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Aviation and climate change

New EU air control system SESAR

Commenting on today's vote in the European Parliament, **UK Green MEP** and rapporteur for the EP on climate change and aviation, **Caroline Lucas** said:

"**Aviation is the fastest growing source of climate change,** with flights set to double by 2020. Equipping air traffic management systems to play a role in reducing the climate damage of airlines is an important concrete step in combating climate change and we welcome today's EP vote, which supported Green proposals to this end.

"Under the proposals adopted by the EP, t**he new EU air traffic management system (SESAR) would be given competences in the area of speed control to reduce fuel consumption** and, consequently, emissions. In addition, SESAR would integrate cooperation with meteorological services to limit the overall climate impact of airlines: this would include using meteorological forecasts to help select flight paths (altitudes) that would limit the extent of vapour contrails (1).

"The rapidly growing climatic impact of aviation is undermining progress made in reducing emissions from other sectors and the EU needs to do all it can to address this. **While introducing a separate emissions trading scheme (with rigorous caps) and a kerosene tax must be priorities**, the EU should do all within its power combat the climate threat of aviation. Air traffic management clearly has an important role to play in this regard."

(1) The impact from aviation on climate change is far from confined to its growing CO2-emissions. Pollution of the highly sensitive stratosphere contributes considerably to the destruction of the ozone layer. The damage caused by H2O or vapour contrails (such as building artificial cirrus clouds) is affected by prevalent meteorological conditions.

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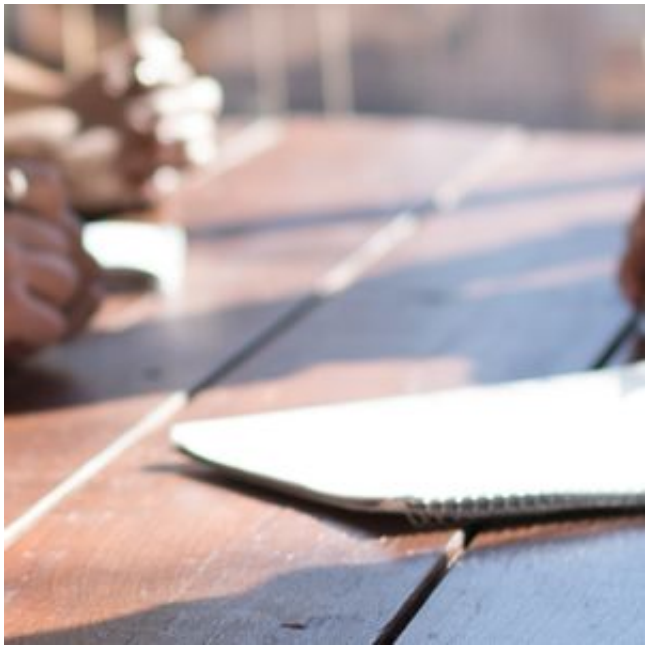
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