

France, Netherlands call for EU climate clampdown on private jets

REUTERS

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BRUSSELS, May 26 (Reuters) - Austria, France, Ireland and the Netherlands have called on the European Union to toughen laws to curb the impact of private jet travel on the climate, a document showed.

The countries are home to some of the busiest airports in Europe, including Amsterdam's Schiphol and Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris.

Schiphol said in April it will ban private jets and small business aviation, which the airport said causes 20 times more CO2 emissions than a commercial flight, while France this week banned certain short-haul commercial domestic flights on routes where sufficient train services are available.

In a document shared with EU countries ahead of a meeting of their transport ministers next week, the four countries said the "excessive" per capita carbon footprint of private jet travel should spur the EU to act. "We believe that greater attention must be drawn to this issue at EU level, especially by assessing the possibility of setting up stronger regulatory measures on private jet travel to make sure that everyone contributes their fair share to the overall decarbonization effort," said the document, seen by Reuters.

Private jet flights in Europe increased by 64% in 2022, and emitted more than 5.3 million tonnes of CO2, according to research by Dutch consultancy CE Delft, commissioned by Greenpeace.

That is a fraction of the 147 million tons of CO2 that all flights departing the EU and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland emitted in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily grounded the sector, according to the EU Aviation Safety Agency.

But climate activists have long taken issue with the high carbon emissions per person associated with private jets. Around 100 protesters disrupted flights at Geneva Airport on Tuesday to demand a ban.

EU countries' transport ministers will discuss the four states' paper on June 1.

Airlines in Europe are set to face higher CO2 costs in the next few years under a reform of the EU carbon market. The EU has also struck a deal on binding targets for airlines to use more

sustainable fuel, but the approval of that law has been held up by an unrelated dispute between countries over nuclear energy.