

# Connecting science across Europe with fewer emissions

Reducing business flight emissions at EMBL

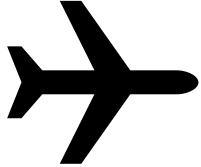
**Brendan Rouse**

Head of Sustainability

*EU Climate Pact Ambassador*



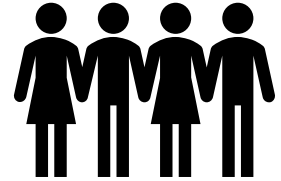
# EMBL has reduced its business travel emissions by 40% since 2019...



Reducing site visits



Embracing virtual meetings



Embedding a culture of sustainability

*Let me show you how...*

# European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL)

EMBL is Europe's only intergovernmental laboratory for life sciences research



**2,000**

people

**29**

member states

**700**

publications

**3,900**

annual users of  
experimental services

**101 million**

daily web requests to  
EMBL-EBI data services

**8,600**

course and conference  
participants

# EMBL has 2000 staff at six sites across Europe



**EMBL-EBI**

Bioinformatics



**Grenoble**

Structural biology



**Barcelona**

Tissue biology  
and disease  
modelling



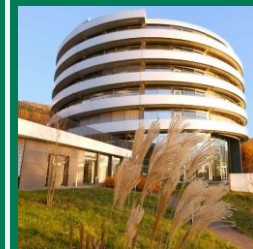
**Hamburg**

Structural biology



**Heidelberg**

Life sciences



**Rome**

Epigenetics  
and neurobiology

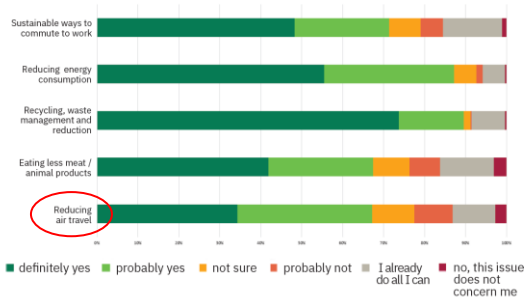


# Historical Context

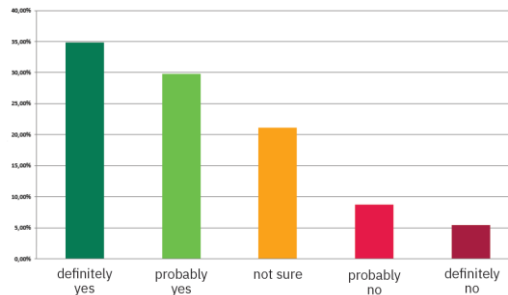
- Green EMBL launched in 2019 as a grass roots working group with the ambition for a carbon-neutral EMBL
- Key focus of the group was air travel



Would you be willing to change your lifestyle in the following areas?



Do you think EMBL should offset flights?



*"Air travel is the largest source of work-related carbon dioxide emission that the scientific community can reduce"*



FEATURE ARTICLE



POINT OF VIEW

## How scientists can reduce their carbon footprint

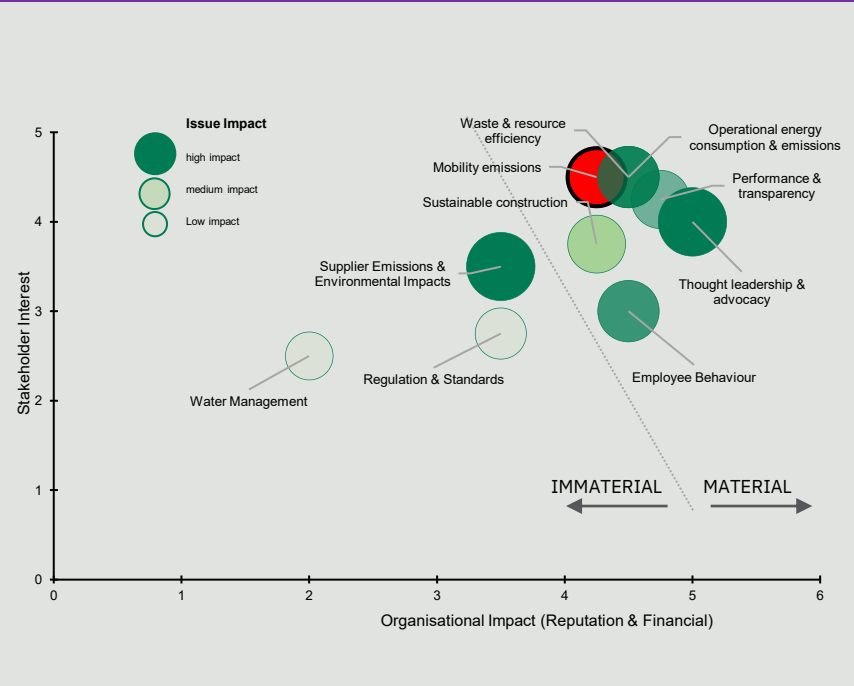
Cutting down on long-distance air travel is the best way to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by the scientific community.

JEREMY NATHANS AND PETER STERLING

*"if we ignore emissions from HVAC and only consider items the 'scientist' can control."*

# Sustainability Strategy – Mobility Emissions

## Materiality Assessment



## Reduction Target



## Action Plan

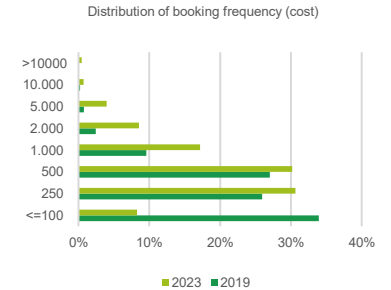
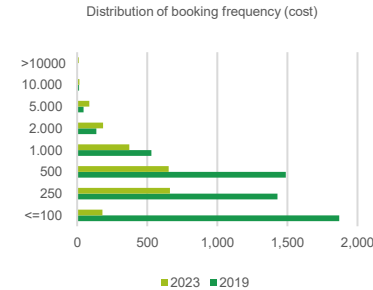
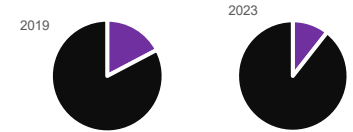
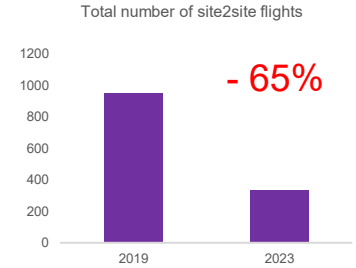
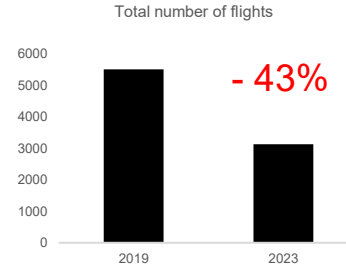
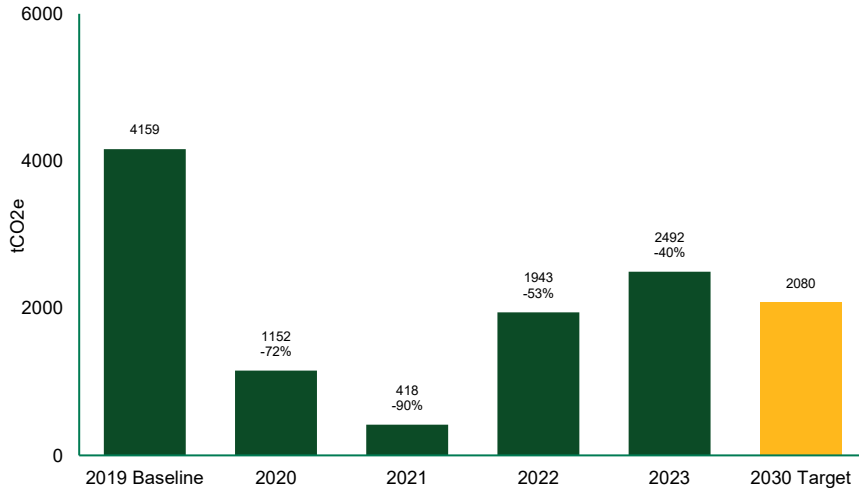
- Amend travel policy
- Promote virtual and hybrid conferences
- Provide EV charging points
- Provide e-bike facility
- Draft offset policy

## Carbon Footprint Breakdown



# Progress in reducing our impact

- Business travel emissions still 40% below 2019 level

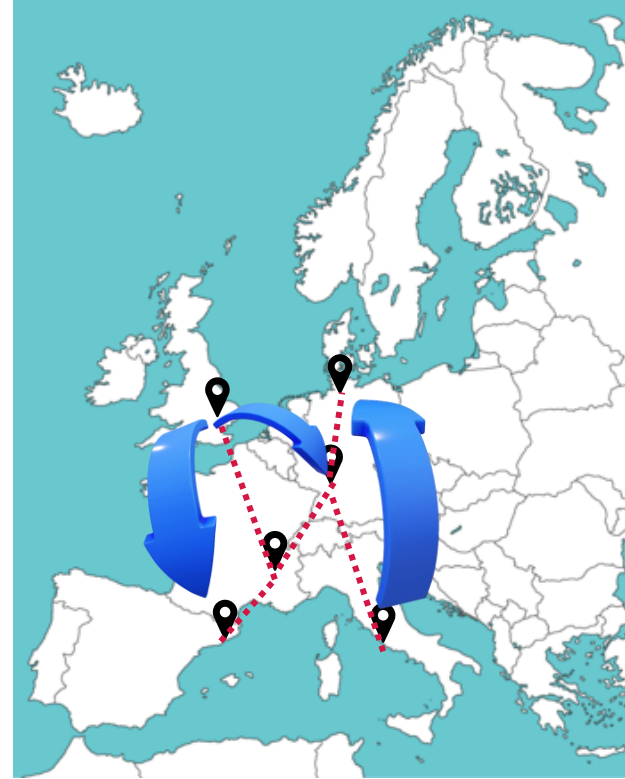


# Site2site flights have reduced the most

- EMBL has a 'new-normal' way of managing an international organisation
- Many meetings are now done virtually > fewer visits to other EMBL sites are made
- Increased use of trains
- General sustainability behaviour change campaign has had an impact

## BUT

- Needs to be formalised and policy needs to 'catch-up' to behaviours



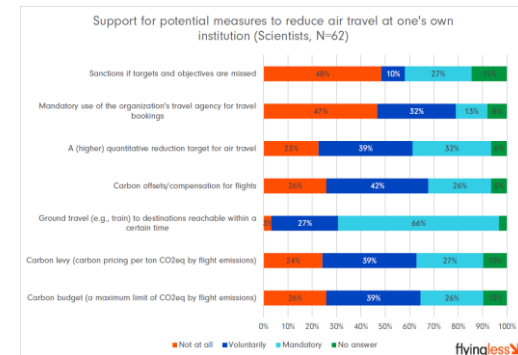
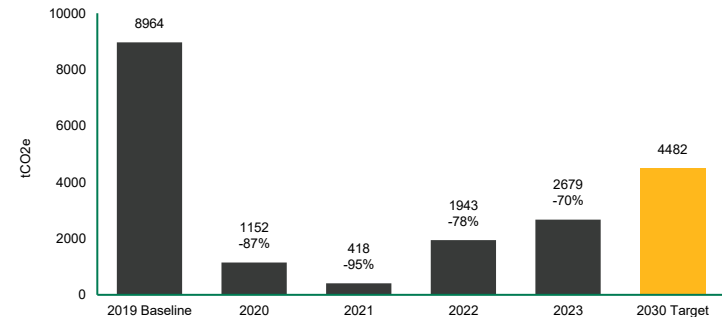


# We will reduce flight emissions even further

- New Travel Policy for EMBL
  - Banning short-haul flights
  - Incentivising trains – decentivising flights
  - Improving data collection
  - A new policy will need a Travel Management Company to administer
- We will switch attention to focus on long distance travel
- Consider the adoption of an internal carbon tax on flights

# FlyingLess – How has EMBL Benefited

- Great assistance with data processing and calculation methodology
- Toolbox has helped us draft our new policy (esp. Module 2 (checklist) and Module 5 (Measures))
- Survey helps us design our policy and will help us argue for measures
- Learning from experience of other partners (eg, U. Konstanz Carbon Tax Policy)
- Will use tools (Decision making tool) as we develop our inhouse travel guidance



Thank you for listening



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