FINNAIR NAMED WORLD'S GREENEST AIRLINE

News / Airlines

Out of 20 major airlines, Finnair was the least polluting of the world's largest airlines in 2014, according to a new study.

The study was conducted by the U.K.'s University of Warwick in Coventry. They examined data from the annual reports of 20 large airlines as well as from the Carbon Disclosure Project, a voluntary carbon data reporting organization based in London. They looked at both greenhouse gasses emitted by burning jet fuel, and from CO2 emissions from airline ground operations and services.

Finnair had the smallest "carbon footprint" in 2014. The good environmental marks are not especially surprising for an airline that once flew a plane from Helsinki to New York City fueled only by recycled cooking oil. Other top performers were TAP Portugal and Virgin Australia. "Finnair performs best due to the age and type of its planes, the routes it flies and the overall number of connections it offers," said Frederik Dahlmann, who conducted the study. "Plus it is probably among the most advanced when it comes to accounting for and managing its emissions over time," he added.

When it comes to carbon footprints, bigger is definitely not better. The airlines with the largest

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carbon footprint were among the biggest airlines in the world. American Airlines came in at an ignominious first, followed by Delta, and United Airlines. The bottom was rounded out by Lufthansa, Air France-KLM, and Emirates.

The researchers seemed to believe this had to do with mergers more than outright pollution output, because a bigger fleet means a bigger footprint. Since American merged with US Airways in 2013, and United merged with Continental in 2010, the new larger airlines, unfortunately, translated to larger carbon emissions.

Sadly, the study also revealed that the airline industry has a long way to go to curb pollution. According to the study, the industry has not made any significant strides in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in almost a decade. “The data demonstrates that for most airlines emissions are either growing or stagnant; none are showing a significant reduction in CO2emissions,” Dahlmann stated in the study. The aviation industry already produces about 2% of the world’s human induced CO2 emissions and that is expected to rise unless airlines start making changes, which might happen if passengers start making more considered choices about which airlines they fly.

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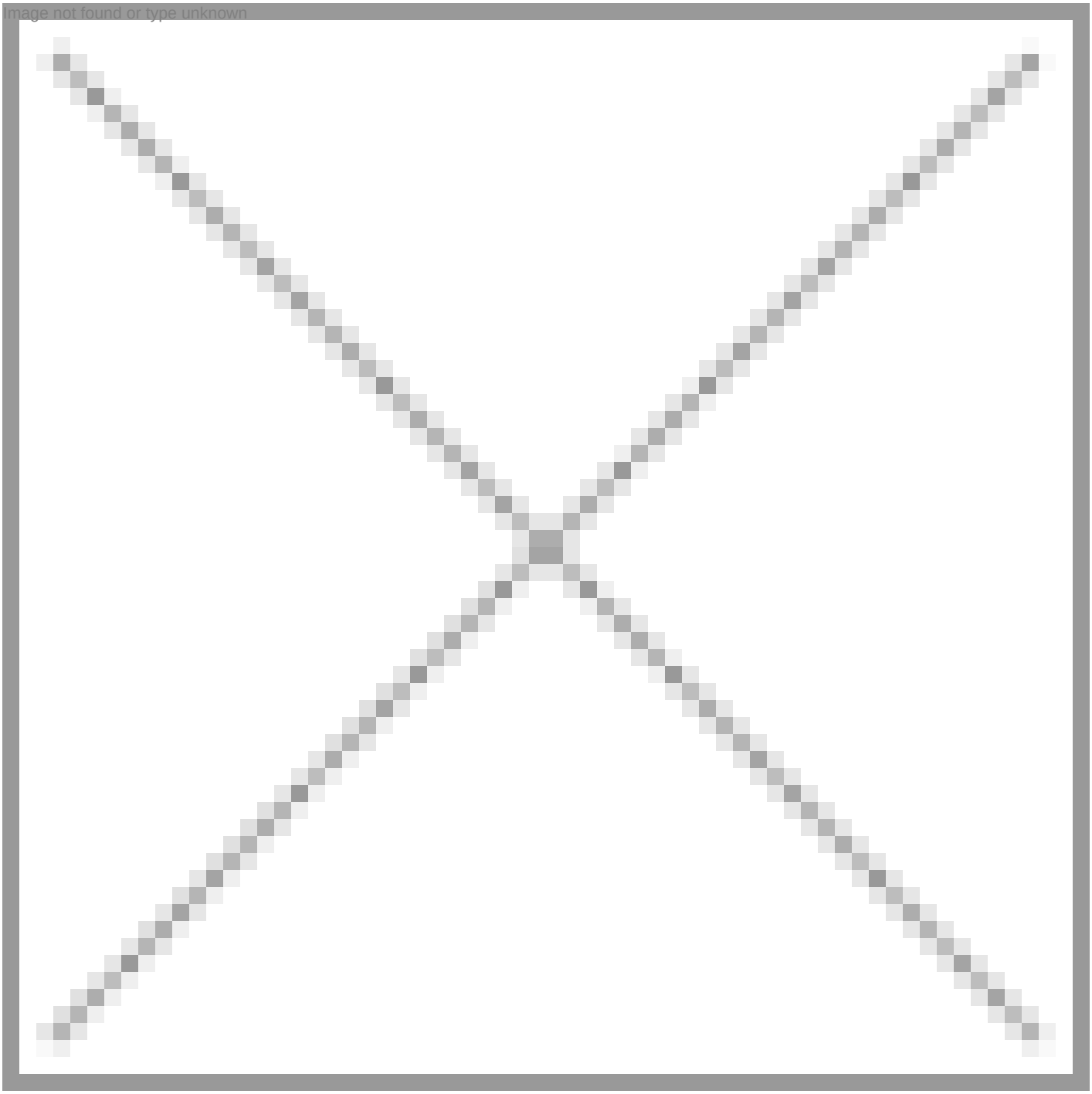

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