

# HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS COMMITTS TO REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF DISPUTES BY SIGNING TRANSFORMATIVE ARBITRATION AND LITIGATION PLEDGES

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Firm news

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Herbert Smith Freehills has committed to reducing the environmental impact of disputes by signing two important industry pledges: the [Green Pledge](#) of the Campaign for Greener Arbitrations (the CGA) and the [Greener Litigation Pledge](#).

The CGA is a global initiative aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of arbitral proceedings. Signatories of the Green Pledge make a commitment in their personal capacity to minimise the environmental impact of the arbitrations in which they are involved, focusing on the reduction of the environmental impact associated with travel and the use of paper. This includes: corresponding electronically, unless hard copy correspondence is expressly needed; encouraging the use of videoconferencing facilities as an alternative to travel; and avoiding printing.

Herbert Smith Freehills has been at the forefront of efforts within the arbitration community to provide a more sustainable arbitral process. In spring 2020, the firm put together a menu of case management options which clients can adopt or propose in the conduct of their arbitrations.

The firm has also given significant institutional support to the CGA initiative, with Senior Associate [Maguelonne de Brugiere](#) acting as a member of the CGA's Steering Committee and Associate [Helin Laufer](#) co-heading the CGA Europe Sub-committee, which comprises arbitrators, practitioners and representatives of various arbitral institutions from over 30 European jurisdictions.

[Maguelonne](#) is also a member of the CGA's Drafting Committee, which published a set of six Green Protocols. The Green Protocols aim to promote better environmental behaviour through a series of action items and are tailored to the conduct of arbitral proceedings (and include a model procedural order), law firms, arbitrators, arbitration conferences, hearing venues, and arbitral institutions. The Green Protocols are accompanied by a framework document which explains the background of the Green Protocols and the Green Pledge.

Global Head of Herbert Smith Freehills' Arbitration Practice, [Paula Hodges QC](#) said:

*"Herbert Smith Freehills' decision to sign the Green Pledge is a significant step in meeting our target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2030, and supports our firm-wide global sustainability strategy. It also forms part of a wider initiative within our global arbitration practice to provide our clients with options for a more sustainable arbitration process."*

Meanwhile, the firm has become a founding signatory of the new Greener Litigation Pledge, a commitment by law firms, barristers' chambers and other organisations to reduce the environmental impact of their disputes practices in England and Wales.

This Pledge is the first act of the recently formed Greener Litigation Project. The Project is a group of leading disputes practices which aims to reduce the carbon footprint of litigation, including by engaging with courts and other legal organisations to support changes to rules, procedures and practices. [Jan O'Neill](#), a lawyer in HSF's London Disputes team, is a member of the Project's Steering Committee.

The signatories to the Greener Litigation Pledge have committed to take active steps to reduce, with a view to minimising, the environmental impact of dispute resolution, including again the two principal sources of emissions incurred by litigants: printed documents and (especially international) travel.

Co-Head of the firm's Global Disputes Practice, [Damien Byrne Hill](#), commented: *"These two pledges represent a great opportunity for us to do something to address the negative impact disputes have on the environment, and I am therefore delighted to be signing up to them."*

The news comes as the firm recently announced its intention to reduce its carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. Herbert Smith Freehills has also just joined forces with other legal sector leaders to fight climate change through the Net Zero Lawyers Alliance (NZLA) – a coalition of commercial law firms committed to helping the world achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Earlier this month the firm also joined 13 other influential global companies and brands to form a Global Alliance, which supports and scales the innovative and ground-breaking solutions developed by the soon-to-be-announced fifteen Earthshot Prize Finalists. Founded by HRH Prince William in 2020, The Earthshot Prize is an ambitious global environmental prize to discover and scale the best solutions to help repair our planet over the next 10 years. Herbert Smith Freehills will also be heavily involved in the Sustainable Innovation Forum, which runs alongside COP26 this year.

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## **THE GREEN PLEDGE AND THE CGA**

The Green Pledge and the CGA were founded by the independent arbitrator Lucy Greenwood in 2019. The Green Pledge quickly gained traction in the wider international arbitration community. As a result, the CGA has been joined by key stakeholders in the international arbitration community, including arbitrators, representatives of law firms and arbitral institutions, third party funders, conference organisers, corporate clients and legal technology providers. For more information, visit the website [here](#).

For more information about our commitment to environmental sustainability, in arbitration and more widely, please refer to the 10th and 11th issues of Inside Arbitration, which are available [here](#) and [here](#)

## **GREENER LITIGATION PLEDGE**

All signatories of the Greener Litigation Pledge will be invited to participate in the Greener Litigation Project. The Greener Litigation Project is for solicitors' firms, barristers' chambers and other dispute professionals actively committed to reducing the environmental impact of dispute resolution, including litigation conducted in the courts of England and Wales. The Greener Litigation Project aims to engage with practice, procedure and policy to reduce the environmental impact of litigation and to further the objectives of the Greener Litigation Pledge.

To read the full list of commitments involved in the Greener Litigation Pledge, and to find how to sign up to the Pledge, please click [here](#).

## **KEY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions, or would like to know how this might affect your business, phone, or email these key contacts.



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