application to the High Court requesting a formal judicial review of the Competition Commission ruling that it must sell Stansted. It's all becoming a bit like the saga of the travellers at Dale Farm... Furthermore, it now seems that even the Competition Commission has lost patience with BAA for its procrastination over the sale of Stansted Airport. The airport operator's latest legal appeal contesting the requirement to sell the Essex asset has been widely reported as a delaying tactic by observers including Ryanair and has led to a decision by the Competition Commission to bring forward the sale of either Glasgow or Edinburgh Airport rather than wait for a protracted end to the sorry Stansted saga. Little wonder that the Competition Commission is sceptical: news reports allege that BAA is sounding out bankers to handle the sale of Stansted next year.

SSE'S 2012 COMMUNITY CALENDAR LAUNCHED

Stop Stansted Expansion's much-loved Community Calendar is now on sale featuring beautiful views of homes and heritage in the shadow of Stansted Airport. All proceeds from sales of the calendar – the tenth to be produced – will be used in the continuing campaign by SSE to secure the long term safeguards needed to prevent the threat of a second runway ever being revisited on the region and to support its wider work to contain the adverse impacts of airport activity alongside its counterparts across the UK.

As in previous years, the A3 format calendars are priced at just £6 and will be on sale at some 30 shops across the Stansted area, as well as from a sales team drawn from SSE's members. The SSE campaign office can also arrange mail order (includes gift mailing) at a small extra charge. Further details and order forms are available from the SSE campaign office on 01279 870558 or info@stopstanstedexpansion.com or from the website at www.stopstanstedexpansion.com.



Campaigners condemn Thomson Airways' chip fat biofuels flight as greenwash

The UK's first commercial flight to be powered by biofuels took off from Birmingham for Arrecife, on 6th October. It had one engine using 50% fuel made from used cooking oil, supplied by a Dutch company called SkyNRG. Thomson had intended the flight to be on 28th July, but that had to be postponed as they could not obtain the fuel in time. Campaigners dismissed the pilot project as a gimmick that inadvertently would end up harming the environment.

There is not, and never will be, enough used cooking oil to make even the smallest dent in aviation's carbon footprint. Almost all the used oil is currently already used for other terrestrial purposes, and if aviation muscles in and obtains its supply of "sustainable" biofuel, that merely means some other user further down the line uses an unsustainable oil instead.



Thomson announced last month that after its first biofuel flight, it will start full daily operations from early 2012 for around six weeks.

FoE said biofuels won't make flying any greener, but their production is wrecking rainforests, pushing up food prices and causing yet more climate-changing emissions. Joe Peacock, from Birmingham FoE commented that "We cannot ignore the massive environmental and social problems caused by trying to feed our addiction to fossil fuels with plant-based alternatives." Currently, aviation biofuel is simply a public relations device to frame the debate and divert attention away from the other 99.9% of aviation's damaging CO2 emissions. There are several articles about this at <http://bit.ly/qRE1hT> and <http://bit.ly/pHmXXC>

Heathrow runway trial will relax noise limits and cause more noise for many



People living under Heathrow flight paths face increased noise after the introduction of new runway rules. Currently, those living under the flight paths have a respite from noise when the runways alternate at 3pm. BAA is now to run a trial, from November to February, of a scheme allowing the use of both runways simultaneously from July to Sept 2012, during the Olympics.

Under the trial, the threshold for triggering emergency dual use of the runways will be lowered. Dual use can be permitted when a plane faces a 10-minute wait to land or take off and if 30% of all flights are delayed by more than 15 minutes. The average delay now for flights is 12 minutes. Residents could face increased noise from losing some of their respite periods and John Stewart commented that although the total number of planes landing each day won't change, people are very angry that they will no longer be guaranteed a half day's break from the aircraft noise. 3.10.2011 <http://bit.ly/nb77nd>

AirportWatch response to the Aviation Scoping Document Consultation

Over the past few months, the DfT has been consulting on its scoping document, to develop a "Sustainable Framework for UK Aviation". This consultation closes on 20th October. There will be a further, full, consultation next March on the developing policy, for planned adoption by government in March 2013. AirportWatch has produced a range of supporting evidence documents, to back its arguments, and these as well as the AirportWatch response are now available. Even for those not intending to respond to the consultation, the information on regional tourism, economics, employment, connectivity, noise, health, biofuels, aerospace etc make very interesting reading. <http://bit.ly/p4Kkf9> This also contains links to the responses by HACAN and by GACC. The AirportWatch response itself is at <http://bit.ly/n0DUBH>

There has recently been a flurry of articles in the media originating from the aviation industry, pushing for aviation expansion, Heathrow expansion, and new runways, to get the issue into the public eye as the consultation draws to a close. This is in contradiction to the current government policy of no new runways at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted, and that though aviation should be allowed to grow because of its presumed economic contribution, it should do so within environmental limits - noise, air pollution, and climate change.

Unfortunately the journalists seem to be swallowing the airline 'must have more runways' spin without question. These media stories about losing the power of Heathrow as a hub particularly feed into fears about economic growth, attempting to persuade us all that the economy would be fixed if we had more air travel. For example an article by Boris Johnson at <http://bit.ly/okQa9R> and one in the Standard at <http://bit.ly/n6LYbD> and BAA's press release with their report by Frontier Economics at <http://bit.ly/qUUZqz> As GACC (Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign)

pointed out in their Scoping Document response www.gacc.org.uk/aviation-policy a hub needs to be at the centre of Europe. When most flights were to the US, Heathrow was on the way. But if you are a businessman in Germany or Poland and want to go to China, you don't go via Heathrow. "The night we went to John O'Groats by way of Brighton Pier."

Gatwick master plan consultation launched, with runway in prospect after 2020

On 13th October, the new Gatwick master plan was published, with a 12 week consultation period ending 13th January 2012. It contains plans for a possible new runway some time after 2020. "If that were ever to become a serious threat it would be fought tooth and nail by GACC, with support from hundreds of thousands of people throughout Surrey, Sussex and Kent," said Brendon Sewill, GACC chairman. "But we believe it will never happen. It is Government policy that no new runways should be built in the South East. The official forecasts show that the London airports will not be full until 2030, and it would make no commercial or environmental sense to build a new runway while there is still unused capacity. If oil prices rise the date may well be much later." The master plan forecasts an increase in the number of flights from 243,000 a year now up to 280,000. Also up to 40.5 million passengers annually on the one runway, and then perhaps even up to 45 million. The airport admits that it will mean more climate change damage, making Gatwick one of the most polluting sites in the south of England. Details and GACC response at <http://bit.ly/pqCSA4>

Official opening for new 124 metre extension of Aberdeen Airport runway

The 124 metre extension to Aberdeen's main runway has been opened, so it is now 2,077 metres long. (By comparison, Luton's runway is 2,160 metres and Bristol's 2,011 metres). Work started in March and finished early. BAA expects the runway will open up new routes, allowing bigger, more modern aircraft to fly to destinations across the Mediterranean, North Africa and North America. And BAA says the airport contributes £114 million of gross value added annually for Aberdeen City and Shire. There are plans for yet further runway extension. 7.10.2011 <http://bit.ly/rjmPva>



John Stewart barred from entering US on speaking tour

Environmentalists from across the US and Europe are surprised and outraged that John Stewart, voted the UK's most effective environmentalist, was questioned for 6 hours and barred from entering the US. John was invited to the US by a coalition of environmental organisations, Aviation Justice, for a one month speaking tour, but was turned back at JFK airport. John, who does not have a criminal record and meets the requirements for the US Visa Waiver program, had his visa waiver rescinded mid-flight. The tour will go ahead, but using videoconferencing so John and Dan Glass can speak at the meetings across the US as planned. 9.9.2011 <http://bit.ly/oKKVsu>



<http://aviationjustice.org>

John has written two pieces on this. *Barred from America* at <http://bit.ly/oQeRv3> and *Has Green become the new Red in America?* <http://bit.ly/nxEeFR>

Residents around Luton fear airport development plans will increase noise

Luton Borough Council, the main shareholder of London Luton Airport, is considering the airport's future. At an Executive meeting, it said it wants to increase the annual passengers to 18 million - almost double the current number, with a view to increasing up to 30 million passengers a year in due course.

It is not clear if the local authority is just kite-flying, in the context of the review of aviation policy. It may also be an attempt by the airport owner to turn up the heat on the airport operator (London Luton Airport Operations Limited) as the break-point in the concession is only a couple of years away, as we've seen no Master Plan from the operator to replace "Project 2030", and the owner is no doubt unhappy at the present terms of the financial deal (which it signed.....) which is believed to provide income to the owner only for passenger departures: and nothing at all for biz-jet activity, which the operator has developed mightily to the extent that it's soaking up parking-space and takeoff slots which could be used in support of more passenger movements.

Strangely, it's not the airport operating company which is driving this scheme as was the case with the ill-fated Project 2030 Master Plan, which was produced in 2005 and withdrawn in 2007, but the it's the airport owner, which is also, very conveniently, the planning authority. Two possible schemes have been mentioned, one taking more land in Hertfordshire and with more building than the other. Neither involves a new or extended runway. However, a substantial increase in passengers would cause more road congestion and more noise across flight paths in the area. Local campaigners still have little of the extent of any development threat, and the situation is unclear.

6.10.2011 <http://bit.ly/nYh5CX>

Michael Nidd

European Court of Justice preliminary opinion rules that EU ETS is legal and does not infringe sovereignty

On 6th October, the European Court of Justice ruled that the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) is compatible with international law. It said the ETS does not infringe the sovereignty of other States and is compatible with the relevant international agreements. This was welcomed by the transatlantic coalition of environmental groups - which includes AEF and Transport & Environment, and WWF UK - that has been opposing the challenge, by American and other airlines backed by IATA, against the legality of the ETS. IATA says there is a risk that countries outside the EU could take retaliatory action against the EU's ETS, and they instead want a scheme (which would not be likely to be effective) run through the ICAO.

The Court of Justice's Advocate General's preliminary opinion supports Europe's right to tackle carbon emissions from airlines that use its airports. The coalition said this preliminary opinion was very encouraging, though it is not binding. The Court is expected to hand down its final opinion in early 2012. The opinion also says that airlines excluded from the ETS would have an unjustified competitive advantage. <http://bit.ly/pgXUfw> But there have been continuing wails of industry protest.

APD cut on long haul flights from Northern Ireland due to Dublin competition

The Government is to cut Air Passenger Duty on all direct long-haul scheduled flights from Northern Ireland, from 1st November. The Northern Ireland Executive had been lobbying to be seen as a special case in relation to the tax, or otherwise risking its competitiveness. Flights from Irish airports pay only a €3 tax, so there is direct competition with potential Northern Ireland passengers travelling south to get a cheaper flight. The APD rate will be reduced from £60 to £12 for passengers travelling in economy class, and from £120 to £24 for those in business class. APD on short-haul and domestic flights from Northern Ireland, and duty paid by travellers elsewhere into the UK is not affected. 27.9.2011 <http://bit.ly/o5XZNx>

Airlines continue to lobby for reductions in Air Passenger Duty

But this has not stopped the aviation industry across the UK upping its campaigning, trying to make out that the tax is too high, damaging their business, deterring passengers, cutting economic growth etc etc. In reality, aviation is NOT over taxed. AirportWatch believes that claiming the rate of APD should to be reduced is opportunist and damaging to the UK economy and the environment. The aviation industry already benefits from around £10 billion in tax breaks annually because it pays no VAT or tax on fuel. At a time of austerity with cuts to public services, cuts to social care for the elderly, hospitals are struggling and facilities of all sorts are being hit, it is distasteful and disingenuous for the aviation industry to be arguing that a family flying on an expensive long haul holiday should not have to pay more for extra leg room.

NI Environment Minister considering modifying the noise regulations governing Belfast City Airport

Local residents have reacted cautiously to news that the Northern Ireland Environment Minister is considering modifying the noise regulations governing the operation of Belfast City airport. He has announced an inquiry which will investigate how the current planning agreement between the Department and the airport can be altered. But the Minister has given no undertaking, as yet, to reinstate or to abide by the 2 million seats for sale limit. Belfast City Airport Watch (BCAW) has requested a meeting with the Minister to clarify this point, and to find out more about his proposed inquiry. Over 11,000 Belfast people are affected by aircraft



noise. The Department is also dropping its defence in a legal battle with BCaw over the planning agreement.

Lydd Inquiry ends as airport says it 'could take strain off Gatwick and Heathrow'

The Lydd public inquiry ended on 16th September. LAAG and the other parties fighting Lydd Airport's development proposal believe they won the arguments at the public inquiry but are now in the hands of the Inspector and the various Secretaries of State. The Inspector's report is expected to be submitted to the Secretary of State by 14 March 2012. The decision on the applications is to be taken jointly by the Secretaries of State for Communities and Local Government and for Transport. No date has yet been given by the Planning Inspectorate as to when the decision will be issued.

LAAG believes the decision should not be made until after June 2012. This is when the European Union formally completes its safety assessment of all of Europe's 143 nuclear power stations including Dungeness A and Dungeness B, which are located less than 3 miles from Lydd Airport.

The process includes the assessment of the structural resilience of Dungeness A and B to an aircraft accident. This issue was not assessed when the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR) failed to oppose Lydd Airport's planning application, This is despite both the Dungeness A and Dungeness B designs predating any regulatory necessity to take into account the possibility of crashes of large commercial-sized aircraft. Instead the ONR based its response on a probabilistic assessment of Dungeness B and concluded that the probability of an accident was so small that it could be dismissed.



Romney Marsh, threatened by the airport's expansion plans

LAAG's experts have demonstrated that the methodology used to establish the probability of an accident is deeply flawed since it is incapable of accounting for the special circumstances at Lydd Airport. Therefore the risk of an aircraft accident at the Dungeness nuclear complex as a result of aircraft taking off and landing from the airport is substantially underestimated. **Louise Barton.**

Airport managers have ambitions for their airport to become an operation big enough to save people a trip to Gatwick or Heathrow if only they can expand. The airport hopes to become a local regional airport, serving local people, and provide some much-needed jobs to the local community. Permission for the runway extension has been given. <http://bit.ly/qJyS3R>

BA buys 6 pairs of take off and landing slots at Heathrow from bmi

British Airways has bought the slots from Lufthansa's loss-making bmi, which now gives it 45% of the slots at the country's major airport. This has increased speculation that the International Airline Group (IAG) of which BA is a part, could buy more slots from the loss making bmi or even take over the whole airline. The 6 pairs of slots, estimated to cost between €100m and €150m, will be used to expand both BA's short and long haul services, possibly including new destinations. So if the country's economic growth is so dependent on new Heathrow routes to China, here is the chance ! Or the others used for new holiday flights to Miami. 23.9.2011 <http://bit.ly/paDA7e>

French campaigners against a huge new airport at Nantes to hold rally for cycles and tractors in Paris on Saturday 12th November



The campaigners against the building of a new airport outside Nantes in South West France will be travelling by bicycle and tractor to Paris - leaving Nantes on 6th November and arriving in Paris on 12th November where there will be a big rally. Opponents of the proposed airport say it is not needed, it will destroy 2,000 hectares of good farmland, and do much harm. This is the biggest campaign against airport expansion in Europe. It is possible that the campaigners can win. Campaigners from other countries are invited to join the cycle ride and/or the rally in Paris. <http://bit.ly/qzpFIQ>

London Southend Airport train station opens on line to London



A new rail link between Southend Airport and London's Liverpool Street station was officially opened by Theresa Villiers, the Transport Minister, on 21st September. This has been built to benefit from the 2012 Olympics. The station eliminates the former need to change at Rochford to access the airport by train. Trains will also stop at Stratford, the main Olympic site. The journey time to central London will be 53 minutes, around 8 minutes longer than the journey to London from Stansted Airport. The time from Southend to Stratford is 44 minutes.

The airport says it is "aiming to give passengers with hand luggage a 'plane-to-train' time of just 15 minutes, with a maximum 4-minute wait at security checkpoints in the other direction." Also that this will give a faster 'train to plane' time than any other London Airport once the new £10 million terminal, opposite the station, is opened. The terminal is due to be completed in October.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southend_Airport_railway_station

From April 2012 there will be 70 new easyJet flights per week to and from European destinations. Southend airport also confirmed in September that a new German carrier, Jetisfaction, will soon offer regular services to and from Germany. <http://www.jetisfaction.com/en/scheduled-flights/flight-booking/> It seems to just have occasional flights from Southend to Munster, starting from November.

Safety worries after block of ice lands on house in Bisley, Surrey

A block of ice fell thousands of feet from an aircraft travelling overhead and damaged the roof of a house in Bisley 20th August. The householder is concerned about the safety of his grandchildren, who had been playing in the garden, shortly before. He has not been able to determine whether the offending aircraft was a small private plane or a commercial airliner, now fears a costly bill to repair the damage. There are many such incidents each year. Some examples. <http://bit.ly/pnWU5t>

Birmingham airport to get subsidy out of public funds for its runway

Here is another subsidy to the aviation industry. Birmingham council has issued invitations to tender for the runway extension and road diversion - a realignment of a section of the A45 - about £70 million in total. It seems Birmingham and other councils will pay for the road, and the airport for the runway extension. But the councils are majority shareholders in the airport. There is also a pledge of £15.7m from the Regional Growth Fund. So while severe spending cuts are being made, the public has to fund airport growth 9.9.2011 <http://bit.ly/mPy4Wa>

Tourism Deficit in the UK over the past 5 years

The deficit is the difference between the money taken out of the country each year (excluding their tickets) by UK tourists having their hols abroad, against the spending of inbound tourists to the UK. This is often conveniently ignored by the aviation industry, when stating just how valuable their services are to the UK. Office of National Statistics (ONS) figures on Page 16 of <http://bit.ly/pL5sAy>

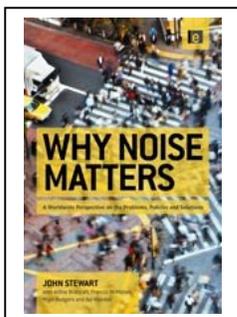
| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 2006 - £ 18.4 billion | 2009 - £ 15.1 billion |
| 2007 - £ 19.1 billion | 2010 - £ 14.2 billion |
| 2008 - £ 20.5 billion | |

September 27th 2011. Earth Overshoot Day.

We are now operating in overdraft in our use of the natural world

From an ecological standpoint, by the end of September humanity has effectively spent our annual salary, with a quarter of the year still to go. Global Footprint Network's preliminary 2011 calculations show we're using resources at a rate it would take between 1.2 and 1.5 planets to sustainably support. If we carry on the course estimated by moderate UN projections for increasing population and consumption, by well before 2050 we will need the capacity of two Earths to meet our level of demand. We maintain this deficit by depleting stocks of things like fish and trees, and by accumulating waste such as CO2 in the atmosphere and the ocean. More info <http://bit.ly/4ec2o>

Shameless plug for John Stewart's New Book: "Why Noise Matters"



A Worldwide Perspective on the Problems, Policies and Solutions

By John Stewart with Arline Bronzaft, Francis McManus, Nigel Rodgers and Val Weedon. Published: August 2011 Paperback £24.99

“After reading it you'll never again dismiss noise as a pollutant that has little relevance to people or the planet”. Caroline Lucas, Green Party Leader.

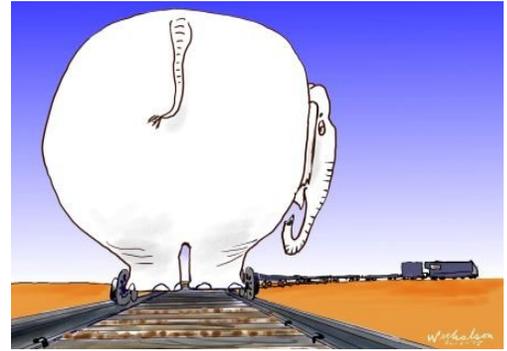
Available at bookshops or from Earthscan at

<http://www.earthscan.co.uk/?TabId=102825&v=513676>

GACC's comment on "Heathwick"

The proposal for a high speed rail link between Heathrow and Gatwick has attracted much attention in the media. It had no author and was a total nonsense, and has been rubbished by many airlines -

- if deep-bored, it would be vastly expensive for little benefit
- if not deep-bored it would do huge environmental damage
- it would not be straight, and thus it is doubtful if it could do the journey in 15 minutes as claimed
- double immigration and customs
- no recognition that there is no space for a 2nd runway at Gatwick. <http://www.gacc.org.uk/latest-news.php>



Soundscape Project for children around Heathrow to experience peace & quiet

Listening with Children: Soundscape is a new project to give children, whose schools are situated under flight paths, the outdoor sensory experience they are missing in school settings where incessant aviation noise prevails. It was set up by Julia Welchman, after years of campaigning and researching the impact of high noise levels on young children's education. The project aims to give children the chance to experience time in quiet environments, with the opportunity to hear each other and their teachers well, and listen to the quiet sounds of nature, like grasshoppers, wind in the branches, and falling leaves - which they cannot experience in their noisy, overflowed playgrounds.

Thousands of children endure their school days under Heathrow flight paths, often subjected to very high levels of noise from planes overhead. 33,000 children in one neighbouring borough, alone, have diminished use of their school grounds owing to overflying. (London Borough of Hounslow head of children's services 2009). Hearing the sounds of birdsong, grasshoppers, water flowing, or wind rustling in trees is a rare experience when the natural sounds are drowned out by noise.

Soundscape wants the children to have the right to be heard, and to hear sounds of nature in a quiet setting. They have located Minet Park in Hillingdon, a short journey away, and so far two school trips have been carried out -both deemed to be a great success. More on Soundscape at <http://bit.ly/ny4ww2>

Useful Info

- For up to date news see **AirportWatch's** news pages <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/news/index.php>
- News and analysis on the **AEF** website at <http://www.aef.org.uk>
- For websites of **airport-related groups** and other organisations <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/links.php>
- For a daily update on aviation and transport news from national and local media, go to www.transportinfo.org.uk
- How to really offset the climate change impact of your flight: www.ThinkBeforeYouFly.com
- Flights emissions calculator <http://calculator.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx?tab=3>
- Weekly update by IATA on jet fuel price. <http://bit.ly/gCtAnD>
- Guardian Climate Change page at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/climate-change>

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Bulletin compiled by Sarah Clayton - with thanks to many people for their help, guidance and contributions 13.10.2011
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