



Written by [James Murphy](#) on January 17, 2022

Climate Hypocrisy: EU Carbon-pricing Scheme Exempts Emissions From Luxury Yachts

The European Union's "Fit for 55" climate agenda has the ambitious goal of slashing carbon emissions by 55 percent by the year 2030 as part of Europe's Green Deal. But environmental groups are upset over certain omissions to the carbon-pricing scheme, which will apparently allow the owners of private yachts to keep emitting carbon tax-free.

According to a [study](#) by Transport and Environment (T&E) — an umbrella group of several NGOs promoting so-called sustainable approaches to transport and shipping in the E.U. — a key carve-out in the new Emissions Trading System (ETS) will allow a great deal of maritime vessels, including private luxury yachts, to go on emitting carbon without paying their "fair share" of carbon taxes.



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The new lower GHG fuel standard will only apply to vessels above 5,000 gross tonnage (GT). Vessels under that weight would include fishing vessels, tourist boats and, yes, private luxury yachts.

"T&E study shows that EU Commission proposals to bring shipping into the bloc's carbon market contain exemptions that would leave millions of tonnes of CO₂ emissions unregulated," T&E tweeted on January 13.

In another tweet, T&E explained that this loophole would allow some 20 percent of shipping emissions to remain unregulated and means that approximately 25 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions — roughly the same amount that Denmark emits annually — would go untaxed by the EU.

"Loopholes in the EU's proposed carbon pricing for shipping would mean that some 25 million tonnes of CO₂ are exempt," T&E wrote. "This would leave roughly 20% of shipping emissions unregulated, including high emitting vessels servicing offshore oil and gas, as well as yachts."

"It's good that the EU is finally trying to address shipping's appalling climate impact. But its proposal based on arbitrary loopholes lets too many heavily polluting vessels off the hook," said Jacob Armstrong, the sustainable shipping officer for T&E.

"The EU must rethink its shipping laws to ensure that millions of tonnes of CO₂ don't go unregulated." Armstrong said.

The European Commission, which wrote the proposal, claims that the 5,000 GT threshold is meant to



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minimize administrative burden for companies for companies with smaller ships — especially for small and medium-sized companies. A European Commission official was quoted by Reuters, saying that the tonnage limit was made “without jeopardizing the objective to cover the vast majority of greenhouse gas emissions from the sector.”

You could almost understand such a position if the gross tonnage limit of 5,000 GT excluded pleasure boats such as yachts from the carve-out. Including pleasure boats seems to be nothing more than a concession that Europe’s elites are giving to themselves.

And if that wasn’t enough climate hypocrisy for you, consider that aviation fuel, as of now, still enjoys an exemption from the EU’s ETS system. A new fee will, reportedly, be “phased in” for passenger flights, including ones that carry cargo, but, as with the yachts, private jets may not be included.

[Zero Hedge](#) reports: “Private jets will enjoy an exemption through classification of ‘business aviation’ as the use of aircraft by firms for carriage of passengers or goods as an ‘aid to the conduct of their business’, if generally considered not for public hire. It gets better: a further exemption is given for ‘pleasure’ flights whereby an aircraft is used for ‘personal or recreational’ purposes not associated with a business or professional use.”

This new version of a carbon tax has not yet taken effect in the EU, with negotiations expected to be ongoing in Brussels throughout 2022. Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, is said to be furious about the out-sized cost that the nation will be expected to bear.

According to Pekao SA bank analysts in a report for the Dziennik Gazeta Prawna: “Compared to current EU regulations, the fulfilment of the new EU climate package will cost Poland around €190billion (\$216.7billion) more.”

Poland is already on the hook for €338billion (\$385 billion) under currently enacted emissions regulations.

As it stands, the yachts and private jets of the European elite will not be subject to the same fees that the vessels and planes that deliver food and consumer goods to the EU will. This means that the fees that the European bureaucracy has come up with to solve the so-called climate crisis will be borne by the people who purchase food and goods in the bloc of nations, while its yacht-going and private jet-flying elite can sail or fly to their heart’s content — secure in the knowledge that whatever greenhouse gases they emit won’t cost them a dime.



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