

Read this if you are a European citizen concerned with aviation and your environment

Are you concerned about airport expansion, bothered by aircraft noise, worried about the ever growing climate impact of aviation?

NOW YOU can do something about it!

For yourself, for your children, for your neighbourhood, for all people threatened by noise and climate change!

In November 2004 a new European Commission started its work. NOW is the chance to influence the European Agenda for the next five years ! The coming years will be crucial! If we do not ACT NOW, the growth of airports and (low cost) airlines will continue and the impact on noise levels and climate impact will get worse.

And you are not alone! All over Europe, people suffer and people protest. Together we WILL make the difference! Environmental organisations and citizens groups have recently agreed to jointly ask the EU to make aviation sustainable.

YOU and all other activists in Europe are asked to write to the European Commission about your concerns! There are four important issues: 1) It is important that you write your own personal – handwritten?- letter about your personal, local problems with aviation. 2) We all will ask for a decent aviation policy regarding climate change 3) We all will ask for a ban on night flights. 4) It is crucial that you ask for a personal reply within 3 weeks to your questions!

Read this if you are a local citizens group or environmental organisation

Around almost all airports in Europe there are major problems due to the growth of aviation. The climate impact of aviation is growing at a very fast pace! This industry must –also- be controlled on a European Level. No one can do that alone, but together we are strong! Millions of European citizens suffer from the problems of aviation!

Studies from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom show that a majority of the population wants to end the tax exemptions for aviation. All major environmental organisations support this demand. They want the EU to incorporate aviation in its climate policy.

Your group or organisation is crucial in this campaign!

To make our voice heard in Brussels we need you to participate.

Write a letter yourself, send this call to all your individual members! Motivate your individual members to participate and ask each of them to write a personal (!!) letter to the EU.

When many citizens show that they think the subject is important, the EU WILL act.

YOUR ORGANISATION IS CRUCIAL !

If you want to receive the free GreenSkies Newsletter, please ask us via info@greenskies.org

If you can help us translate this call for action into your language, please contact us at info@greenskies.org
The translations will be put on www.GreenSkies.org

Aviation and Environment, background-info

Aviation is growing again at 4 to 5 % a year. In North-West Europe, aviation is already responsible for 10% of the climate change...!! If this growth continues , by 2030 aviation will be a bigger source of climate change than all cars, trucks, busses and trains combined ! We want the European Union to include aviation in its climate policy !

Notwithstanding the growing impacts, in every European countries there are plans to extend runways, airports, to convert small (ex-military) airport to bigger ones, in order to cater for the growth. Despite promises of quieter airplanes, the number of Europeans that suffer from loss of sleep and the sickening impact of air noise is still rising! A study by Gent University showed that noise stress from Zaventem Airport was related to 200 premature deaths each year. At the expense of the local population around each location, airports compete amongst themselves for the supply of night slots in order to attract even more night operations. We want ourselves and our children to be able to sleep between 23:00 and 07:00 !! We want a ban on night flights in this period!

Individual European Countries are hesitant to protect their citizens against the noise problems, the expansion plans and the climate problem. They fear other countries will get a 'competition disadvantage'. That is why the EU must act ! And **NOW** is the opportunity to ask the new Commission and the new Parliament to introduce firm measures on a European level within this new term.

The aim of this joint European Letter Writing Action Campaign is that as many as possible Europeans write a PERSONAL letter to the European Commission and/or the European Parliament. The more personal, the better. Write about YOUR problems. ASK what the EU is going to do for you! Below you find an example text, please alter it to make it YOUR PERSONAL LETTER!

IMPORTANT HINTS TO MAKE YOUR LETTER EFFECTIVE:

1. Try to make it YOUR OWN PERSONAL LETTER, describe YOUR (local, regional) problem.
 - If you have a nice handwriting, consider writing the letter by hand, it will stand out !
2. Ask for a concrete reply within three weeks, to prevent your letter from being ignored !
 - Don't forget to include your own address ;-)
3. In each letter we suggest that all of us also ask the EU to:
 - Stop the ever growing climate impact of Aviation
 - Introduce a night ban on landings and take-offs between 23:00 and 07:00
4. Send your personal letter –as soon as possible- to one of the people indicated below. If you have more time, send your personal letter to both the Commission and to the Parliament.

Dear <pick a name from the list below>

I live in ... near ... airport, <Describe here in maximum three paragraphs your (children's, neighbour's) personal problems with aviation in your neighbourhood. Ask a question that requires a specific response!>

Air travel is sometimes necessary for essential contacts, but the current amount of air travel places a high – and rapidly increasing- burden on the lives of many citizens, the European environment and the global atmosphere. Air travel is an industry where regulation has only really seemed possible on the European level - for the last decade progress towards a sustainable industry on the global level has been virtually null. Therefore I ask you to incorporate a vigorous work program on Air Travel and Environment in the upcoming five year Work Program of the European Commission.

Also I have some questions which I would like you to answer:

Climate Change

Aviation is a major and fast growing climate problem. Without measures, the growth of aviation's climate emissions will outstrip much of the progress made elsewhere. At the ICAO meeting, the European Union succeeded in keeping open the door towards the introduction of efficient economic instruments after 2007. I want Europe to incorporate aviation into its climate policy! I want you to stop the (hidden) subsidies and tax exemptions. I want you to take the appropriate measures to stop the growth of the climate impact of aviation. Can you please write me what you personally and what your organisation is going to do about this?

Noise

The Noise Directive is a first step but not enough to create a level playing field for European Airports. I want you to develop and enforce a policy that guarantees equal rights on silence for citizens living around airports across Europe. I want me, my family and neighbours to be able to sleep at least 8 hours per night! I want you to include an European wide ban on nightlights between 23:00 and 07:00 in this policy. Can you please write me what you personally and what your organisation is going to do about this?

Airport Subsidies and tax breaks

Local and regional authorities as well as member states often financially support airport developers and airline companies. Also the aviation industry still enjoys the tax breaks on fuel and pay no VAT. This overstimulates the growth. What will you and what will your organisation do to stop these unsustainable subsidies of mainly holiday flights?

I would appreciate to receive your reply within three weeks,

Kind regards,

<Name>,

<Address>

<Country>

List of names and addresses:

Direct your letter to:

Mr. Barrot,
Commissioner for Transport
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels,
Belgium

Alternatives in the Commission:
(Same Address)

-Mr. Dimas,
Commissioner for Environment
-Mrs Wallstrom,
Commissioner for Communication

Or at the European Parliament:

Mr. Costa,
Chair Transport committee
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60
B-1047 Brussels, Belgium

Alternatives in the European Parliament:
(Same Address)

-Mr. Florenz
Chair Environment committee
- Mrs. Berés
Chair Economic committee

And you can write also to a Member of the European Parliament from your country. The address is the same and a list of names of all members from your country can be found at www.GreenSkies.org/ep

**Help each other to
Change the Future...**

**Twenty minutes of
your time WILL make
the difference...**

**Don't put off to tomorrow,
what you can do today!**