

I worked in the aviation industry, as cabin crew for 10 years until 2017. During this time I studied an environmental studies degree and could not believe how bad our environmental problems were. Luckily this shook me to move away from this horribly destructive industry, retrain and search for new work. I no longer fly.

Firstly I want to mention waste, on particular, plastic waste. When you work on a plane you get a different perspective of the sheer scale of plastic waste accumulated on a single flight. It is incredible. The waste from one long haul flight can fill a whole truck! And that's just one flight. We are at crisis point with plastic waste and this expansion will just increase it. None of this gets recycled and it ends up in our oceans, in landfill, in our biosphere or burned with pollutants loaded into the atmosphere.

This is just one example of a direct negative impact of this expansion which will barely even be thought about or discussed. It is a problem created by this industry but not addressed by the industry. It is an externality. This industry is very happy to use our World as a dumping ground and not take responsibility for the problems it creates.

Our atmosphere is the biggest dumping ground of them all for the airline industry and there is very little sign this will change. Ever. This expansion plan is jam packed full of all the best greenwashing tricks with fantastical statements about emissions reductions, environmental protection and carbon neutrality. Its all pure rubbish.

It is this mentality of dumping on our world which makes me so angry because we are only just beginning to see the start of the effects of climate change in this country. We have only really recently started to see the effects of climate change in the global North such as the wild fires in the States and Australia and floods in Germany. But these negative effects have been experienced for a very long time in the global south.

It this this point I am about to make which I need you to hear. When you hear this I need you to engage with it emotionally. I need you to use some empathy here.

Following paragraph in brackets not read but spoken from my heart.....

(Wife's grandmother, farm in Kenya. Locusts. No food. Heat more than you can imagine. Uncomfortably hot. Heatwaves have caused DEATH here. Direct effect of our carbon footprints in the global North. HERE. Because of this infinite expansion mentality.)

You are making decisions in this room that could either save life or end it. You are making decisions on this room that can indirectly cause death and suffering. You need to understand this. I am the direct link here between us in this privileged part of the world and those lies privileged elsewhere in the world. Here, this is a regional development plan with environmental problems. In the global south, this expansion is murder.

This industry is completely incompatible with the fight for a clean, safe climate.

The expansion would be akin to a green light to new fossil fuel extraction projects in the year when the UK should be leading the way with tackling the climate emergency as they host COP26. The science is clear that this cannot happen but at the very least, this would damage the government's credentials and make a mockery of their position of environmental leadership.

When will it stop? When will enough be enough. Its just not needed. Airline staff in this country are still furloughed with no sign of things changing any time soon so this doesn't even make financial sense. The demand simply isn't there. People simply do not even want this expansion. What is it about this that isn't being understood?

This expansion must not happen