

Experts examine the environmental impact of crime

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New research indicates that crime committed in 2011 in England and Wales gave rise to more than 4 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents.

In the *Journal of Industrial Ecology* study, [burglary](#) resulted in the largest proportion of the total carbon footprint (30%), attributed to the carbon associated with replacement of stolen and damaged goods. Emissions arising from criminal justice system services, such as police investigations and the running of prisons and court buildings, also accounted for a large proportion.

"Although it is not possible to definitively state whether the carbon emissions that result from crime can be avoided completely by preventing crime, raising awareness of these emissions remains important for policy valuation of crime," the authors wrote.

"If the relationship between crime and climate change is overlooked, we risk undervaluing the impacts of crime and missing an opportunity as we strive toward a low-[crime](#) and low-carbon future."

More information: Helen Skudder et al, Addressing the Carbon-Crime Blind Spot: A Carbon Footprint Approach, *Journal of Industrial Ecology* (2016). [DOI: 10.1111/jiec.12457](https://doi.org/10.1111/jiec.12457)

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