



Press Release

NEW REPORT: **Together We Can: 8 Habit changes for below 2°C**

Hong Kong, 16th March 2022 – CWR releases a new report, “**Together We Can: 8 Habit changes for below 2°C**” that shows how individuals can help cut carbon emissions with only small changes to our lifestyles. The report shows that if enough of us made simple habit tweaks across eight areas of our daily life from food, online shopping to internet surfing plus more, we could save more than two billion tonnes of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (see infographics in following pages). This is equivalent to the combined 2015 GHG emissions of Japan and South Korea!

The report’s inspirational actions are timely and a welcomed injection of optimism after the recently released “**IPCC Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability**”, which painted a bleak future for mankind. With a greater than 50% chance that we will reach 1.5°C before 2040 and worsening climate impacts, UN secretary-general António Guterres described the IPCC tome as “*an atlas of human suffering and a damning indictment of failed climate leadership*”.

Many of us want to do something about climate change but don’t know where to start; or we feel disempowered as we believe our actions are insignificant. With this report you can find out how we as individuals and we as a group can do something. “*The power of one is strong, the power of a group is even stronger*” is clearly illustrated in the report, as it urges “*we can all make a positive impact towards the survival of this wonderful and beautiful planet we call home*”.

The habit tweaks showed in the report are simple and more importantly very doable. There is a whole range of them to choose from – there are “usual savings” like walking instead of driving and electricity saving tips at home to “savings unusual” like cutting time on social media and swapping to Wifi (see infographics in following pages for the full list).

Did you know that 9 kg to 21 kg of GHG emissions can be saved if just one individual from either the US, the EU or China cuts their social media activity by one hour a day for a year? This might not sound like a lot, but the energy saved can charge a smartphone about 1,100 to 2,700 times; the range of saved emissions is due to different energy mixes in the three regions analysed.

Since social media is a daily activity for more than half the world’s population, if we did this collectively GHG savings could be significant. Based on surveys on who would be willing to take climate action, the report estimates that collective action from the US, EU and China could amount to 37 MtCO_{2e}, equivalent to Cambodia’s 2015 GHG emissions. And that’s just collective savings from one less hour on social media per day; imagine if we made more changes.

Although by no means exhaustive, there is something for everyone to do in this 100-page guide. The report aims to inspire but not prescribe habit changes. The hope is that everyone who reads it will learn something about climate change and make some or all of the 8 actions a part of their daily lives.

“*The habit changes were selected because of their significant impact and despite using the latest available scientific data, multiple assumptions had to be made as many data gaps persist*” said Dawn McGregor of CWR and lead author of the report. But data gaps shouldn’t hold us back from action in this eleventh hour of climate change: “*Water is how we “feel” climate change and to reduce water risks, we must rein in emissions – so although this is not a typical climate & water risk report from CWR, we felt that must do this to help people save both water and emissions*” McGregor explained.

Water, the only resource we cannot live without, is very vulnerable to climate change. The 2022 IPCC report is full of dire warnings from increasing scarcity to even more extreme rain, floods and droughts; multi-metre sea level rise plus more. Our current policy path has dire consequences for water across Asia: reaching 3°C will likely lead to a 90% loss in glaciers in the Himalayas, a source region of 10 major rivers that provide water to almost two billion people. Moreover, 896 million that live in low-lying coastal regions are vulnerable to rising seas.

Time is running short, but it has not run out. The IPCC calls for transformative changes in our economies, cities, energy and food systems as well as consumerism and lifestyles – these, at the most basic level are our actions, our habits. As this new report shows, small changes in our habits can make a big difference to emissions; it’s time to start tweaking your habits to save our planet. Every effort counts; if enough of us do this, we can keep global warming to below 2°C.

Together we can.

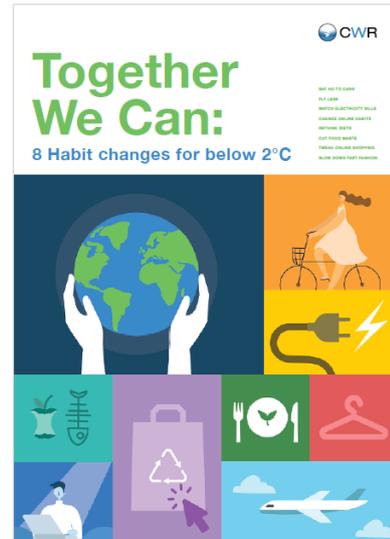
Access the **full report** [here](#)

Access the **individual actions** [here](#)

See **infographics** on individual & group impacts in the following pages

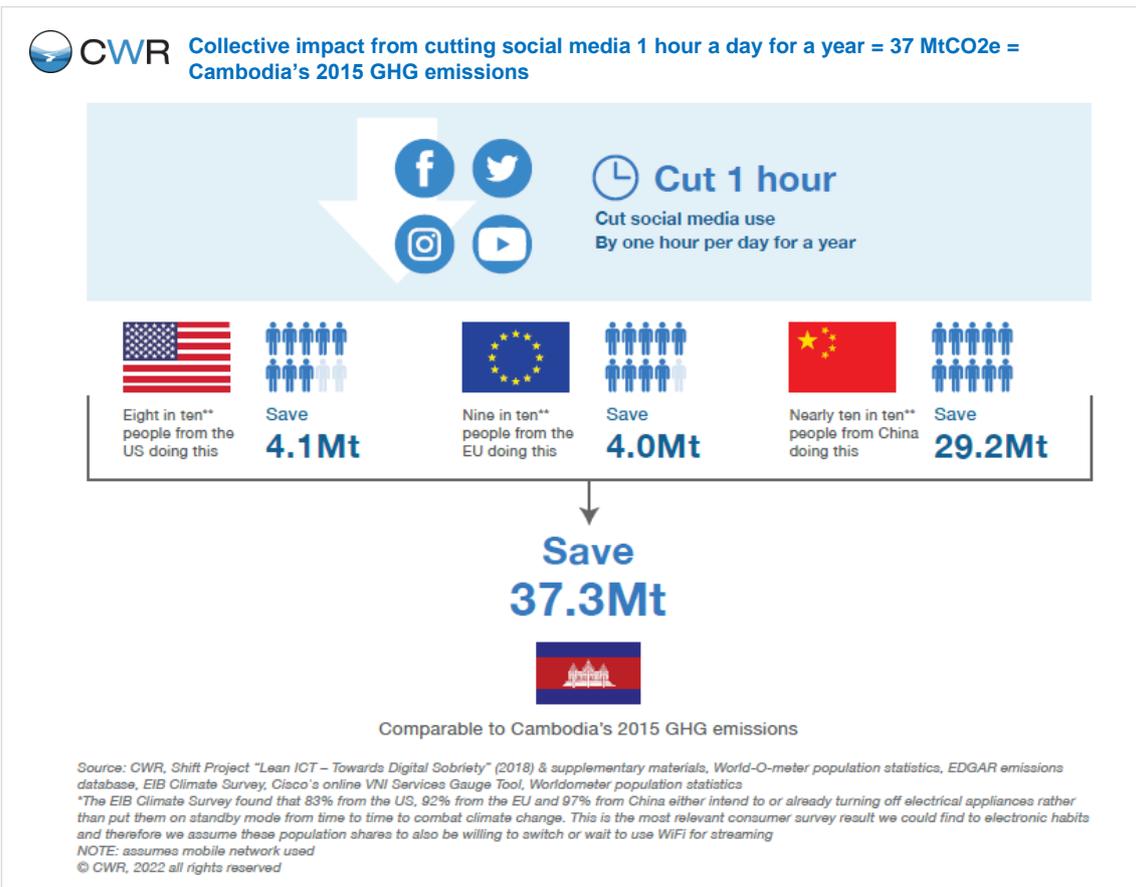
For more information, please email:
info@chinawaterrisk.org

Acknowledgment
CWR would like to thank Nelson Leong for making this report possible.



About CWR: CWR (China Water Risk) is a non-profit think tank that aims to create a world where water & climate risks are embedded in business & finance. Since its launch in 2011, it has worked from its Hong Kong base to engage with global business & investment communities in understanding and managing water risks in China & across Asia so that better decisions can be made today for a water secure tomorrow. Today, CWR leads the water risk conversation with proprietary research including co-publishing policy briefs with government-related bodies in China and globally. Our website www.chinawaterrisk.org remains the “go-to” resource on water risks. CWR has also been commissioned by financial institutions & corporates to conduct research analysing the impact of water risks across various sectors. Such reports have been considered ground-breaking and instrumental in understanding China and Asia’s water challenges. Join the conversation at www.chinawaterrisk.org

An example of a simple and easily doable habit tweak that can make big impact



This habit change is part of **Action 4: Change Online Habits**. It is amazing how much what we can do if we put our minds to it!

Climate change is not too big to solve,
The power lies with each of us,

Together We Can.

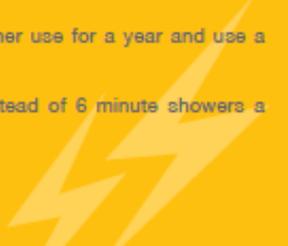
Action 4
Change online habits

We can save more than 170 million tonnes if willing individuals from the US, the EU and industrialised Asia (3 regions with the highest data consumption) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to the combined GHG emissions of Singapore, New Zealand and Cambodia in 2015:

- Stream half of online videos over WiFi instead of mobile networks for a year; and
- Cut social media use by one hour a day for a year.

**Big savings can be made by some people making small changes
8 actions = 2Gt saved = 2015 GHG emissions of Japan + South Korea**

Breaking down the 2 GTCO₂e ...

<p>1</p> <p>Action 1 Say no to cars</p> <p>We can save 730 million tonnes if willing individuals from the US, the EU and China (the world's top car owners) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to the combined GHG emissions of Chile, the UK and Singapore in 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walk instead of taking a five-minute drive every day for a year; and• Take a train instead of a 15-minute drive every day for a year. 	<p>2</p> <p>Action 2 Fly less</p>  <p>We can save almost 230 million tonnes if willing individuals from the US and China (two countries with the most flyers) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to the combined GHG emissions of Singapore, Ethiopia and Honduras in 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cut one short-haul flight (about 1,400 km) once a year;• Switch one long-haul flight (about 5,500 km) to a short-haul flight once a year; and• Fly economy (business class emits three times more carbon).
<p>3</p> <p>Action 3 Watch electricity bills</p> <p>We can save almost 630 million tonnes if willing individuals from the US, EU and China (3 regions with highest residential electricity consumption) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to the GHG emissions of the UAE, Qatar and Philippines in 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Halve air conditioner use for a year and use a fan instead; and• Take 3 minute instead of 6 minute showers a day for a year. 	<p>4</p> <p>Action 4 Change online habits</p> <p>We can save more than 170 million tonnes if willing individuals from the US, the EU and industrialised Asia (3 regions with the highest data consumption) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to the combined GHG emissions of Singapore, New Zealand and Cambodia in 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stream half of online videos over WiFi instead of mobile networks for a year; and• Cut social media use by one hour a day for a year. 

Breaking down the 2 GTCO2e ...

5

**Action 5
Rethink diets**

We can save nearly 160 million tonnes if willing individuals from Argentina, the US and Brazil (the world's top 3 beef consumers) along with the EU, China and South Korea (the top 3 pork consumers) commit to the following habits, with savings equivalent to the combined GHG emissions of Hong Kong, Singapore and Denmark in 2015:

- Eat one fewer 8oz (220 gram) steak a week for a year; and
- Eat one fewer 4oz (110 gram) pork chop a week for a year.



6

**Action 6
Cut food waste**

We can save just over 75 million tonnes if willing individuals from the US, the EU and industrialised Asia (3 regions which waste the most food) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to the combined GHG emissions of Hong Kong and Croatia in 2015:

- Cut 10% of food waste for a year.



7

**Action 7
Tweak online shopping**

We can save just over 60 million tonnes if two thirds of online shoppers from the US, the EU and China (3 regions with more than 80% of global online shoppers) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to the combined GHG emissions of Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Honduras in 2015:

- Cut one online shopping return a month for a year; and
- Choose standard instead of express delivery twice a month for a year.



8

**Action 8
Slow down fast fashion**

We can save 15 million tonnes if willing individuals from the US and the EU (which consume about three times more apparel a year than the world average) commit to the following, with savings equivalent to cutting 20% of Hong Kong's GHG emissions in 2015:

- Buy 1 fewer pairs of jeans and 3 fewer t-shirts a year; and
- Extend the lives of a pair of jeans and 3 t-shirts by 9 months.

