

Universities must arrive in the
reality of the climate crisis!

- take a stance against the reprehensible termination of Gianluca Grimalda by IWF Kiel!
- follow through with the announcement of binding, climate friendly travel policies!
- no punishments for scientists who oppose flying as a matter of principle!

walk the talk!

walk the talk!

**Make your
University a
no-fly-zone!**

(please unfold for
further information)

**Don't punish
academics for
slow travel!**

(please unfold for
further information)

In October last year, Dr. Gianluca Grimalda, a behavioral economist, was fired from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW Kiel) because he refused to fly. Dr. Grimalda has been avoiding air travel for many years. In order to minimize his CO₂ emissions, he travelled mainly by land and sea to Papua New Guinea for field research. The IfW was aware of this and yet requested him to be back in Kiel within a few days at the end of the field trip - only feasible by plane. Dr. Grimalda remained true to his convictions and lost his job.

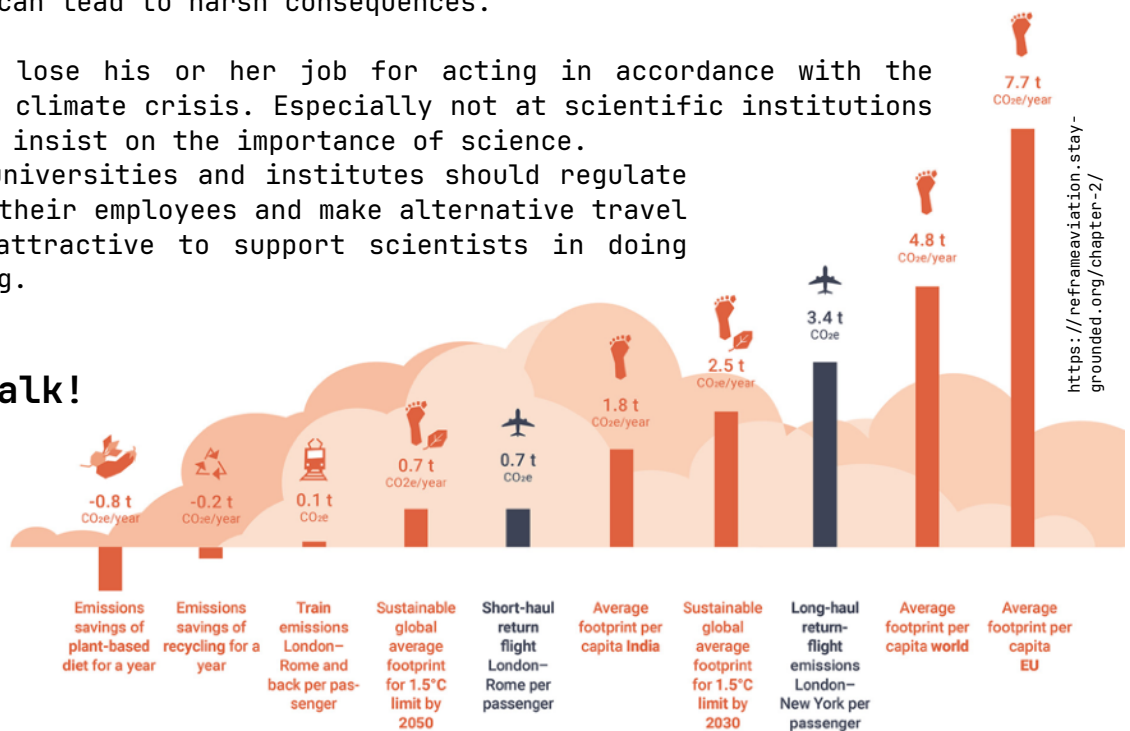
Can this also happen at our university or institute?

2023 was the hottest year in over 120,000 years and yet academic institutions are managed as if everything were as it has always been. Scientists fly from conference to conference as if they were disconnected from the physical and ecological reality of this world. The lifestyle of the internationally networked scientist is romanticized and presented as indispensable. Yet academic flying has little impact on scientific success (Wynes et al., 2019).

The scientific community has been complaining for decades that their warnings about the climate and biodiversity crisis are not being taken seriously. Perhaps also because academics themselves do not behave as if the greatest threat to humanity were a reality? We academics have a special role model function. Studies show that the public perceives scientists who fly less often as more credible (Attari et al., 2016). And yet frequent flying, even short-haul, is supported, even encouraged, by academic institutions and, as in the case of Dr. Grimalda, doing without can lead to harsh consequences.

No one should lose his or her job for acting in accordance with the reality of the climate crisis. Especially not at scientific institutions that otherwise insist on the importance of science. In addition, universities and institutes should regulate the flying of their employees and make alternative travel options more attractive to support scientists in doing the right thing.

Walk the talk!



Sources

Shahzeen Z. Attari, David H. Krantz, Elke U. Weber (2016), Statements about climate researchers' carbon footprints affect their credibility and the impact of their advice. *Climatic Change* 138, 325-338.
 Stefan Gössling, Andreas Humpe (2020), The global scale, distribution and growth of aviation: Implications for climate change. *Global Environmental Change*, 65.
 Seth Wynes, Simon D. Donner, Steuart Tannason, Noni Nabors (2019), Academic air travel has a limited influence on professional success. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Volume 226, 959-967.



scientist rebellion_



grounded science