

Billionaires create a million times more CO2

10th November, 2022



We all know about the damage being done to the environment by industries, households, belching cows and the release of methane from permafrost. A new report highlights a source of CO2 emissions that few of us are aware of - billionaires. The British charity Oxfam has reported that the lavish lifestyles of the world's

wealthiest create significantly more CO2 than the average person. It conducted an analysis of the investments and lifestyles of 125 of the world's richest billionaires. The conclusion was that the average billionaire is responsible for 3 million metric tons of carbon dioxide per year. This is a million times more than the average person creates. Collectively, billionaires create as much CO2 as France.

The lifestyles of billionaires are damaging to the environment. Luxury yachts, extravagant mansions and private jets mean the super-rich have a huge carbon footprint. This is made bigger by the investments they make. Speaking at the COP 27 Climate Change Conference in Egypt, an Oxfam spokesperson provided details about CO2 and the super-rich. She said: "The major and growing responsibility of wealthy people for overall emissions is rarely discussed or considered in climate policy making. This has to change." She added: "These billionaire investors at the top of the corporate pyramid have a huge responsibility for driving climate breakdown. They have escaped accountability for too long."

Sources: cnn.com / theguardian.com / commondreams.org

Writing

Rich people should pay a very large environment tax. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

damage / environment / industries / households / belching cows / billionaire / average / lifestyles / yachts / private jets / climate change / wealthy / investor / responsibility

True / False

- 1) The article says cows add to the damage done to the environment. T / F
- 2) A charity made a report about the CO2 billionaires create. T / F
- 3) The article says there are just 125 billionaires in the world. T / F
- 4) The article says billionaires in France create the most CO2. T / F
- 5) The article says private jets create the most CO2. T / F
- 6) The investments made by billionaires add to CO2 emissions. T / F
- 7) A charity said many people talk about the CO2 emissions of billionaires. T / F
- 8) The article says a billionaire escaped from a pyramid. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. damage | a. examination |
| 2. release | b. important |
| 3. significantly | c. as a whole |
| 4. analysis | d. gave |
| 5. collectively | e. discharge |
| 6. huge | f. got away |
| 7. provided | g. harm |
| 8. major | h. talked about |
| 9. discussed | i. seriously |
| 10. escaped | j. very big |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What would your daily lifestyle be like as a billionaire?
- c) Would you like a huge mansion and a private jet?
- d) What will the COP27 conference change?
- e) How can billionaires invest to help the environment?
- f) What will our environment be like in 20 years from now?
- g) How can we make billionaires more accountable?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Oxfam?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. belching | a. jets |
| 2. CO2 emissions that few | b. of billionaires |
| 3. It conducted an analysis | c. CO2 as France |
| 4. a million times more than the | d. change |
| 5. billionaires create as much | e. of us are aware of |
| 6. The lifestyles | f. cows |
| 7. private | g. breakdown |
| 8. wealthy | h. average person creates |
| 9. This has to | i. people |
| 10. responsibility for driving climate | j. of the investments |

Discussion – Student B

- What damage does CO2 do to the environment?
- How is CO2 created?
- What should billionaires do to cut down on CO2 emissions?
- Should billionaires change their lifestyles?
- Should billionaires have to pay a huge environmental tax?
- What do you know about the dangers of melting permafrost?
- Should everyone live a simple life?
- What environmental advice do you have for billionaires?

Spelling

- being done to the environment by etdirusnis
- englcibh cows
- the release of naemhte from permafrost
- sivahl lifestyles
- igatnisfciyln more CO2
- 3 million tiermc tons of carbon dioxide
- Luxury yshcta
- a huge carbon ntripfoto
- oarelv emissions
- climate ocypil making
- top of the corporate ipdymar
- They have escaped ctulacbanytiio

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. i	4. a	5. c
6. j	7. d	8. b	9. h	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Billionaires

You think billionaires cause the most damage to the environment. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these causes the least damage (and why): motorists, loggers or heads of governments.

Role B – Motorists

You think motorists cause the most damage to the environment. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these causes the least damage (and why): billionaires, loggers or heads of governments.

Role C – Loggers

You think loggers cause the most damage to the environment. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these causes the least damage (and why): motorists, billionaires or heads of governments.

Role D – Heads of Governments

You think heads of governments cause the most damage to the environment. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which of these causes the least damage (and why): motorists, loggers or billionaires.

Speaking – Biggest damage

Rank these with your partner. Put the people who create the most environmental damage at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| • Billionaires | • Oil company CEOs |
| • Motorists | • Mining company CEOs |
| • Meat eaters | • Loggers |
| • All of us | • Heads of governments |

Answers – True False

1 T	2 T	3 F	4 F	5 F	6 T	7 F	8 F
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.