

 **Impacts**

## Climate change ? It's the Chinese and Americans who are responsible !

*The most carbon emitting countries in the world are currently China and the US. Hence, they are seen as the number one cause for climate change, and should take the lead in solving the issue. The EU only accounts for 10 % of global emissions, and 7 % of the world population, and as such may not be a priority for action. Is this a valid argument ?*



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Only looking at current absolute greenhouse gas emissions per country is too simplistic to conclude on who should act against climate change. A fresh perspective based on a set of broader data is necessary.

First, as greenhouse gases accumulate in the atmosphere, past emissions are important and historical responsibilities should be taken into account. In this context, the role of China becomes less significant compared to industrialised countries such as the EU and US.

Also, national emission data hides the carbon footprint of products that are imported. Statistics from the Ministry of environment shows that while French domestic emissions have decreased since 1990, the saving has been offset by the increasing impact of imported goods.

Last, countries do not have the same capacity to engage in a proactive phase-out of fossil fuels. While the US are not doing enough, the EU and France should not just wait to act, considering the costs of inaction and socio-economic benefits of climate policies.

In reality, failing to play our part in the EU (and France) would make us co-responsible of the lack of action at global level.