

DRAGON HALL

"The predominant moral issue of the 21st century, almost surely, will be climate change, comparable to Nazism faced by Churchill in the 20th century and slavery faced by Lincoln in the 19th century. Our fossil fuel addiction, if unabated, threatens our children and grandchildren, and most species on the planet."

James Hansen Climate Scientist – NASA

The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany estimates that humans must not emit more than 1 trillion tonnes of CO₂ into the atmosphere if we are to have a 50% chance of limiting global warming to 2°C. We have already emitted 500 billion tonnes and on current trajectory, will exhaust the “carbon budget for the human race” by 2040. Attempts to limit the average global temperature rise to 2°C necessitates an upper limit of 750 billion tonnes of CO₂ by 2050. If that global allowance were distributed according to population levels, many developed nations, including the UK, would face almost immediate CO₂ bankruptcy.

In historical terms, the UK's emissions are the second highest in the world and only just below those of the United States. The rich (long-industrialised) countries have far more to cut than the majority world. They possess infrastructure and wealth achieved by burning fossil fuels over the past 100 years and the capacity to invest in low-carbon technologies for the future.

Historical responsibility for climate change rests overwhelmingly on the long-industrialised world, while it is the majority world that will be hit hardest by the consequences of inaction. One of the factors, in terms of building design, is how the rich world is obsessed with maintaining hugely inefficient buildings with little or no regard for the terrifying human and environmental impacts that this is having on the poor and the future.