[Making polluters pay for emissions would raise £80 billion a year for the UK, Green Party says](#)

11 June 2021

- **Ahead of the G7 leaders' summit, Greens urge UK government to show real action on climate change and adopt carbon tax and dividend proposal**
- **Jonathan Bartley: "The world's scientists are telling us that we have to cut fossil fuel usage far more quickly than we are doing at the moment. But we also know that if fossil fuels remain falsely cheap, they will continue to be burned"**

The Green Party has urged the UK government to show true leadership ahead of the G7 leaders' summit and commit to making major polluters pay for the damaging greenhouse gases they emit.

The Greens have calculated the UK government would raise around £80 billion of revenue a year if it adopted the party's proposal for a carbon tax and dividend.

The party estimates the UK will be responsible for around 800 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent in 2021 [1]. Its proposal for a carbon tax and dividend, starting at £100 per tonne of CO_2e, would mean up to £80 billion would be generated, which could then be used to invest in the big changes needed for a rapid transition to a zero carbon economy, and to support UK residents through the transition. [2]

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said:

"This really is crunch time for the climate. As the world comes out of the pandemic, we urgently need to make far-reaching changes at an international level that can help avoid a much worse, and irreversible, catastrophe. The G7 needs to show that it's more than just a cosy and very expensive club for the leaders of the richest nations.

"The world's scientists are telling us that we have to cut fossil fuel usage far more quickly than we're doing at the moment. But we also know that if fossil fuels remain falsely cheap, they will continue to be burned."

Figures from the insurance industry and the Royal Society of Physicians indicate that the combined costs of flood and storm damage, together with the effects of air pollution from fossil fuels, added up to more than £23 billion for the UK alone [3]. The figure for the world as a whole is estimated at more than £2 trillion. [4]

Bartley said:

"One crucial part of the solution is an internationally agreed framework of carbon tax — in other words, tax paid by the producers of fossil fuels and applied at the point of extraction or import.

"The big producers of oil and gas have made massive profits from pouring greenhouse gases into the world's atmosphere — the top four oil companies alone have made more than $2 trillion in profit since 1990.

"Meanwhile, the damage to people's health, homes and livelihoods continues to climb ever higher. This has to stop if billions of people around the world are to have any chance of a viable future."

ENDS

Notes

1

The Green Party has calculated the UK will be responsible for around 800 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent in 2021 — 520m tonnes of production emissions, including aviation and shipping; an additional 30m tonnes for the high altitude factor on aviation; and 302m tonnes from imports.

2

The Green Party included its carbon tax and dividend in its 10 point climate plan published last year: https://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/files/Communications/10_Point_Climate_Plan.pdf

3

Catastrophe insurance data provider PERILS estimates the total cost of wind and flood damage during the 2019/2020 UK winter at approximately £778 million:

https://www.reinsurancene.ws/perils-sets-final-368mn-estimate-for-feb-2020-uk-floods/

The Royal College of Physicians report, "Reducing air pollution in the UK: Progress report 2018" calculated the total annual health and societal costs of air pollution in the UK at £22.6 billion:

https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/outdoor-air-quality-uk-position-statement#footnote4_21geeyb

4

Greenpeace estimates the total cost of air pollution globally (in terms of cost to health services, lost economic activity etc) as $2.9 trillion, or just over £2 trillion.

https://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaign/tracking-cost-air-pollution/

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