



5 November 2021

Future Transport

COP26: Transport is the next big thing

Free to View Automobiles

Global

- ◆ The UN's flagship climate conference COP26 is taking place in Glasgow with aim of getting the world to 'net zero' by 2050
- ◆ In this report, we revisit the role of xEVs and the pathway to decarbonise global transport by 81% until 2050 vs 2019
- ◆ As such, HSBC views transport as a "second frontier" and critical pathway to net zero global CO₂ emissions

HSBC pathways to net zero approach shows how to close the emissions gap

We have previously discussed potential decarbonisation pathways for the major sectors in the context of reaching global net-zero carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 2050. We focused on decarbonisation across four major emitting sectors or 'pillars': power, transport, buildings and industry. Global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must fall to net zero by 2050/2070 to limit global warming to 1.5°C/2°C – and our modelled pathways demonstrate how to reduce global GHG emissions by 81% by 2050 vs a business-as-usual outlook. Reductions in transport account for c20% of this fall, with diverse genres of electric vehicles (xEVs) decarbonising road transport by 2040 and global regulation limiting shipping and aviation emissions.

HSBC views cleaner transport as second frontier of decarbonisation

Low-carbon power generation has been the major decarbonisation focus to date, but it is not enough to meet climate targets alone, and we see reducing emissions in the transport sector as one of the next areas of focus, including at COP26. As investors are seeking to align portfolios with a low-carbon energy transition that includes a scope beyond traditional clean-tech sectors, Sustainable Mobility and cleaner Future Transport firmly belong in decarbonisation strategies, in our view.

The EU is leading the charge against tailpipe emissions, targeting a 55% CO₂ emissions reduction by 2030 vs 2021 and a 100% reduction by 2035 (de facto Internal Combustion Engine, or ICE, ban). China is closely behind, but the US currently only targets 50% xEVs by 2030 (non-binding). Lifecycle or "well-to-wheel" and "cradle-to-grave" sustainability is also increasingly in focus. Shipping and Aviation are more technologically difficult to decarbonise than road transport, in our view, while EV batteries are a key factor in decarbonising cars.

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The next big thing

- ◆ HSBC's climate change research team thinks the next big focus for reducing global emissions is the transport sector
- ◆ Advances in battery electric and fuel cell technologies offer major pathways to removing oil derivatives across transport modes
- ◆ Zero road / rail emissions by 2040, and capping those from aviation and shipping, could reduce global transport CO₂ by 81% vs 2019

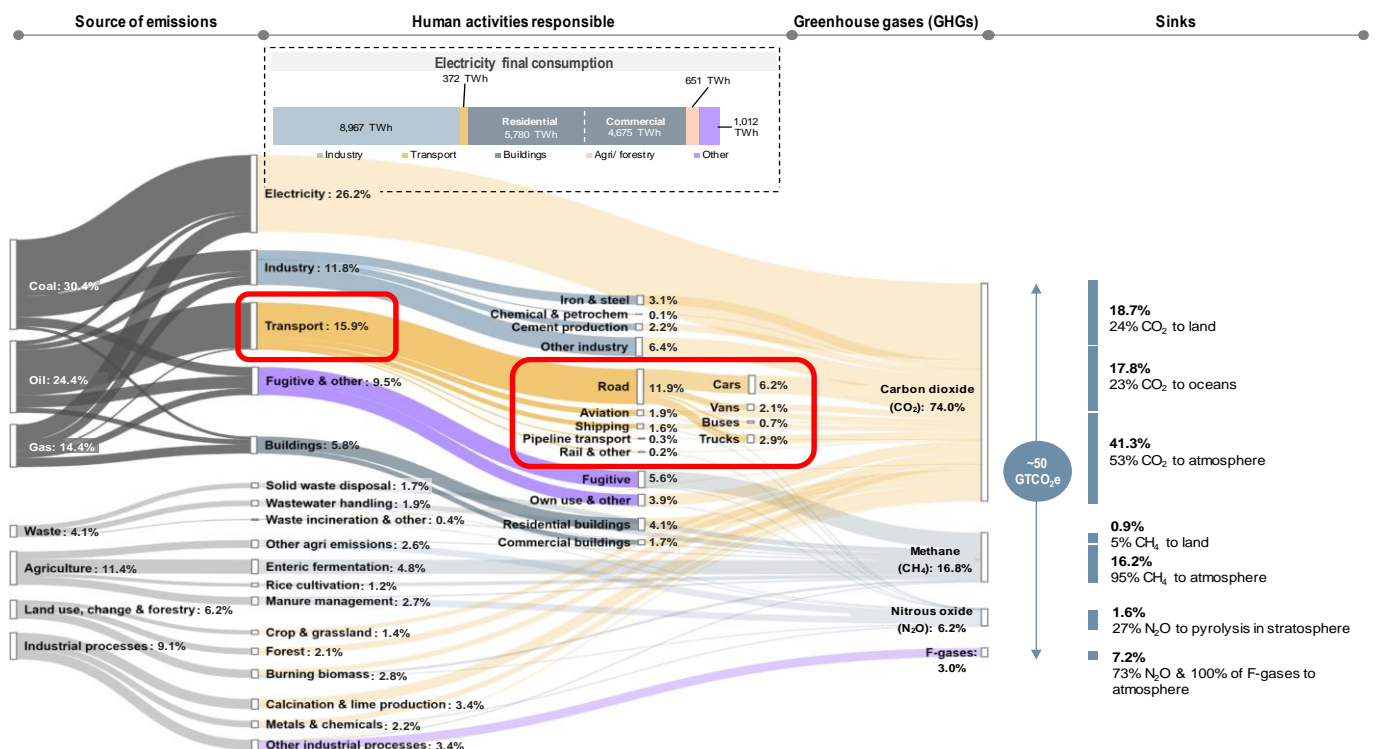
Decarbonisation across sectors

COP26 is the latest push to reach 'net zero' emissions by 2050

In 2015, the Paris Agreement was adopted, bringing in a new era of global focus on addressing climate change risks. And now, COP26 (the "conference of parties" in its 26th round) brings together world leaders again to discuss how to set the world on a course to reaching 'net zero' by 2050 to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by 2100.

As the chart above illustrates, emissions come from a wide range of human activities, across the global economy. In 2017, total GHGs were at around 50 GTCO₂e (or billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent). Within this number lie many contributory factors, but broadly speaking, global GHGs can be broken down into power, transport, industry, buildings and agriculture, with around 70% of GHGs come from the use of fossil fuels for energy and industrial activity.

Mapping our footprint – global GHG emissions in 2017



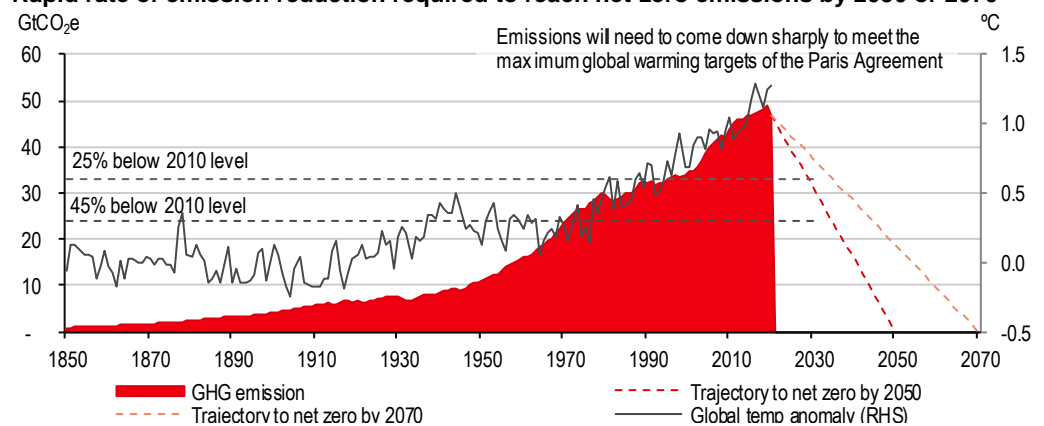
Source: HSBC, IEA, EDGAR, Global Carbon Project; values for sinks adjust calc. error; F-gases sources are not shown here but typically include refrigeration, air conditioning, aerosols and high voltage switchgear; LUCF is Land Use Change and Forestry; data for LUCF values are inherently uncertain and may show variations based on accounting; Own use & other includes losses and agricultural use of energy; Other agri emissions includes direct emissions and emissions from agri waste burning & other indirect emissions; Other industry includes non-ferrous metal, paper & pulp and mining & quarrying; Energy and process emissions from calcination and cement production is nearly 2.5 GTCO₂. production of coke for iron & steel, feedstock for chemicals and petrochemicals, and some parts of oil & gas refining are classified as other industry.

Emissions are still rising and so is the temperature

Emissions must fall to net-zero by 2050 or 2070 to limiting global warming to 1.5°C or 2°C by 2100

But despite increased ambition, annual emissions have continued to rise, as the chart below illustrates (notwithstanding a 2020 dip due to the COVID-19 pandemic). And moving in tandem with emissions has been a rise in the temperature, up over 1°C since the mid-19th century. The chart below also shows the implied rapid rate at which emissions must fall to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 or 2070; broadly aligned with limiting warming to 1.5°C or 2°C. This includes the need for medium-term 2030 cuts of 25% and 45%, respectively, vs 2010 levels which the UN says are necessary (UN synthesis report – way, way off the 1.5°C track, 4 March 2021).

Rapid rate of emission reduction required to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 or 2070



COP26 the world's last chance to get to net zero emissions

Many enhanced climate pledges over 2021, but only a small number of parties have formally communicated mid-century decarbonisation strategies

The Paris Agreement remains a key driver of national climate policy agendas

Through 2021, there has been a continuous flow of national level climate action announcements made by countries (nationally determined contributions or NDCs), with a view to increasing the ambition level. These typically entail a combination of medium (2030) and long-term (2050 onwards) emissions reduction targets and can cover a wide range of actions, policies and strategies.

Do existing pledges close the emissions gap? The UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) 2021 Emissions Gap Report 2021 shows that new national climate pledges combined with other mitigation measures (as at the date of publication) still put the world on track for a global temperature rise of 2.7°C by the end of the century – "well above" the goals of the Paris climate agreement and leading to "catastrophic changes in the Earth's climate". The report suggests that annual global GHGs need to halve by 2030 to keep global warming below 1.5°C this century.

If implemented effectively, net-zero emissions pledges could limit warming to 2.2°C, closer to the well-below 2°C goal of the Paris Agreement. However, many national climate plans delay action until after 2030.

The reduction of methane emissions from the fossil fuel, waste and agriculture sectors could help close the emissions gap and reduce warming in the short term, the report finds. Carbon markets could also help slash emissions. But that would only happen if rules are clearly defined and target actual reductions in emissions, while being supported by arrangements to track progress and provide transparency – all which are therefore key discussion points at COP26.

'Net zero' concept has taken hold as a driver of strong policy action on climate change

COP26 is seen as last chance to get onto the net zero emissions trajectory by 2030 and keep temperature rises below 1.5°C...

...and a successful COP26 may result in accelerated climate policies and unlock incentives for investment to reduce emissions

Future Frontiers scenario models how zero road/rail emissions by 2040, and capping those from aviation and shipping, could reduce global transport CO₂ by 81% vs 2019

The rise of 'net zero emissions'

The concept of 'net zero' emissions has, in recent years, taken hold as a driver of intent to act on climate change across governments, companies and investors. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has set up a Race to Zero Campaign to mobilise Parties but also non-state actors (cities, regions, businesses, etc.) to commit to achieving net zero emissions by mid-century. An increasing number of countries have announced net zero targets, with varying dates scopes in the last year, these pledges now cover a majority of global CO₂. However, many of these are currently not yet backed up by policy or legislative framework.

COP26

The last climate negotiations, COP25, held in December 2019 left a number of loose ends to be tied up. COP26, in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November 2021, is arguably the most important COP since the Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015. This is because it is to focus on raising (post-2020) ambition levels i.e. getting countries to agree increased ambition in terms of setting targets and implementing them through actions.

COP26 is widely seen as the world's last chance to get onto the net zero emissions trajectory by 2030 and limit temperature rises to 1.5°C. The task has been made more urgent by increased scientific evidence of human-induced climate change and the volume of record-breaking extreme weather events recently. There is pressure from all sides as politicians juggle the pandemic, the global energy crunch and the balance between long-term climate preparedness and votes. And while there has been a flurry of climate-related announcements in the run-up to COP26 from governments, businesses, investors and civil society, the details of how this will be implemented are mostly lacking.

Implications for investors and business: Investors and businesses want visibility on longer-term climate mitigation and adaptation policies and clarity on the speed of the low-carbon transition. We believe a **successful COP26** would result in an acceleration of climate policies – unlocking incentives for investment to reduce emissions as well as build resilience. This would drive more disclosure, more targeted regulation, and the integrity of corporate climate strategies (i.e. avoid "greenwashing"). **Failure at COP26** would mean even more uncertainty over the prospects for avoiding the severest impacts of climate change, irreversible damage, and the climate response becoming ever costlier to address.

Decarbonisation of Transport is the "second frontier"

The use of oil derivatives (petrol and diesel) in transport sub-sectors is typically the next sector in line for decarbonisation, globally, after power generation.

We apply our Future Frontiers scenario to demonstrate the role that a cleaner transport sector can play in reaching Paris Agreement targets through the following steps:

Land-based transport: Cars, buses, vans, trucks, motorcycles and railways. The use of oil derivatives is eliminated by 2040, in a linear trajectory. This decarbonises a large part of the transport sector, currently representing around 75% of transport emissions.

Ships: Emissions from this sector come through burning bunker fuel (a heavy oil distillate). We reduce this by half on 2008 levels by 2050, reflecting the targets of the international regulations of the International Maritime Organisation.

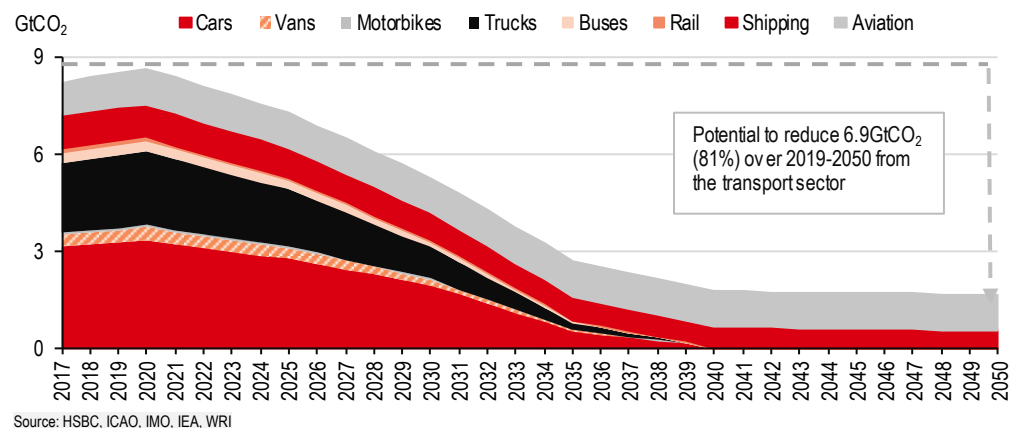
Aviation: Aircraft burn kerosene, an oil derivative, thus generating CO₂ – we assume the International Civil Aviation Organisation's CORSIA regulations are met, capping global emissions at 2019 levels into perpetuity.

Overall, these decarbonisation pathways across transport reduce sectoral emissions by 81% by 2050.

No differentiation between DMs and EMs due to leapfrog effect

We do not differentiate between developed markets and other countries in our modelling of the transition towards cleaner transport. This is because, although more developed countries may have greater economic ability to effect transition, they are likely also to have greater embeddedness of existing transport infrastructure – effectively sunk costs. Meanwhile, countries with less capital to invest, or a higher cost of capital, may nevertheless have the ability to build clean transport infrastructure in the first place, without building and then closing existing transport networks – the ‘leapfrog effect’.

Future Frontiers scenario: Transport trajectory to 2050



Currently, the transport sector uses oil derivatives (mostly diesel and gasoline) for 77% of its fuel consumption, and bunkers – the heavy, residual oil left over after gasoline, diesel and other light hydrocarbons are extracted from crude oil during the refining process – for another 15%. Thus, overall, the transport sector relies on oil for around 92% of its total feedstock.

Overall, Transport is a major emitter but also, theoretically, presents a major decarbonisation opportunity

As the global population has increased, and affluence has risen in many geographies, so have transport oil consumption and emissions, both due to increased personal and business travel and given increased trade volumes with greater enabling laws, globalisation and infrastructure. And in economies where transport emissions have decreased in absolute levels, they have often increased in terms of their relative share of the total. Transport is a major emitter, but, also, theoretically, presents a major decarbonisation opportunity.

The full note contains a deeper look at the future of *Cars & Vans*, including analysing the high global EV penetration and the knock-on effects on components demand from semiconductors to batteries, *trucks and other heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)*, *Aviation* and the progress that Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) seeks, and *Shipping*, including a look at the *IMO Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI)*

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