

The Net Zero Review

The call for evidence: submission from Motorcycle Action Group

2022 11 03

Introduction

This is the submission from the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), the UK's premier voice of motorcyclists in the United Kingdom. We were formed in 1973 to defend riders' rights. MAG (1) is a democratic structure, with regular internal meetings to consider Government policy as it pertains to motorcyclists. We are consistently committed to engaging positively, using referenced evidence for our policy positions and to back up the rationale for our campaigns.

MAG is always ready, willing and able to engage with officials and Ministers in the interests of creating the best policies for transport, specifically for two- and three-wheeled powered vehicles. We can always be contacted (43) to discuss the content of this submission. Please request contact with the 'Net Zero Review Response Group.'

MAG authorises the partial or full publication of this submission in the public domain.

1. How does net zero enable us to meet our economic growth target of 2.5% a year?

The Government has provided no evidence that it can contribute positively to meeting the economic growth target of 2.5% per annum. Nor has the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) seen any such evidence from any other source – merely aspirational statements, indicating the hope that net zero can help achieve economic growth targets. Indeed, the green lobby itself appears widely opposed to growth targets (2) (3), so MAG believe that there is an inbuilt conflict between what the Government seeks to do - in driving growth through net zero - and those who are making the loudest calls for the elimination of human generated CO₂, namely the green lobby.

Ministers have appeared silent on this dichotomy, which is caused by the contradiction of wishing to secure growth while simultaneously seeking to eliminate fossil fuel. This suggests the Government is not in possession of any blueprint under which economic growth and net zero are compatible – otherwise this blueprint would already have been widely shared in the public domain. MAG is therefore concerned that the net zero agenda is likely to harm riders' financial circumstances, as well as freedom of choice, in preventing them from purchasing new petrol motorcycles from some set date.

It follows that the onus is on the administration to provide a credible economic outline of how increased energy costs, reduced energy security and higher living costs (arising from the CO₂ reduction agenda), and the dependence on a vastly increased demand for precious terrestrial resources (see below), can support British economic growth.

MAG has repeatedly highlighted the cost-of-living damage that inflated fuel costs, plus the enforced abandonment of sales of new petrol motorcycles, will cause. MAG commissioned, and has *already* supplied to the Government, a comprehensive report (4) from the CEBR (Centre for Economic and Business Research). This demonstrates, using the Government's *own* figures, how much damage will be done to the UK by imposing a mandatory ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicle vehicles.

Ministers have frequently cited the IPCC and its reports as a justification for the net zero policy framework. However, the conflict between net zero and economic growth, and the true agenda of the IPCC, has been starkly revealed by those involved with the IPCC itself. For example, former United Nations climate official Ottmar Edenhofer, stated publicly of the agenda and (at that time) forthcoming summit in Cancun: 'One has to free oneself from the illusion that international climate policy is environmental policy. This has almost nothing to do with the environmental policy anymore ... We redistribute de facto the world's wealth by climate policy... the... world climate summit in Cancun is actually an economy summit during which the distribution of the world's resources will be negotiated.' (32)

Critically in terms of the purpose of this Government review, Edenhofer, who co-chaired the U.N.'s IPCC working group on Mitigation of Climate Change from 2008-2015, added: 'in order to get rich one has to burn coal, oil or gas.'

This sort of commentary entirely undermines the British Government's hope of achieving net economic growth by abandoning fossil fuels – part of which includes the forced abolition of the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles. If even a former co-chair of the IPCC's own working group on Mitigation and Climate Change explicitly states that for a country to 'get rich' – i.e., for wealth generation - it is necessary for an economy to rely on coal, oil and gas, the UK Government cannot seriously pretend the abandonment of these fuel sources will *add* to economic growth. Either the Government accepts this advice from a *former senior IPCC official*; or it needs to explain why it accepts some aspects of what IPCC officials have said, but then chooses to ignore the starkest and most unambiguous warning possible; one that dissolves any pretence that economic growth can be aided by the *abandonment* of fossil fuels – a move which is, after all, at the heart of the net zero agenda.

Reinforcing Edenhofer's conclusions are the findings of the CEBR report. *Using the Government's own methodologies*, it reveals that the costs of the petrol/diesel vehicle ban, as measured by the accepted 'Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) methodology, are five times more than the projected benefits, and for motorcyclists the costs are proportionately even greater than this – as the report transparently explains on page 29 (4): 'the overall BCR of 0.19 above represents that total costs are just over five times those of total benefits. For motorbikes, for instance, this ratio is much lower, indicating that the costs of the bans on motorbikes are over 10 times the associated costs.' Thus, this aspect of the net zero agenda is demonstrably not in any way helping to achieve a growth target. Indeed, it actually contravenes the Government's own operational parameters!

Realistic independent evaluations of the cost of the net zero agenda for the UK range between £1.4 trillion (33) and £3 trillion (34) - and there are even higher estimates in circulation. The Government has so far been unable to explain how these on-costs could contribute to growth, rather than simply making life and business in the UK more expensive in absolute terms, *and* relative to competing economies. In a global market, these other economies will unquestionably then become more attractive as locations for business and thus jobs.

MAG suggests that the administration now has a moral obligation to: *either* provide a plausible rebuttal in regard to the points made in the published CEBR report, and which underline the assertion from the former senior IPCC official; *or* explain publicly and objectively why it has abandoned its core value-for-money (and other economic) considerations and is choosing to disregard Edenhofer's growth warning, while apparently accepting the redistributive political agenda of the United Nations which has '*almost nothing to do with the environmental policy anymore.*'

MAG asserts that, in the absence of any plausible clarification from the Government, to proceed with the net zero agenda is to abandon any hope of a credible economic *growth* policy from now until 2050 - or beyond. Put bluntly, embracing net zero means accepting the political redistributive agenda of the United Nations; one which is not focused primarily on the environmental agenda, but which instead seeks to engineer absolute or comparative falls in living standards in the UK - and similar nations - for the presumed benefit of 'levelling up' human living standards in other parts of the world.

To summarise, the Government needs to recognise that, regardless of its environmental aspirations (which we return to later in this submission), its net zero agenda – including the ban on new petrol and diesel vehicles – will necessarily hinder, rather than help, British economic growth for at least a generation.

2. What challenges and obstacles have you identified to decarbonisation?

A broad range of analyses shows the unfeasibility of achieving this goal without plunging the United Kingdom into an economically regressive condition for the indefinite future. The key issues are:

- i) The economic damage due to a forced transition.
- ii) The logistical impossibility of the task – so far there has been no attempt to reliably future-proof the National Grid to cope with increased demand and the variability caused by solar and wind generation on a vastly increased scale.
- iii) The damage this agenda will cause to the environment itself, due to the wasteful and virtually irrecoverable confinement of precious metals in batteries.
- iv) The land use required for generating power from less dense energy sources necessarily takes this land out of the food production cycle. This raises practical issues, in that limited land area means we would be trading food production capacity

for energy production capacity (35). The Government's estimate is that 0.6% of land area delivered 116 million litre of biofuel in 2020. That represents less than a quarter of 1%, versus the total annual fossil fuel oil usage in the UK (36). To make even a 10% contribution to fossil fuel replacement would require at least two fifths of the arable land in the UK to be turned over for biofuel production. Nor does this mean that all the products derived from oil production can be synthesised from biofuels; and that is another aspect of the transition that would have to be considered by Government before committing to a net zero agenda that eliminates fossil fuels. The second issue is moral: what are the ethical considerations relating to the shift of land suitable for food production for energy production? It is beyond MAG's remit to answer the question: but it must be answered by Government.

- v) The unreliability of supply from what is customarily called 'renewable power.'
- vi) The failure of Government to provide a power smoothing solution to mitigate the vagaries of power from renewable power, through adequate 'spinning reserve.'
- vii) Any value-for-money justification in terms of the comparison between mitigation in relation to climate change versus the cost trying to 'stop' or 'reduce' it.
- viii) The potential destruction of the viability of a large proportion of Britain's manufacturing base, including the motorcycle manufacturing sector.
- ix) Likely public resistance when the population realises the true implications of these measures, as vividly portrayed in the dystopian novel 'The Denial' (5).
- x) Achieving the net zero goal inevitably requires reference to another 'elephant in the room' – the size of the human population. The inconvenient truth is that persistent population growth would undermine efforts at achieving net zero. However, population control does not fit with the moral orthodoxy of Western democratic principles, nor perhaps – ironically, in the context of this consultation - with controversial considerations related to economic growth (38). This issue has been highlighted by the United Nations (37), though it, too, resists taking a position; instead hoping that population will stabilise around 2100 A.D. Not being willing to proactively manage population in the UK (or globally) effectively means Governments are leaving to chance a key driver of resource usage – with all the consequences for food production, heating and everything else humans consume and emit. The Government needs to state whether, like the UN, it simply hopes the British population will not be too big to stymie efforts to achieve net zero, or if it has a plan. Specifically, it must answer the following question: faced with the dilemma of missing its net zero target or imposing population control measures on the British population, what will it do? This issue requires an answer, and clearly stands to become a profound obstacle to the Government's net zero agenda, either in terms of practicality, or politically - or both. This further illustrates the vastness of the implications evoked by the Government's net zero agenda; one in which the apparent contradiction of seeking economic growth and also committing to net zero resides. Note that the most prosperous communities also produce the greatest emissions. (37). It is clear, therefore, that taking a step such as banning the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles is tactical rather than strategic - and, unless the greater issues outlined here are tackled, comparatively futile.

- xi) A basic ignorance about the science of climate change – which is still a nascent field of study, but which already provides conclusive proof that to ‘stop’ climate change to preserve the climate within current parameters is to ‘terraform’ the earth for humanity’s convenience. Incidentally, this also raises moral issues that no Minister has yet discussed publicly, regarding humanity’s right to attempt to stop a macro natural variability, for the convenience of our civilisation and regardless of the natural cycles of earth.

3 What opportunities are there for new/amended measures to stimulate or facilitate the transition to net zero in a way that is pro-growth and/or pro-business?

There is no such pathway on the legislated timetable. The only theoretical route that would deliver the required energy stability and pricing, in terms of energy generation and supply, is the wholesale shift to nuclear, and possibly tidal, energy generation. However, this is indeed theoretical. In practical terms, the UK has never achieved such a shift in the past. When it comes to power generation historically, new technologies tended to be allowed to expand total power generation without replacing existing technologies. Older technologies naturally declined. But until the environmental movement became so assertive, there was no convention to attempt to forcibly eliminate the existing technologies. Therefore, the change in tactics adds greatly to the problems facing the Government.

Regarding nuclear generation, Hinkley Point C development was originally proposed in the 1980s, and there commenced serious construction work in 2008. However, it won’t be in operation until at least 2028 (21). The Severn Barrage (22) has been unsuccessfully proposed at least 15 times across two centuries. These examples indicate there is insufficient time to make this transition, even if successive Governments have the political will to attempt to do so. The cost of a huge new nuclear fleet is measured in hundreds of billions – or even over a trillion – Pounds. While this is clearly capable of creating a booming nuclear sector, the costs will be paid by taxpayers, and it is an additional burden that will limit household wealth for decades.

We already know ‘renewables,’ such as wind and solar, can never deliver a reliable supply in the UK. The notion that an electrified transport system could operate reliably on the basis of these technologies, plus some sort of power storage system, is as fanciful as it is environmentally and economically questionable.

MAG also notes that the Labour Party has stated an even more aggressive timetable (39), which would require the creation of all this energy generation capacity by as early as 2030. They have yet to publish any strategic plan on how they intend to achieve this remarkable construction feat in the time available. How Labour will deliver a fully carbon neutral National Grid by 2030 will unquestionably be one of the most incredible Government procurement stories ever told.

Note, also, that to create sufficient ‘spinning reserve’ to cope with the variabilities of renewables would need ongoing commitment from Governments formed of any party – otherwise the initiative would stall if one single Government abandoned the nuclear option; then the entire agenda would be stalled by this, and the UK would either have to speedily return to fossil fuels or suffer a chronic energy crisis with materially damaging consequences for the British population and industry.

Even with multi-decadal cross-party support (which also means overruling environmental objections to nuclear power - ironically by those most vocally promoting net zero, such as the Green Party (23)), the gargantuan challenges of shifting sustainably to, for example, an electric-only transport system are dwarfed by the cost and practical limitations of that universal electrically powered private and public transport system. For example, the materials required for just one generation of renewable technology is manifestly unfeasible. (6) This shows that the resources demanded to do this for the first generation alone are, by any serious measure, not achievable, and arguably unjustifiable in terms of locking up such vast quantities of precious elements in this single initiative.

4. What more could Government do to support businesses, consumers and other actors to decarbonise?

Should the Government wish to achieve this goal for whatever reason, it must:

- i) Provide a credible rationale that creates engagement by the general public. So far this has amounted only to a general appeal that net zero is necessary, with emotive speeches about a putative ‘climate emergency,’ but no cohesive scientific justification. By contrast, various individuals (7) have provided a cast-iron treatise revealing how justifications for the net zero agenda are presented consistently fail to acknowledge the benefits of fossil fuels. These benefits, which include thousands of fossil fuel dependent products for their manufacture, their high energy density and comparatively low cost will need to be reflected by any alternative energy infrastructure solution.
- ii) Provide a financial framework that at least achieves parity of costs for the new energy regime, for the reasons outlined in point (i).
- iii) Guarantee security of energy supply. In a First World country it is simply inexcusable to contemplate an unreliable energy grid, which carries with it life-threatening and economy-wrecking risks.
- iv) Ensure the economic competitiveness of the UK in terms of the manufacturing base that is still left in this country. Note: it is highly disingenuous to, de facto, export our manufacturing to other countries as a result of the unaffordability of UK energy, only to re-import the manufactured goods and then blame that other country for creating emissions. Those emissions are really the UK’s emissions. The current shift towards electric vehicles risks destroying the successful, multi-billion Pound UK petrol motorcycle manufacturing sector, and any vehicles that

are re-imported, whether petrol or electric, will carry with them the moral ownership for the emissions caused abroad. It is a cheat to pretend that, just because the CO2 emanated in, say, China, the UK has no ownership for it if the consumers are in this country.

- v) Demand of those calling for net zero to provide a cast-iron scientific justification for this move. Currently, the case that has been presented by the activists who call for these cuts in CO2 tend not to be a balanced, cohesive contribution to the scientific realities of the debate. One indication of this is the tactic of those campaigning for net zero to seek to ‘cancel’ opponents of their agenda, using emotive language such as ‘climate change denier’ and stating that the ‘science is settled.’ They resist explaining why they are right scientifically, and why – even if they are - the high cost of net zero is preferable to adaptation policies that have effectively been deployed by the human race in response to massive climate changes in the past. Unless the environmental movement can demonstrate that humans can ‘stop’ climate change - a process that has occurred for billions of years - then adaptation will be necessary in any case as the climate warms and cools according to well-established, age-old natural cycles that continue with or without any human influence. The Government has a duty to have a considered and public response to these natural cycles, even if the environmental lobby has not.

MAG proposes that it is the duty of a responsible administration to facilitate a frank and open debate, where all sides can present their arguments. In this way, a decision on the merits of net zero can be made objectively, and without bias from emotive arguments which serve no objective purpose. In an age of reason, and given how high the stakes are for the future of the UK’s economic viability and the standards of living of its citizens, the Government should invite all sides to make their case, so that a truly data-based decision can be made. MAG will certainly engage with all sides, to seek a sound outcome from such a process. We are aware that many others will eagerly do the same.

Should the environmental movement seek to stymie such a debate, that should serve as a red warning light: since, if the science is settled, they would win the debate anyway and would have nothing to fear from a public debate. In the event of resistance from the proponents of the ‘climate emergency’ lobby, the Government ought to urgently review its association with activists who seek to prevent such debate and who use coercive means to attempt to silence those who challenge the wisdom of net zero.

5. Where and in what areas of policy focus could net zero be achieved in a more economically efficient manner?

The Government needs to answer this for itself. MAG has looked at the cost of the ban on petrol engines and, as already stated, co-sponsored the CEBR report on the economic implications of a ban on new petrol and diesel vehicles. MAG can picture no scenario in

which net zero is a positive macro-economic contribution for individuals, households, businesses or the wider British economy. At a time when the UK faces a long-term economic crisis, exacerbated by recent Government decisions, it appears irresponsible to pretend that net zero is a positive initiative in the interests of the country, without solid evidence to indicate this is so.

6. How should we balance our priorities to maintaining energy security with our commitments to delivering net zero by 2050?

The only credible solution to is revisit the science, not with political activists, but with those who have made objective assessments of the true impact of CO2 in relation to climate. MAG suggests that this will lead to the abandonment of the net zero agenda, and its replacement by prudent management of our existing global energy resources. Within this, the abolition of the petrol and diesel vehicle ban is an immediate first step the Government could take.

MAG is ready, willing and able to provide extensive information, all of which is factually compiled, properly referenced and scientifically consistent. This will assist the Government in its duty to make objective policy decisions based on data, logic and reason – as well as the economic realities in relation to a financial crisis that is likely to persist to a greater or lesser extent for at least a decade.

7. What export opportunities does the transition to net zero present for the UK economy or UK businesses?

The primary export opportunity the net zero agenda presents is, ironically, the export of what remains of our manufacturing base – including the motorcycle manufacturing sector – to other countries with a more favourable energy supply regime, both financially and in terms of the reliability of supply.

More generally, and beyond the remit of MAG's interests, we imagine there may be individual firms that can benefit from the export of technologies associated with net zero. This will not out-balance the net cost to the British economy.

Questions for businesses

8. What growth benefits/opportunities have you had, or do you envisage having, from the net zero transition?

MAG states here that questions 8-17 are assumptive. They fail to entertain the prospect that net zero is a net negative to business. MAG counsels the Government against selective

quotation once it receives contributions to this consultation, lest it imply that business will benefit overall from this policy agenda. It clearly will not at a macro level.

The way the questions are framed leaves little latitude for challenge of the net zero agenda per se, and this builds in bias to the answers. It would be wrong to simply assume that business will benefit overall from this policy agenda, and that net zero will automatically lead to positive results. As this submission makes clear, MAG believes the opposite is the case.

9. What barriers do you face in decarbonising your business and its operations?

The primary barrier for any business is cost and convenience. Until the Government finds solutions that provide the same quality of energy supply - for static infrastructure and for transport - as fossil fuels do, the agenda is doomed to damage our viability.

To take one example, MAG holds regular events for bikers in rural environments in fields, which form a significant part of our major funding streams. So far, there has been absolutely no indication of how we would be supported by the authorities to supply, say 10,000 motorcycles, with the necessary charging facilities, plus all the other power needs, without using fossil fuel powered generators. If the latter is the solution – diesel generators - then it's pointless to create all the inconvenience and cost of electrification, since the extra step of generating electricity for charging purposes would actually increase emissions, not reduce them, due to the extra steps between power generation and power usage, versus direct petrol motor-to-wheel power. This is just one example of the problems the net zero agenda is likely to cause.

Motorcycle Action Group

10 Looking at the international market in your sector, what green opportunities seem to be nascent or growing?

The overwhelming majority of European motorcyclists oppose the banning of petrol motorcycles (8). As such, there is currently no prospect of majority agreement with the net zero agenda amongst the motorcyclists of Europe if this means the banning of petrol motorcycles.

11. What challenges has the net zero transition presented to your business?

If the Government forces the ban on the sale of new petrol-powered motorcycles, our research (9) indicates that the majority of our membership will not make the transition to electric power. As such, the primary challenge that net zero presents to the Motorcycle Action Group is its destruction.

12. What impacts have changing consumer choices/demand had on your business?

None at this stage. The motorcycling community will, in majority, only switch to electric powered vehicles if forced to do so. But, as stated in our answer to the previous question, this will in all likelihood decimate the Motorcycle Action Group and the UK market for leisure motorcycles, because most will not make the change.

13. What impacts have decarbonisation/net zero measures had on your business?

None yet. Arguably, the increase in fuel prices is a direct consequence of the Government's energy policies, and our members are affected by this just as the rest of the United Kingdom has been.

14. What more could be done to support your business and/or sector to decarbonise?

The Government would need to ensure:

- i) That electric motorcycle options match or exceed the performance parameters of their petrol equivalent at the same price.
- ii) That charging infrastructure matches the time and usage convenience of petrol stations.
- iii) That there is no risk of power outages.

15. Do you foresee a role for your business within an expanded UK supply of heat pumps, energy efficiency, electric vehicles, hydrogen economy or clean power?

No.

16. For clean power industry: what barriers to entry have you found in deploying new plant and technologies?

Most of our members will simply abandon motorcycling if the only way to continue is to buy a new electric machine. While it could be argued that this might change as the ban approaches, there is no evidence to think so at this time. The limitation, costs and characteristics of the current electric vehicle sector means that there is a limited application for commuting, and little or no applicability for longer journeys or extended leisure riding or touring, due to the range limitations of the machinery.

Despite frequent press stories indicating the expectation of improved range performance, this has yet to materialise in the motorcycling sector. Also, battery degradation over time means that second-hand motorcycles - of an age yet to be defined by the market - will be almost worthless, due to compromised range and the cost of power pack replacement.

17. How many green jobs do you estimate will be created in your sector by 2030?

The UK could lose thousands of jobs and sales. The Motor Cycle Industry Association (10) represents a large UK manufacturing sector. Though it partly depends on how many manufacturers convert to electric vehicles manufacture in the UK, there are indications the manufacturing base itself will be exported if this change takes place. MAG concludes that there is no indication at this time that any significant numbers of motorcycle manufacturing jobs will be created in the UK as a result of this ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles.

Questions for the public

18. Have you or are you planning to take personal action to reduce your carbon emissions (for example through how you travel, what you buy, how you heat your home)? If so, how?

MAG's membership, consisting of approximately 8,000 full members plus 150,000 affiliates and associates, has openly discussed the pros and cons of the net zero agenda. As stated, MAG held a survey of its membership, which revealed that a large majority are in opposition to the proposed ban on sales of new petrol-powered motorcycles (9). Nevertheless, we must all recognise that consensus is not science, and as such, while our survey indicated a majority of riders oppose this element of the net zero ban, these decisions must be made on the basis of objective data.

That said, MAG has consistently argued for the environmental benefits of modal shift to motorcycles (40). This is a commonly recognised environmental credential of motorcycles, from reduced environmental manufacturing costs to generally reduced consumption of fossil fuels and other resources, for example in terms of spare parts. We have made these arguments since before the formation of the IPCC. However, our calls to reduce emissions by modal shift to motorcycles have been consistently ignored. The apparent absence of any policy promoting a modal shift away from cars to motorcycles on the basis of a far smaller footprint versus four wheeled vehicles, indicates a lack of joined-up thinking by the Government.

There is also gross inconsistency here – double standards which indicate the Government is not actually serious in its claims about being concerned to reduce emissions. On behalf of the many members of MAG who have raised this and similar concerns, MAG requests a formal

response to the justification for why a large Airbus aircraft can be used by the Government to essentially transport the Prime Minister (20) - when it is seeking to ban individual, often low wage, workers from going to work on small capacity motorcycles.

19. Do you face any barriers to doing this? What are they?

Yes. The biggest barriers to widescale conversion from petrol to electric motorcycles are:

- i) The higher cost of purchase of electric vehicles versus petrol machines.
- ii) Lack of clarity on the likely cost of vehicle-related taxes for electric vehicles over the long term. After all, if the Government achieves its electrification goals, it must necessarily pay for road infrastructure somehow. It is politically inconceivable that any Government could spread the cost of roads indiscriminately across the population. Thus, logically, there must come a time when electric vehicles will lose their big tax advantages, not least because, like for like, they are heavier than their petrol and diesel equivalents, and therefore will create more road damage than the vehicles the Government wants them to replace.
- iii) Lack of clarity on the likely cost of electric charging for electric motorcycles over the life of an electric motorcycle.
- iv) Range limitations, requiring unacceptably long periods for multiple recharges on long journeys – making the use of electric motorcycles currently non-viable due to the time costs involved.
- v) Poor second hand value, given battery degradation.
- vi) Subjective perceptions and personal preference.
- vii) An apparently in-built Government bias against motorcycles. Note that, as already stated, even in the context of the Government's own net zero agenda, an electric motorcycle has a far smaller environmental footprint than an electric car. The failure of the Government to recognise and publicly promote this as an attractive modal shift suggests it is guided by prejudice rather than logic, or its own environmental objectives. MAG suggests that the Government's decision on whether to advocate this four-wheel to two-wheel modal shift is a litmus test for whether its claimed prioritisation of its emissions reduction policies is serious or not.

20. What would help you to make greener choices?

If greener was cheaper and at least as reliable, this would be the single biggest improvement in the attractiveness of the switches the Government appears to want the public to make. It follows that if the motorcycle industry is incentivised to make motorbikes that perform as well as or better than petrol equivalent machines and at the same or lower cost, then motorcyclists would naturally make the switch. As outlined in our answer to question 16, MAG does not expect the technology to have evolved sufficiently in the foreseeable future to

achieve this. Indeed, there may be technical limitations that prevent this from being possible for decades. The Government therefore needs to provide evidence that shows this technology will be available, before committing the country to an agenda that might simply not be deliverable in a practical way.

21. What is working well about the measures being put in place to reach net zero?

MAG has a proposal about what *could* work well, if implemented. As with society at large, there is a need for motorcyclists to receive core facts about WHY net zero is preferable to adaptation policies in regard to climate change. Even more profoundly, the Government has the opportunity to share its scientific references – those that demonstrate to the general public and informed commentators that net zero is a worthwhile aspiration.

It would be appropriate for the administration - in the interests of transparency with the population it is paid to serve - to do this now, and certainly before proceeding along some potentially catastrophic interventions in transport policy, such as the proposed new petrol/diesel vehicle ban.

22. What is not working well about the measures being put in place to reach net zero?

Ministers persistently demonstrate a poor grasp of the basic science of climate, and the effect of CO₂ on the planet's climate. Examples include former Prime Minister Boris Johnson wrongly claiming that increased CO₂ leads to desertification (11); frequent wrong claims about the increasing frequency and severity of storms (12); and wrong claims about the increasing death toll from weather related disasters (13). On these three points, the world is getting greener, thanks to the fertilisation benefits of CO₂ (14); there is no discernible increase in storm activity (15); and record *low* numbers of humans are being killed by climate-related events (16). Until the Government can demonstrate at least a basic grasp of the facts, is it unrealistic to pretend that anything is working well in relation to its net zero campaign, simply because it appears to be based on a raft of false assumptions.

In a practical sense, the dysfunctional aspects of the Government's agenda include:

- i) The inability to lay out a credibly costed agenda for net zero.
- ii) The inability of Ministers and officials to respond to clearly laid out scientific evidence to demonstrate that net zero appears technically unachievable.
- iii) The failure of the Government to respond to compelling evidence that net zero is economically self-harming to the UK and will increase the cost of living by many thousands of Pounds for all households over many years.
- iv) The demonstrable failure of Government Ministers to 'walk the talk' in their own travel and lifestyle choices, indicating they are not taking it seriously, or – worse

still - believe they are exempt from their own mandates in some Orwellian scenario.

- v) The absence of any stated comprehensive policy to prepare the National Grid for increased demand.
- vi) The absence of an energy policy to prevent power cuts. The current Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, expressly warned that under his premiership there could be power cuts in the winter of 2022/23; a phenomenon not witnessed since the infamous 'Winter of Discontent' in 1978/9 preceding the fall of the Callaghan Government.
- vii) The failure to provide any kind of credible infrastructure package to provide the necessary public charging points for electrification of the private vehicle fleet, a programme that must be completed by 2030.

Repeated claims of 'consensus' on a 'climate emergency' are further distorting any semblance of a balanced debate. Consensus is not science. Furthermore, the claimed 'consensus' is clearly a scientifically fraudulent one, and this has been publicly revealed by a number of observers (17). Unfortunately, the Government seems either unaware of this misrepresentation of scientific opinion, or unconcerned about it.

Yet the reality is starkly different to the impression given by Ministers and the media. For example, the claim of a 99.9% scientific consensus (25) that 'the climate emergency is caused by humans' is easy to disprove. The Clintel Declaration (24) stating that 'there is no climate emergency' has already been signed by 1,200 individuals. It would therefore require evidence of at least 1,200,000 scientists on the other side to sustain the 99.9% claim. Moreover, the OSS Foundation has amassed 31,000 opponents of the 'human-caused climate emergency' claim (26). Thus, the onus is on those claiming a 99.9% consensus to identify 31 million scientists who support the 'human-caused climate emergency' claim. Since there were estimated to be not more than 8.8 million scientists on the planet in 2018, (27), it is clear that the consensus claim is wholly fraudulent.

Similarly, the earlier claim of 97% consensus has been totally undermined by simple analysis of the flawed methodology behind the claimed level of consensus (41); flaws which recur repeatedly in many similar research projects (42). In both the 97% and 99.9% cases, these attempts at claiming overwhelming consensus are merely a distraction that serve no useful scientific purpose but are used persistently to give the wrong impression that the 'science is settled,' even though it clearly is not settled in favour of the existence of a human-caused climate emergency. While many will agree that humans have some effect on climate, this is very different to claiming humans are mainly or solely responsible for a looming and catastrophic episode of global warming.

It would be unacceptable – and totally unprofessional - for the Government to base its policy framework on the basis of lies about consensus. Under no circumstances should the net zero agenda be justified according to dishonest claims about scientific consensus. This matters to MAG, because if our right to buy new petrol motorcycles (and the right to buy new petrol or

diesel cars) is curtailed due to untrue claims of consensus, then a great injustice will be enforced upon a majority of the British population on the basis of a lie. No Government should place itself in a position where the electorate can observe Government promoting a policy that stands to cost trillions of Pounds over decades on a false, indeed ridiculous, claim of scientific consensus.

Whatever the motives of those making these clearly false consensus claims, the *democratic consensus* requires space for free speech and debate on all these topics so that the real science can be properly ascertained. Yet debate on the subject is even being suppressed by state-sponsored media. For example, the BBC has taken the extraordinary position of expressly abandoning balance in the debate (28), and even training their staff in this practice. They have accepted the scientifically biased position that: ‘it is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century.’ However, this is a significant and grave error, based on unquestioning acceptance of a highly politicised ‘summary for policymakers’ from the IPCC (31), rather than the core data which says nothing of the sort. This is leading to repeated errors and unbalanced reporting, in direct contravention with the BBC’s own Charter. MAG can provide numerous examples on request. The absence of a proper platform is now leading to poor and unpopular choices due to lack of a broad debate.

Returning to an important previous point, the Government has created an additional and substantial barrier for its net zero agenda: an image problem. This is manifested in the appearance of very visible public standards, which appear to prove to the public that the Government has no intention of following its own strictures when it comes to the net zero agenda. One notorious example is the spectacle of former Prime Minister Boris Johnson flying to various destinations in the UK in a large Airbus aircraft, including from the COP 26 environmental conference.

While he is entitled to travel how he likes, when the UK Premier is flying about in a large twin-jet commercial aircraft, it compromises the Government’s authority as it attempts to gain momentum and public support for its intention to ban. For example, a new 125cc petrol commuter motorcycle would be banned even though, for reference, a Honda CG125 (18) uses the same amount of fuel to travel a whole week’s worth of commuting (say 100km) as Boris Johnson’s Airbus A321 used in four seconds (19)(20). To put it another way, the former Prime Minister’s single one-way flight – from a conference dedicated to CO2 reduction – consumed the same amount of fuel required to supply fuel for a dozen low wage workers commuting on their small-capacity petrol motorbikes for two years. How can anyone take the Government seriously when there are such apparently blatant double standards?

23. Do you have any further comments on how efforts to tackle climate change are affecting you?

Despite Whitehall's attempts to blame the 'cost of living crisis' on extraneous matters, such as the war in Ukraine, it is self-evident that the primary driver is the UK's incomprehensible reliance on expensive energy sources, instead of domestic gas and oil. Since all the measures being taken by the UK will make no measurable difference to climate change – and certainly nothing that will ever be detectable within the massively greater noise of natural climate variations, it is creating resentment amongst many MAG members to be coerced into fuel shifts and petrol motorcycle bans when it will not have any significant effect on climate, but *will* have a massive effect on these riders financially, socially and in terms of civil liberties.

We understand that, as such, whether an individual politician or their party supports net zero and the petrol vehicle ban, it will shortly exceed the traditional party loyalties that previously existed. This is especially likely given the current state of the relationship between the electorate and the parties and party leaders – something that does not need to be spelled out by MAG.

In summary, the Government has a duty of care to the electorate, in that it must now demonstrate the scientific and economic justification for proceeding with a net zero agenda.

This requires the administration to provide:

- i) The scientific evidence to show the relationship between CO2 and climate change (which is different to any claimed consensus).
- ii) Alternatively, it can nurture an open debate to resolve this question decisively.
- iii) The economic impact study it has conducted to demonstrate the value of net zero.
- iv) The social impact study it has conducted to evaluate the effect on British residents, households and businesses, of forcing through a ban on sales of new diesel and petrol vehicles.
- v) A cohesive and data-based response to the CEBR's comprehensive study into the economic impact of the proposed ban on petrol and diesel vehicles.
- vi) An infrastructure strategy for transport, specifically laying out how the electrified network will be supplied and charged without undue delays to journeys.
- vii) A credible energy strategy to ensure that there are no power blackouts as a result of the Government's net zero agenda: including costed and time-bounded deployment plans for renewables, nuclear and tidal power on the necessary timescale. Note that it will be necessary to have a significant proportion of this in place by 2030; when the first proposed ban on petrol and diesel vehicle is scheduled to come into force.
- viii) A set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by which the public can judge the extent to which this - and successive administrations - are achieving the waypoints necessary to deliver net zero by a given date.
- ix) Cross-party agreement, which will be binding for the period ascribed for the achievement of net zero, without which the entire project becomes fatally

flawed - on the basis that one single administration can veto a critical scheme and thereby undermine the trillions of Pounds of taxpayers' money that will have been spent up to that point; a waste of national and individual wealth that will be the direct responsibility of those who facilitated it.



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