



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
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MINISTER'S LETTER IN THE GUARDIAN

Printed in the Letters Column in yesterday's Guardian newspaper in UK was this letter from Gibraltar's Minister for Health and Environment, the Hon Dr John Cortes.

Gibraltar's carbon emissions

"The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) states that Gibraltar has the highest per capita emissions in the world. Carbon dioxide emissions estimates are based on petroleum consumption and include both domestic and international bunkers (World carbon emissions: the league date of every country, 21 June). Gibraltar's ranking is therefore due to its role as a significant bunkering hub, relative to its small population. International bunkers are not excluded from the country-level calculation of emissions because of the lack of specific data on domestic and international bunkers not normally provided, but available for Gibraltar.

While this may be acceptable for countries with much larger populations, it is a misinterpretation of the reality for Gibraltar. The majority of (bunker) fuel sales in Gibraltar are not consumed nationally but form part of the international shipping industry. When this figure is divided by the small population (approximately 28,000), we naturally appear to be the worst in the world. The statistic is less realistic and more alarming than might at first appear. The limitations of the methodology mean the world carbon emissions league table is misleading, reducing its value as a tool for climate change mitigation.

The government of Gibraltar was elected last December on a manifesto that committed it to a significant reduction of its carbon footprint and to the introduction of wide-ranging environmental policies. It is already making progress in bringing about fundamental changes to this effect. Sadly, because of the methodology described above, this may not be reflected early in US EIA reports."