



Check out the website for more resources and today's slides

<https://conferences.ncl.ac.uk/hopenoheat2025/>

Climate Anxiety and Green Careers

Environment and Earth Society

Who Are We?

- Stage 3 Earth Science Students
- From Environment and Earth Society



What is Climate Anxiety?

- Fear and worry experienced linked to climate change
- Common among young people
- 56%* of young people think humanity is doomed!
- Yet many climate scientists think doomerism is dangerous and delays action

- If you are struggling with climate anxiety there are online resources
 - <https://blog.calm.com/blog/eco-anxiety-coping-tips>
 - <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/climate-anxiety-resources-to-energise-action/>

* Out of 10,000 respondents aged 16-25 in 10 countries

Source: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(21\)00278-3/fulltext#:~:text=Climate%20change%20has%20important%20implications%20for%20the%20health,its%20harm%2C%20making%20them%20vulnerable%20to%20climate%20anxiety.](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(21)00278-3/fulltext#:~:text=Climate%20change%20has%20important%20implications%20for%20the%20health,its%20harm%2C%20making%20them%20vulnerable%20to%20climate%20anxiety.)

Climate change: Young people very worried - survey

© 14 September 2021



GETTY IMAGES

Over half of those surveyed said they thought humanity was doomed and that governments were failing to respond adequately

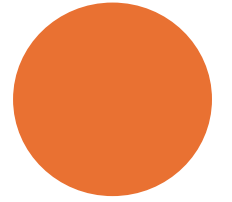
My Experience



- I first started to experience climate anxiety at the end of 2019 when watching the Black Summer bushfires in Australia on TV
- I remember starting to feel a sense of despair and hopelessness
- It got worse during the first lockdown
- But in the course of a year I overcame it!

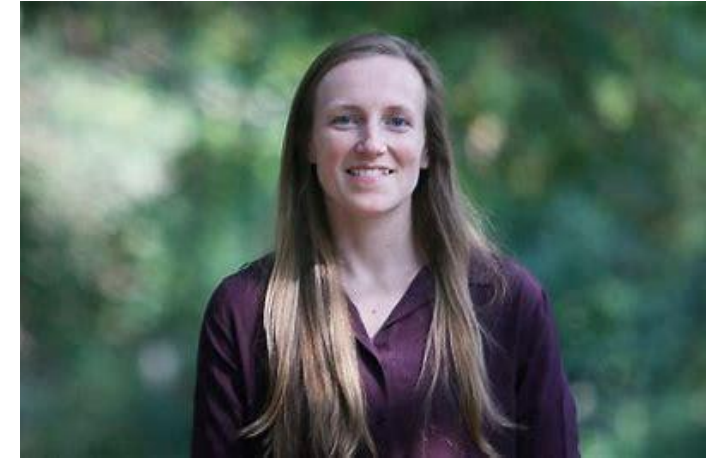
How?

- I started to learn more about climate science at school and through my own research
- Then I started to learn about climate solutions
- Includes more 'unique' ones such as biochar, carbon removal and girls' education
- Light bulb moment where I realised that things can be done about this and how this linked to what I wanted to study
- I'm now writing my dissertation on a climate solution
- Website Happy Eco News shows some of the positive things happening
<https://happyeconews.com/>

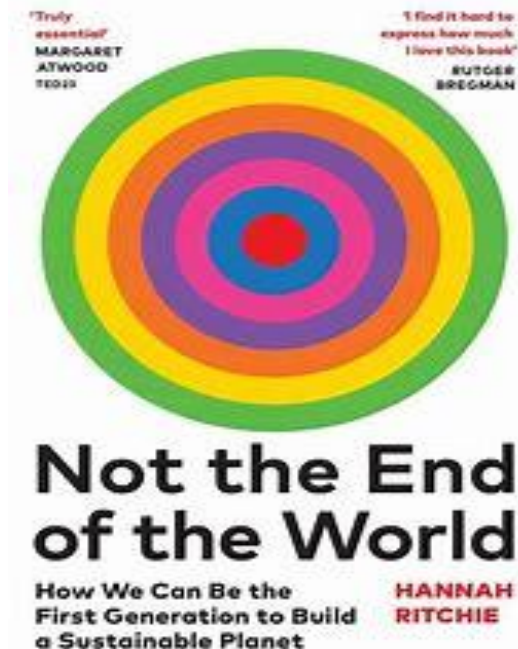


Not the Only Story – Meet Hannah Ritchie

- Scientists themselves have gone through feelings of hopelessness and now advocate against ‘doomerism’
- Dr Hannah Ritchie is a data scientist and science communicator
- At university used to feel anxious and hopeless about climate change
- This changed when she discovered the work of Hans Rosling (Swedish physician and statistician) who used data to show how the world was improving (check out Gapminder - <https://www.gapminder.org/>)
- Now advocates for hope using data
- Read her excellent book ‘Not the End of the World’



Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/future/article/20240206-hannah-ritchie-sustainability-data-spreads-hope-not-doomism>

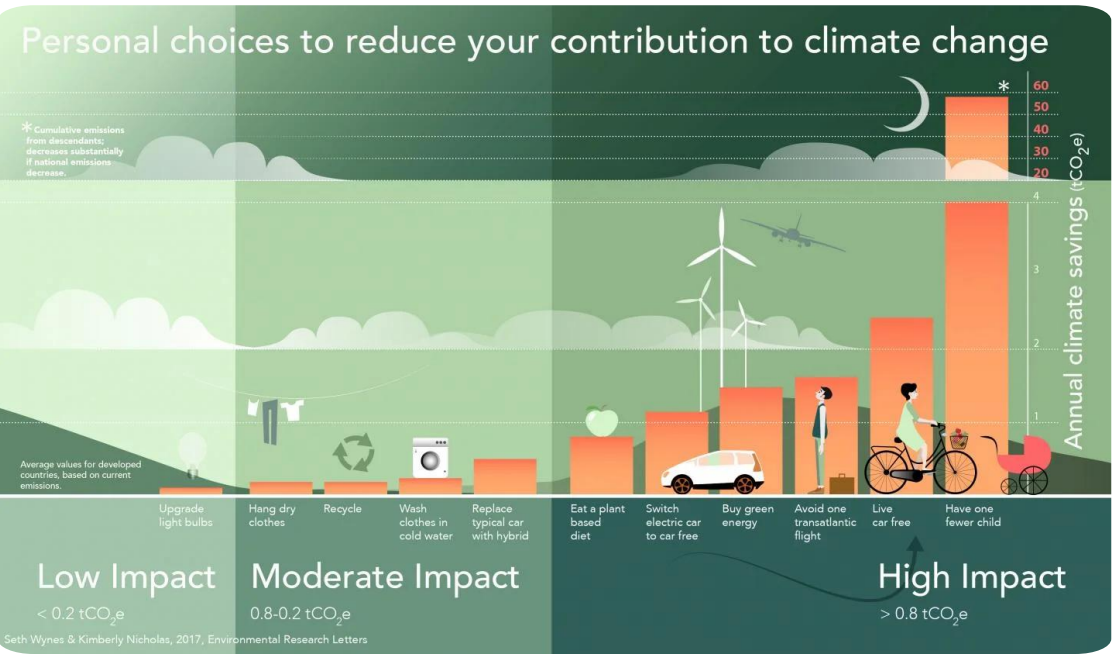


What Can be Done? Individual vs Systematic Action



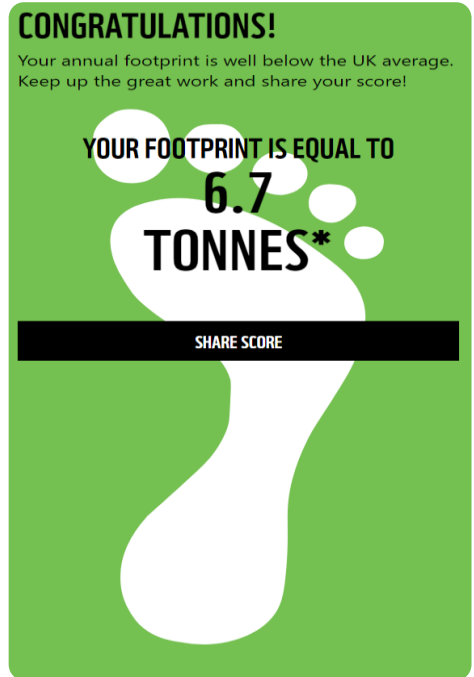
- We need both as they go hand in hand!
- Corporations and governments need to be held accountable
- However individual action important as society is made up of individuals
- Surveys show our actions can influence others to make change

Source: <https://www.climateworks>,
<https://theconversation.com/climate-change-yes-your-individual-action-does-make-a-difference-115169>

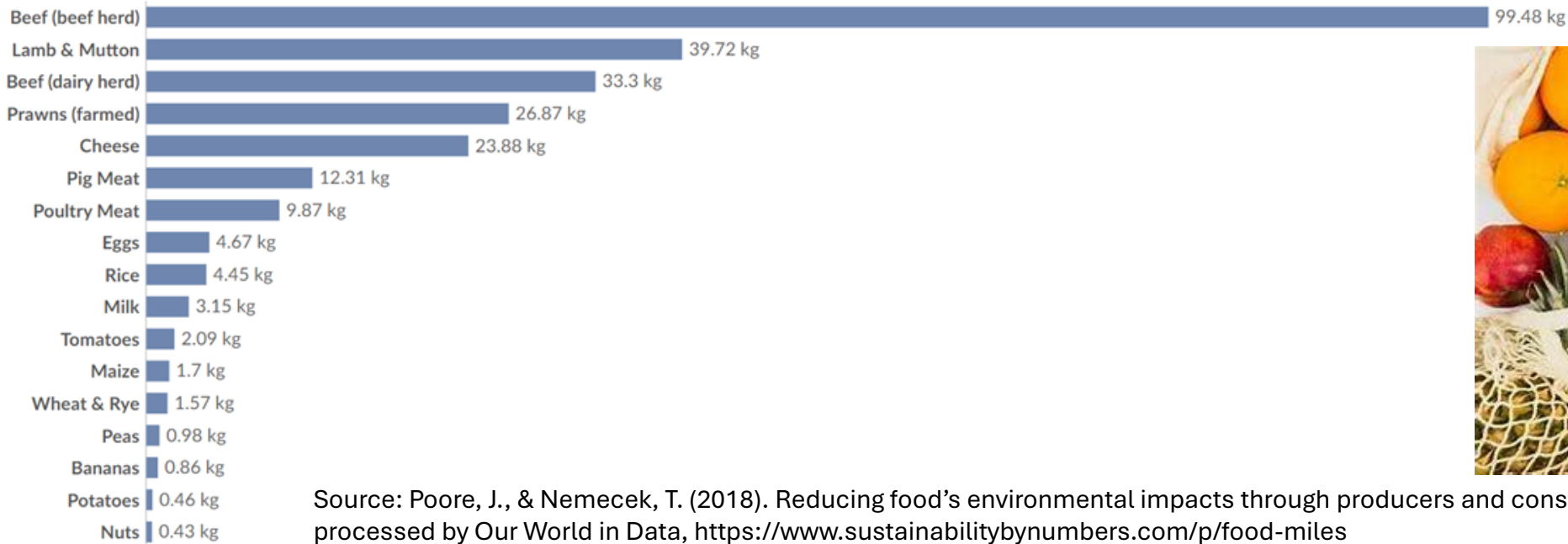


Meaningful Actions to Take

- We need systematic change too but you can still reduce your carbon footprint (controversial term as promoted by BP)
- Can calculate carbon footprint <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>
- On the website John (organiser) has a list of suggestions <https://conferences.ncl.ac.uk/hopenoheat2025/getinvolved/>
- Some actions more impactful than others and these actions have additional benefits
- Having conversions with people to challenge status quo can help normalise change in behaviour
- You don't have to be a 'perfect environmentalist' to make a difference – you literally just need to be a human living on this planet



Food

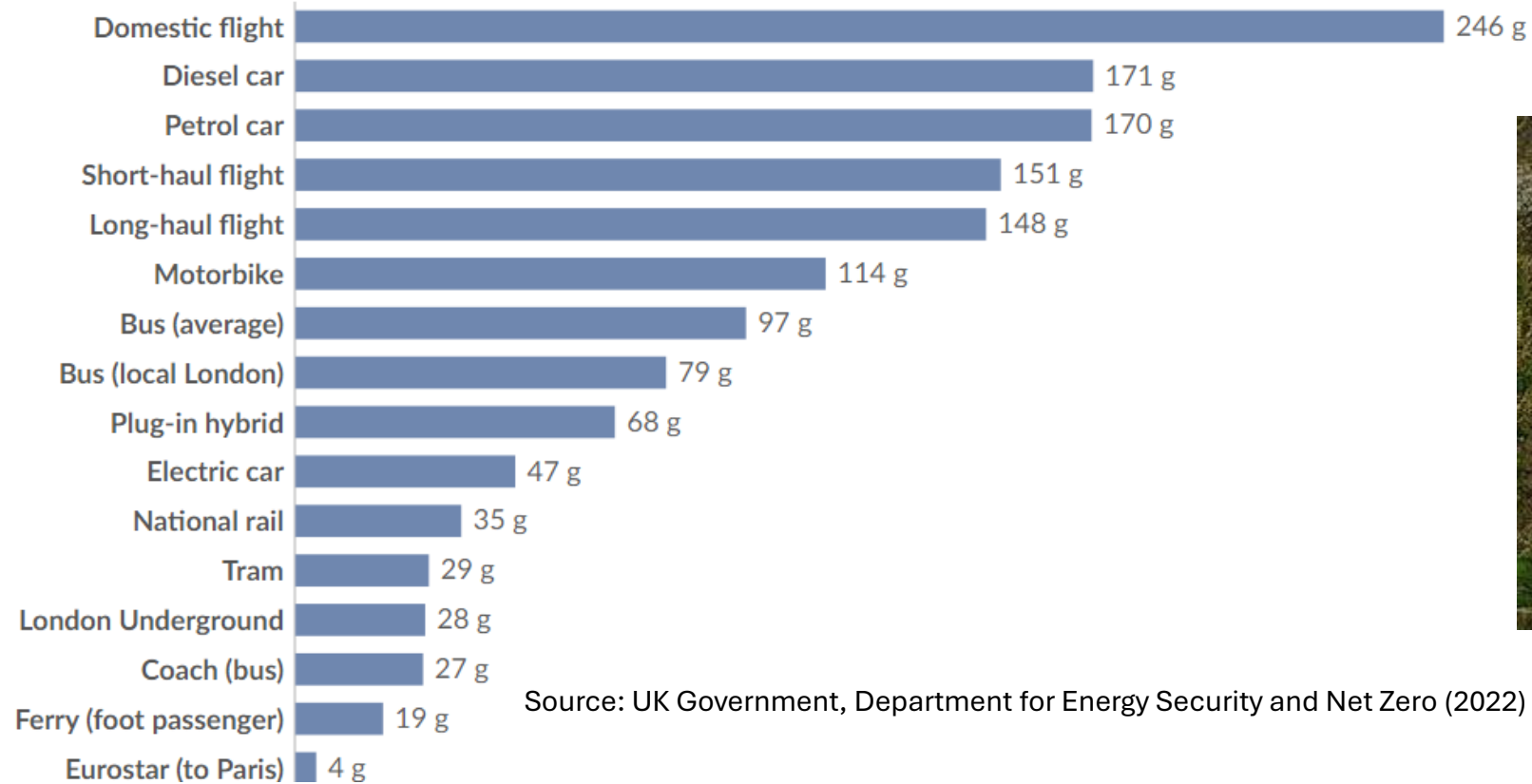


Source: Poore, J., & Nemecek, T. (2018). Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. *Science*. – processed by Our World in Data, <https://www.sustainabilitybynumbers.com/p/food-miles>



- Generally, plant-based food has a lower carbon footprint
- What you eat is more important than where it comes from as emissions from transport low due to shipping over flying (Hannah Ritchie)
- Make gradual changes and try sustainable swaps
- Reduce food waste

Transport



Source: UK Government, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2022) – processed by Our World in Data

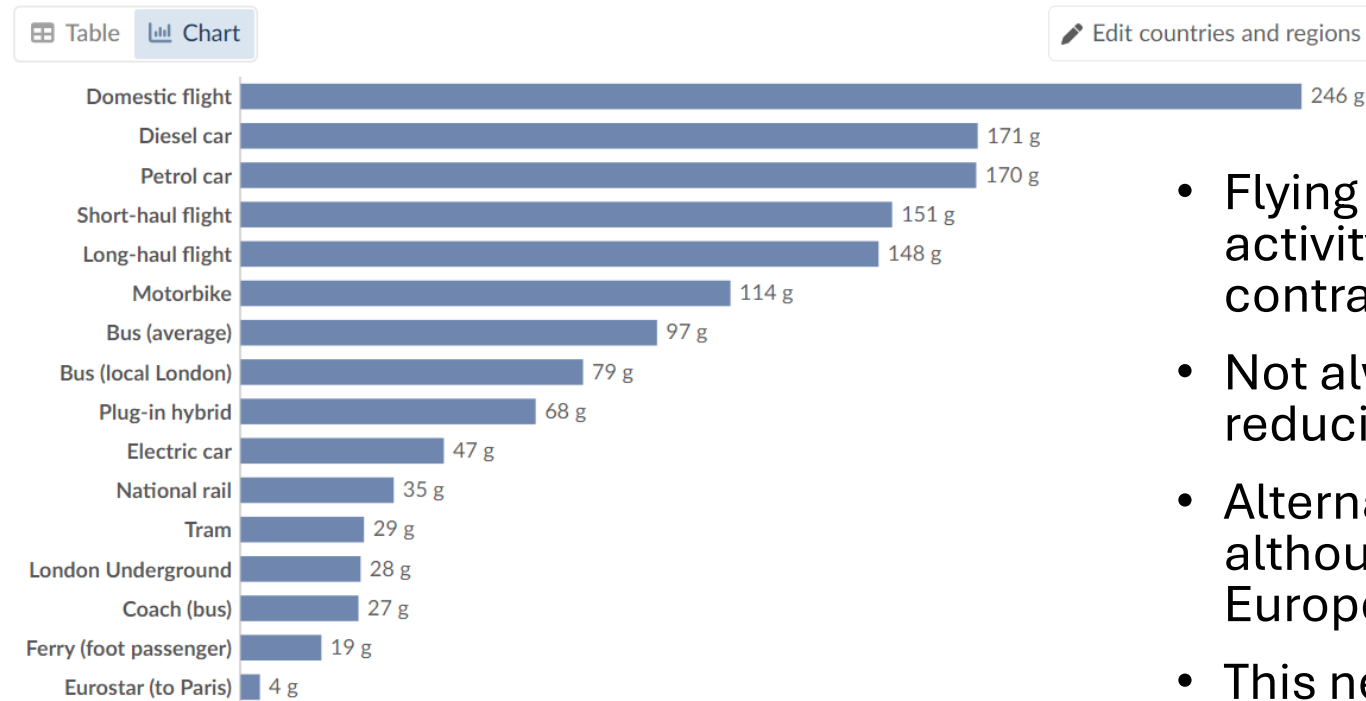


- If possible use public transport
- If you need to use a car can consider using joining a ‘car club’ such as Co-wheels

Carbon footprint of travel per kilometer, 2022

The carbon footprint of travel is measured in grams of carbon dioxide-equivalents per passenger kilometer. This includes the impact of increased warming from aviation emissions at altitude.

Our World
in Data

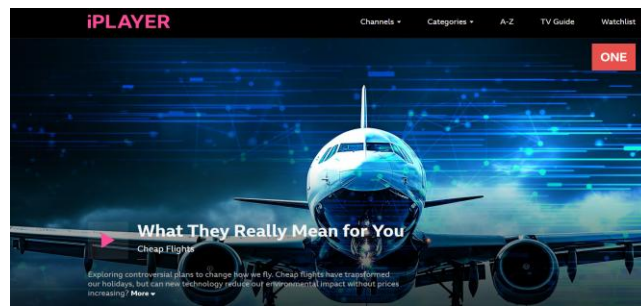


Flying

- Flying most carbon intensive individual activity (with significant climate impact from contrails)
- Not always possible to give up flying but reducing number of flights a positive action
- Alternative ways of travelling emit much less although can be expensive – taking train to Europe can be x4 times cost of flying
- This needs to change at a political level – tax on kerosene, make train travel cheaper etc

Source: UK Government, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2022) – processed by Our World in Data

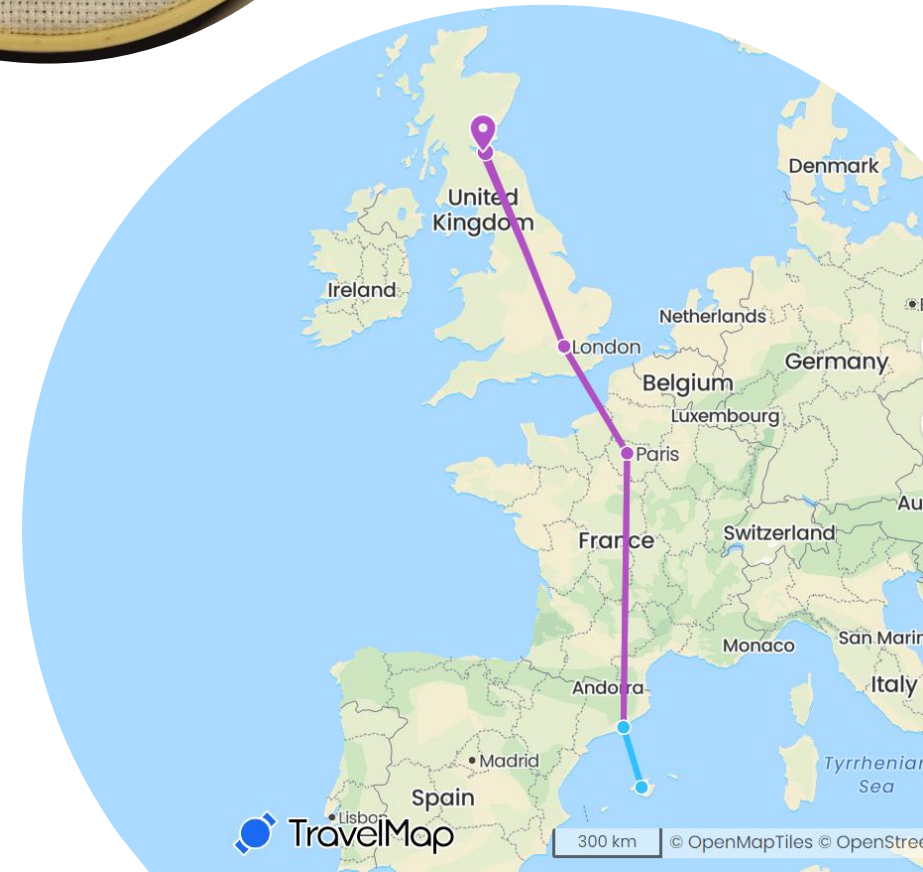
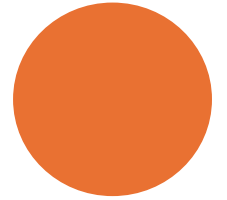
Source: <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/cheap-pollution-means-taking-the-train-to-europe-is-four-times-the-cost-of-flying-report/>

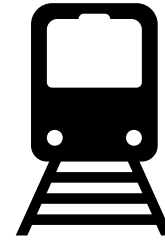


<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m001zq7n/what-they-really-mean-for-you-cheap-flights>

My Own Flight-Free Adventure

- Dragged my poor mum from Edinburgh – Majorca (included going to ABBA Voyage) and back without flying in summer 2023
- 0.102t of CO₂ compared to 0.769t of CO₂ (about 7.5x less emissions not flying)
- In addition to emissions saving was an amazing experience and we saw so much more!





We Also Need Systematic Change

- For systematic changes in the way our society is run and to move to a sustainable world we need to hold those in power accountable
- Whilst we can take individual action, we can't individually change the price of climate solutions, energy systems, make all concrete 'green' etc
- Vote at the ballot box and (if you can) with your wallet (kurzgesagt video)



Can YOU Fix Climate Change?

13.6M views · 22 Sep 2021

YouTube › Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell

https://youtu.be/yiw6_JakZFc

Change can be made but...

UK to finish with coal power after 142 years



PA MEDIA
The UK's last coal plant, Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station near Nottingham, ends operations on Monday



GOV.UK

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Written statement to Parliament

Phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and support for zero emission vehicle (ZEV) transition

Our transition plans promise cleaner air and quieter streets, enhancing the quality of life in our communities.

From: [Department for Transport](#) and [Heidi Alexander MP](#)

Published 6 January 2025

- Current action not good enough – existing policies globally would lead to 2.7°C and pledges and targets would lead to 2.1°C (Climate Action Tracker)
- But it's not game over when Paris Agreement goals of 1.5°C or 2°C reached! Every fraction of a degree matters!

Source: <https://climateactiontracker.org/publications/the-climate-crisis-worsens-the-warming-outlook-stagnates/>



We MUST make changes...

Let's see what you guys do for the environment.

We need a Social Revolution.

You MUST:

- Travel with 0 emissions
- Pledge to eliminate fossil fuel use
- Donate
- Vote



But this isn't necessarily the case...

The top results when you search 'how to save the planet' all have these overarching themes of complete lifestyle changes and pledges both politically and economically.

But this is where climate anxiety comes from...

Whilst these things are true...

Personal changes to our lifestyles are hugely important, but we can't forget that the backbone of the modern world is built on industrial revolutions.

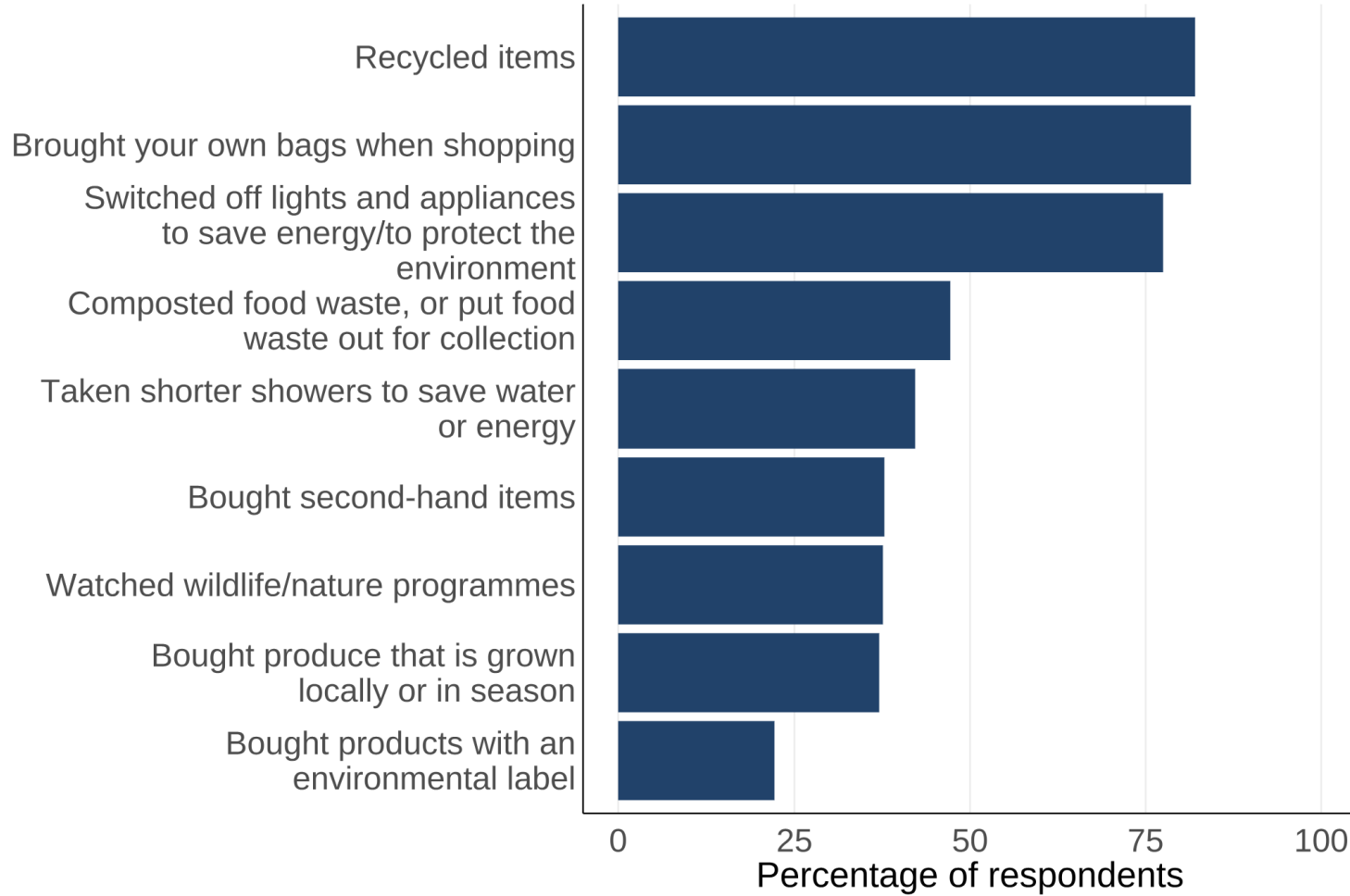
Our whole world is built around fossil fuels, its difficult to move away from them...



We don't need a **REVOLUTION** we need **EVOLUTION**

Change can't just come from individuals it has to come from all of us, and the change won't be brought about by telling people what they need to change.

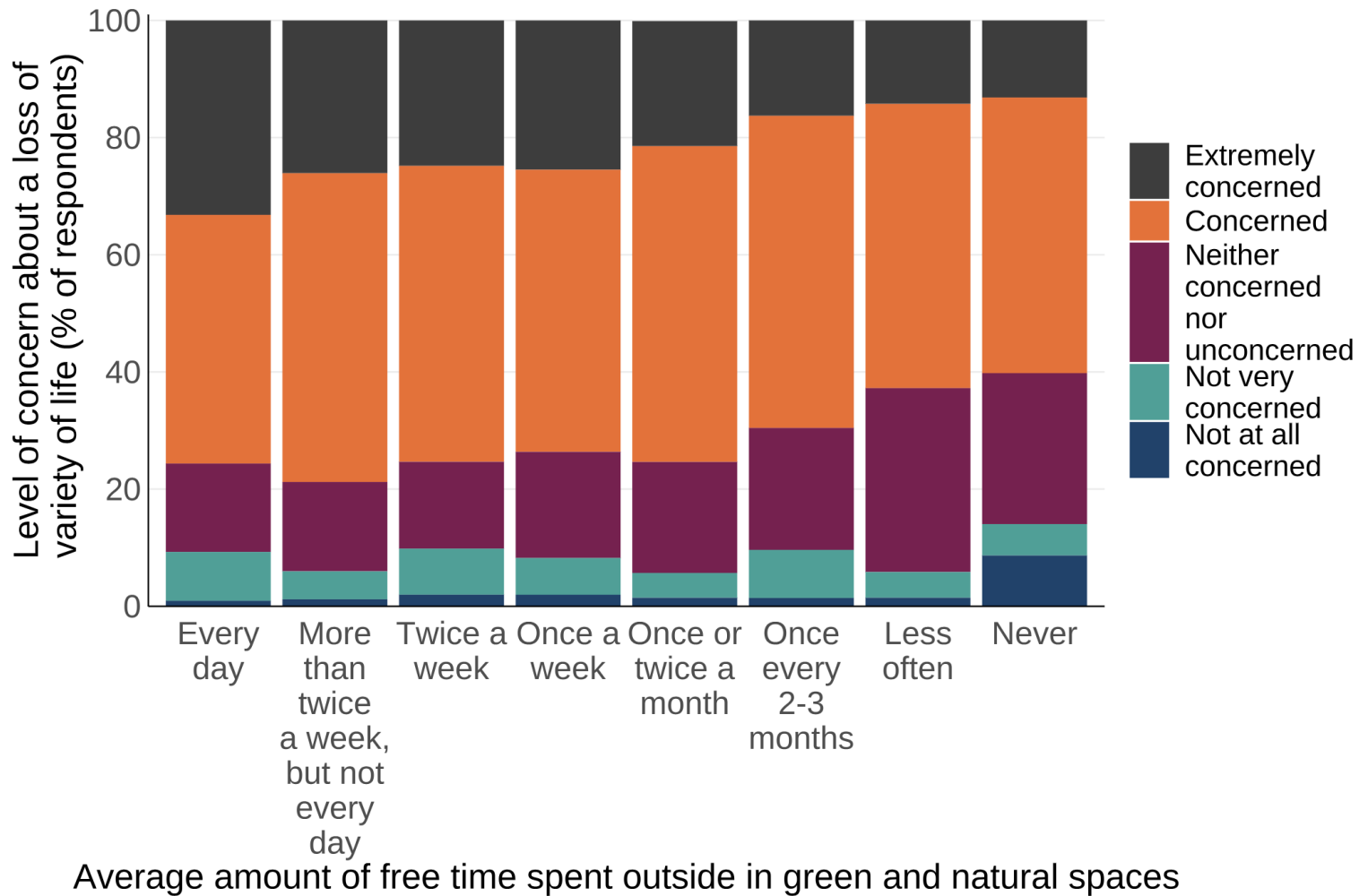
The biggest hurdle to overcome is education and understanding.



Public surveys

These public statistics from gov.uk show the full story...

~75% of people make small contributions whilst <50% take more major and routine changing actions.



More public surveys

Equally this graph shows that people who spend more time in green spaces express more concern about the loss of biodiversity.

So really, do we need to tell people what to do to save the planet, or teach people about the planet that needs them?



So why is it like
this?

The information for ways to make positive environmental changes is readily available, but why do such small proportions of people adhere to them?

Many people don't feel like their contributions make a difference. Or even more so, they don't see it.



How can we see our difference?

There are many sources which report positive news on the environment, many of which don't make it to the mainstream media.

- <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/climate-anxiety-resources-to-energise-action/>
- <https://happyeconews.com/>
- <https://www.dailyclimate.org/Good-News/>

These along with educating people on how their changes make an impact can help bring around a change in perception about environmental change.



Green Careers

Equally, anyone can play their part by educating themselves on and considering green careers.

There is a huge array of environmentally positive roles in careers that cover all backgrounds, allowing you to make a change and craft your future.

Why are these important?

The green sector plays a critical role in protecting the planet and addressing pressing global challenges, prioritising creating opportunities for all backgrounds.

These careers prioritise sustainability, environmental protection and mitigating carbon footprint. Working a career, and specialising in one of the many fields applicable, means people can contribute to real solutions and foster a sense of purpose and hope.

Where can I find a green career for me

We all know telling people what to do has the adverse effect, but if you are interested there's tons of sources and opportunities available. A great website I've found is:
<https://www.greencareershub.com/find-your-green-role/job-profiles/>

They provide in depth profiles of careers and green rolls that you can pursue, including salary ranges, descriptions, and any qualifications you need.

It's not just about tackling climate change...

- It's about building a better future and the world we want to live in

