

shipping CO2 emissions

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I heard an interesting article on shipping CO₂ emissions this

week on the radio. Climate change has been in the news a lot recently with David Attenborough and [Extinction rebellion](#). The PM programme on radio 4 has been looking at three different areas we have to cut emissions from. The first of these was housing where I felt the presenter Evan Davies skirted around the difficulties. The second was on shipping CO₂ emissions. This is not an area that comes up very much when considering climate change. This article did not avoid the issues but met them head on. They spoke to someone from Maersk which claims to be the largest shipping company. The interview was very revealing. As I have written about before current container ships are huge. Evan Davies went on board one. It carries 18,000 containers and has a tank with a capacity of 10,000 tonnes for the diesel fuel used to power its enormous diesel engines. The man from Maersk was very forthright and honest. They have cut emissions by 40 odd % over the last number of years but his aim was to get to zero emissions. What was so revealing was he had no idea how they were going to do it. The programme then explored various ways of achieving this. These have been covered in a previous blog post on shipping but are worth reiterating. The first is batteries. This was dismissed straight away. The size of the vessels and their engines lead you to see this would never work. They then looked at biofuels. This is a theoretically feasible solution but of course you straight away come up against the food versus fuel. Second generation fuels using the parts of crops you cannot eat (stalks/leaves) are a potential way round this. We covered this in our book and I would direct the reader towards the problems covered there. The next solution was something I don't know much about but will research, that is making liquid fuels from CO₂ using electrolysis. This has an advantage that I thought the programme was going to pick up on, that it would tie a lot of carbon up and potentially act as a carbon sink. Like the last solution it would take a lot of energy though. The next solution is to slow the ships down. They spoke to someone from a green group who said slowing the ships down by 30% would buy the company 6 years grace. Their representative was not at all interested in this, funnily enough. The last solution was put by Evan Davies. Maybe the era of globalisation has to end. Strangely enough the man from Maersk didn't see it that way. What was very surprising to me was his comment that the company had to come up with a solution by 2030 if they wanted new ships for 2050. Neil

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