

MCC Press Release

Global CO₂ emissions growth nearly flat for third successive year

Global Carbon Project estimates 36.4 Gt CO₂ for 2016 – MCC: Not aligned with two degrees target

Berlin, 14/11/2016. Global CO₂ emissions growth from fossil fuels and industry in 2016 is nearly flat for a third year in a row. They are projected to be around 36.4 Gt this year, according to a study by the Global Carbon Project (GCP). They were at 36.3 Gt CO₂ in 2015 and at 36.2 Gt CO₂ in 2014. But GCP Scientific Steering Committee member Sabine Fuss from the Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change (MCC) warns: “The lower growth in emissions is not aligned with the pathways that limit climate change below two degrees Celsius.”

The projected rise of only 0.2% for 2016 marks a clear break from the rapid emissions growth of 2.3% per year of the previous decade. “In order to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement, emissions in the coming years need to drop as fast as they were on the rise in the last decades,” Fuss points out.

In order to achieve this, policies are needed. Yet, despite Germany’s support for renewables, German emissions did not decrease in 2015 but increased slightly by 0.7 percent. A similar picture emerges at EU level. The 28 member states together are still the third largest emitter causing 10 per cent of emissions and created a rise of 1.4 percent from 2014 to 2015.

China, on the other hand, being the biggest emitter of CO₂ at 29 per cent saw emissions reduce by 0.7 per cent in 2015, compared to growth of more than 5 percent per year the previous decade. A further reduction of 0.5 per cent is projected for 2016. However, there are considerable uncertainties in regards to China’s national emissions in 2016.

Corinne Le Quéré, Director of the Tyndall Centre at UEA who led the data analysis, said: “The break in emissions rise is a great help but it is not enough. The emissions need now to decrease rapidly. If climate negotiators in Marrakesh can leverage ambitions for further cuts in emissions, we could be making a serious start to addressing climate change.”

The estimation by the GCP of global CO₂ emissions and their partitioning among the atmosphere, land and ocean is a major effort by the research community. It brings together measurements and compilation of statistical estimates with analysis of model results.

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On Monday, Nov 14th, 4.45-6.15 pm, the GCP will organize the side-event “The Global Carbon Budget 2016 and its implication for meeting global warming targets” in the Arabian Room. It will provide further analysis of the Global Carbon Budget to 2016, assess the potential for negative emissions and discuss the feasibility of keeping global warming well below 2°C or 1.5°C. Speakers are, among others, Sabine Fuss from the MCC and Glen Peters from the Center for International Climate and Environmental Research.

This media release is part of the Global Carbon Budget 2016, the annual update by the Global Carbon Project. It is based on the analyses published here:

- Le Quéré et al. (2016) Global Carbon Budget 2016. *Earth System Science Data*
<http://www.earth-syst-sci-data-discuss.net/essd-2016-51/>

Access:

- Data and figures: <http://www.globalcarbonproject.org/carbonbudget>
- Data interface for exploring data: <http://www.globalcarbonatlas.org>
- Prior to embargo: ESSD paper and Infographics can be requested for media purposes to press@uea.ac.uk
- After embargo: ESSD paper is open access available at link above

Social media:

- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/globalcarbonproject>
- Twitter: @gcarbonproject
- infographic address: <http://www.globalcarbonbudget2016.org/>

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- Contributors to the Global Carbon Budget 2016 are funded by research organisations and government departments in multiple countries and supported by their organisations.
- The Global Carbon Atlas the provides easy access to the emissions data is funded by BNP Paribas Climate Philanthropy
- A full list of funders is provided in Table B1 of the ESSD paper

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