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# First Annual Report

Opportunity Green is a unique charity helping unlock the opportunities from tackling climate change.

**October 2021 – 2022**

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## Introduction from Chair of Trustees, Rachel Goodwin

Opportunity Green has had an extremely impressive first year and has laid the foundations for a hugely successful future. There is already much to celebrate and firm resolve to tackle the urgent climate issues we face. Our Founder and CEO set out with a clear vision, purpose and plan and hit the ground running. There were the inevitable set up challenges such as the laborious process of gaining Charity Status but these were all tackled whilst delivering against the plan allowing for the growth of the Opportunity Green team which will soon number six. Opportunity Green has taken a pragmatic approach to their mission using legal expertise to bring a fresh eye to existing regulations and working collaboratively with other organisations to maximise impact.

At the end of their first year Opportunity Green has established a solid foundation for growth with a real emphasis on integrity in every aspect of their work. Working in this field it is vital that we adhere to values that create a sustainable and just environment and that is at the core of Opportunity Green which is why I am so proud to be involved. I feel sure that the commitment and integrity demonstrated by all at Opportunity Green is evident to funders, collaborators and to those joining the team and will ensure longstanding relationships and continued success.

It has been inspiring to witness this growth over the past year and now that the key structures are in place, the funding pipeline is strong and the talented and committed team are gathering I'm excited for the year ahead.

# "What a difference a year makes."

A note from Founder and CEO,  
**Aoife O'Leary**



Opportunity Green is one year old on 18th October 2022 and our achievements have been tremendous. We now have a staff of 6 and will be expanding again before the end of the year. We have been granted charity status and are projected to have a turn over of £1 million in year two.

The absolute highlight of Opportunity Green so far has to be our staff. Ana and Carly joined us in June and between navigating the International Maritime Organization and analysing litigation opportunities, both have achieved so much already.

As this goes out it will be Blánaid's second day and soon we'll have two more starting on a really exciting new project to build a positive coalition around green hydrogen and direct air capture.

Obviously none of this could have happened without the amazing support of our funders: ClimateWorks Foundation and European Climate Foundation (and huge thanks to the future funders in the pipeline). But also the other climate organisations that partnered with Opportunity Green on some really impactful projects.

Also a huge thank you to Opportunity Green's trustees: Rachel, Anna, Marie and Isabelle who guided me through early days to now helping Opportunity Green figure out office moves and finances.

And there is more to come! We're developing more legal strategies, working to support climate vulnerable countries, collaborating with ambitious companies and building a team of excellent, committed people, both in and with Opportunity Green.

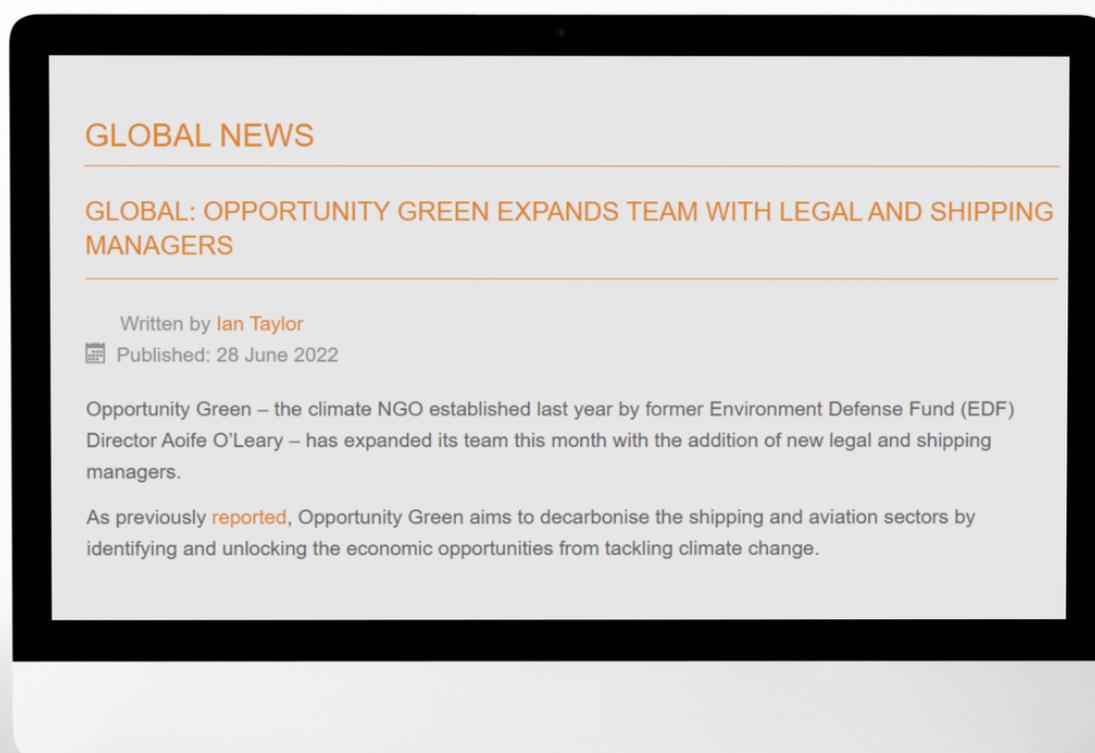
So just to conclude with this: thank you to everyone who helped to make Opportunity Green a reality. Who knows what year two will bring? I don't. But I do know this: Opportunity Green will continue to forge new pathways to have impact on the climate fight.

# A Few Milestones



## Opportunity Green's expansion covered in the press

Headline from Bunkerspot on 28th June





## Opportunity Green's Launch Party

June 6th with a keynote address from Lord Deben, Chair of the UK Climate Change Committee



## First Day of Work in Person

Ana, Aoife & Carly on their first day working in person together but with our exponential growth, this picture will look very different next year!

# Diversity



At Opportunity Green we firmly believe that everyone should be empowered to succeed. Sadly due to the current structures of society this is not always the case. We openly acknowledge that we don't have all the answers but one of our principles is to do better everyday. We have a progressive parental policy, we value learning & development so have already put aside a budget for staff on this, and believe firmly in flexible working. We are building on these policies everyday.

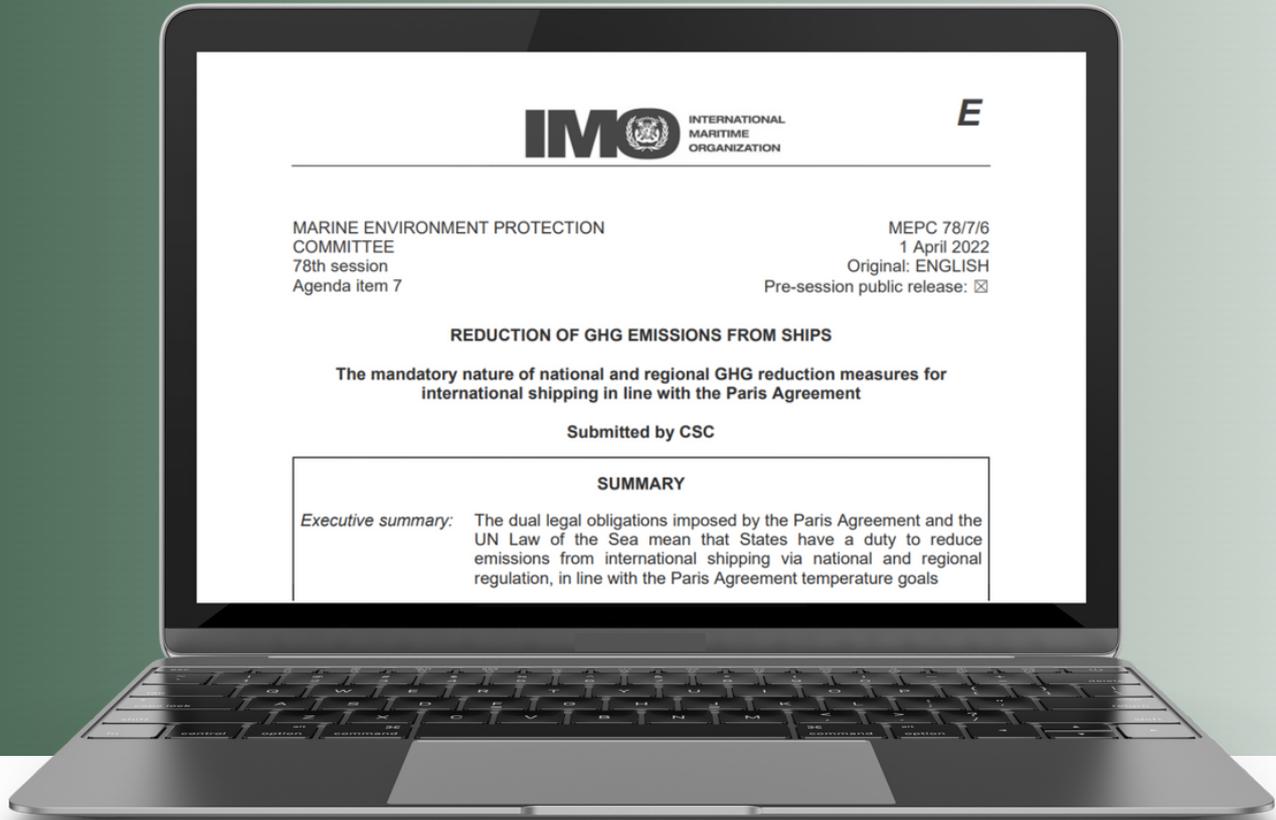
# Our Work



As this is the first annual report no financial reports have been prepared yet. Our estimated turnover for the first year of operations is approximately £300,000 but we expect that to grow to about £1,000,000 in year two. Opportunity Green started with just Aoife O’Leary but in June 2022 both Ana Laranjeira and Carly Hicks joined. In October 2022 Blánaid Sheeran joined, and two more staff will join soon. Opportunity Green began in October 2021 as company (no. 13635293) but was granted charity status (no. 1199413) in June 2022 and we are now in the process of transferring all employees and assets to the charity which should be complete by the end of the year. We have just moved into a new office at 40 Bowling Green Lane, EC1R 0NE in Clerkenwell, please come and visit us if you are in the area!

Our work has been referenced in the Financial Times, the Guardian, and the Washington Post, among other news outlets and podcasts. Collaboration is central to Opportunity Green, and throughout this year we’ve formed invaluable work partnerships with organisations across the globe. Our legal analysis of the Paris Agreement and the UN Law of the Sea has been submitted to the International Maritime Organization to frame the debate around the ability for national action in international shipping emissions; our work has challenged the accepted wisdom on what was possible as part of the EU’s Green Deal, and our joint report with Pacific Environment was a foundation for the brilliant Ports for People campaign.

# Legal



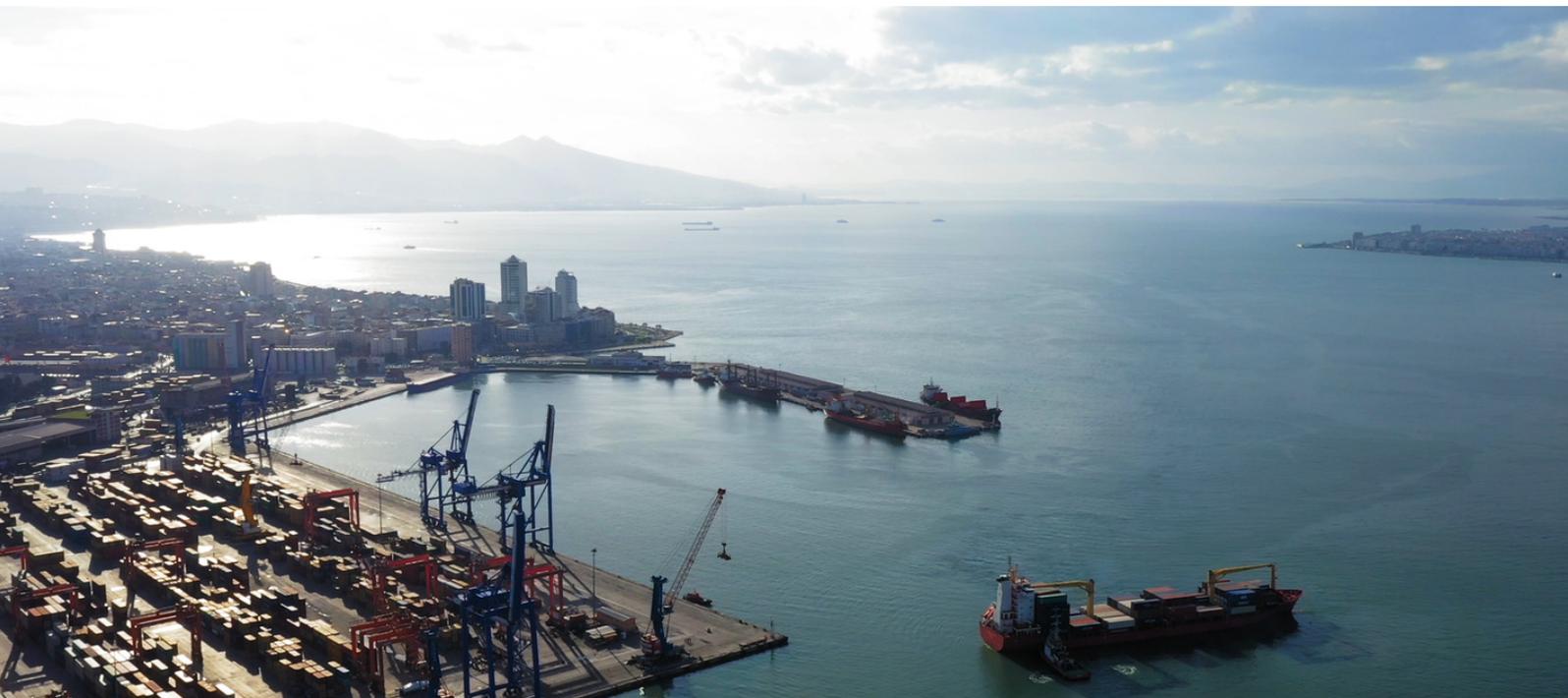
We have provided legal analysis for numerous other NGOs, and worked with progressive consultancies on a variety of climate matters: from agriculture and aviation, to the EU's delegated rules on additionality for hydrogen production.

We are now building out our own legal programme (so watch this space!) but our legal philosophy is simple: we believe lawyers are obligated to analyse the existing legal systems and regulations to stop climate change. We use legal innovation to forge new pathways on climate action or where that is not possible, find pathways within the present legal structure to facilitate the legislation needed to slash carbon pollution. Opportunity Green's experience, positioning and skills make it well placed to bring a fresh legal eye to help build the conditions for success in the use of legal avenues.



# Ports for People

Portside communities suffer from higher-than-average rates of asthma and lung disease, due in large part to the pollution from the ocean shipping industry. With the launch of the Ports For People campaign, Opportunity Green collaborated with Pacific Environment to set out how ports and local communities can take ownership of their transition to a climate-friendly future, without having to wait for international action.



# Legal Obligation to Reduce Emissions from Shipping

Working with other NGOs, including Transport & Environment and the Moving Forward Network, Opportunity Green identified that the dual legal obligations imposed by the Paris Agreement and the UN Law of the Sea mean that states have a duty to reduce emissions, via national and regional regulation, from international shipping in line with the Paris Agreement temperature goals. Our analysis assesses the legality of states regulating international shipping through national and/or regional regulations. In addition, Opportunity Green produced specific reports on the UK and US, looking into the national regulatory landscape to understand how these international obligations translated into implementable regulations.



# Human Rights

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Both aviation and shipping are sectors that emit a lot of pollution to the atmosphere but pay little in taxes, and do not contribute to the sustainability of the most climate vulnerable nations as they try to adapt to the climate change impacts that are already happening. Therefore, Opportunity Green responded to the United Nations Human Rights Council call for input on the “Promotion and protection of human rights in the context of mitigation, adaptation, and financial actions to address climate change, with particular emphasis on loss and damage”, ahead of UNGA77. As the sector’s international regulator, the IMO ought to adopt stringent global measures to phase out shipping emissions in line with the Paris Agreement’s 1.5°C temperature goal, and contribute to the global efforts with respect to financial support, remedies and redress for those most vulnerable to climate change.



# Legal Consultancy Examples



## Hydrogen Delegated Act

The European Commission produced a delegated act defining additionality and geographic and temporal correlation of Renewable Fuels of Non-Biological Origin (RFNBOs). However, the delegated act does not ensure that RFNBOs are produced with additional renewable energy but rather due to a grandfathering clause undermines this goal. Our legal analysis for Transport & Environment set out how in addition to this, the rules themselves go beyond the authority the Commission was given by the legislation in question.

## No legal reason not to act on non-CO<sub>2</sub> from Aviation

In addition to the impacts of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by aircraft on the climate, aviation has so-called non-CO<sub>2</sub> climate impacts. One of the main non-CO<sub>2</sub> impacts is the formation of contrails; by some measures, its contribution to global warming is larger than that of aviation CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Opportunity Green provided legal analysis in a report by CE Delft which explores the potential for reducing the non-CO<sub>2</sub> content, setting up a monitoring system and the legality of regulating the non-CO<sub>2</sub> content.



# Ambitious Industry Coalitions

Green hydrogen and direct air capture (DAC) are two essential technologies for decarbonising aviation and shipping. However, currently both UK and EU policy on green hydrogen and DAC do not prioritise these sectors for these technologies. This could lead to the problematic prioritisation of sectors that have alternative technologies. We are working to build a coalition of companies from both the aviation and shipping industries to tackle this challenge by working with regulators to ensure that both technologies only go to the sectors that need them.



## Climate Ambition at the International Maritime Organization

To secure emissions targets which are Paris-aligned and enable an equitable transition that leaves no one behind, we need ambitious Member States to actively participate in the IMO GHG negotiations. Climate vulnerable countries have historically had limited engagement at the IMO, in part because of a lack of capacity to consistently follow technical discussions and inability to participate in the meetings in London. We aim to help to solve that by creating the London Friends of the IMO (LFoI): a group of London-based ambassadors and senior diplomats from ambitious climate vulnerable nations that are not presently active in the IMO GHG discussions, and provide them with the information and tools they need to engage. Just this year, we've reached out to 35 LFoI embassies, discussed this work with other well-established and progressive IMO delegations, and have begun planning a joint LFoI event with the UK Government.

# Future Plans



**Aoife and Opportunity Green's Chief Security Officer, Roo attend a climate march.**

Many of our projects are in their early stages and seeing these build and achieve impact will be a highlight for 2023. We also have plans for looking more deeply into legal avenues to reduce emissions from international transport. We'll be building our support to climate vulnerable countries in the IMO and hopefully bringing those countries into the aviation decarbonisation debate as well. Finally, we'll be looking to tackle the false narrative that gas, another fossil fuel, could have any role to play in decarbonisation.

# A Huge Thank You to Our Funders



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