

SPORT ONE

CARBON
ZERO

FUND REPORT

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HIGH IMPACT ATHLETES

High Impact Athletes (HIA) is an athlete-founded, tech-enabled charity that is transforming sporting influence into measurable global impact. Founded by Olympians Marcus Daniell and Hugo Inglis, HIA provides the infrastructure for athletes, from Olympic champions to everyday competitors, to fund the world's most effective, evidence-based solutions across climate, global health, and animal welfare.

Born from the realization that sport's massive cultural power lacked a mechanism for precise, measurable impact, HIA built the missing link: a credible, scalable system for athlete-led giving that breaks away from the inefficiencies of traditional charity.

In just four years, High Impact Athletes has grown to a movement of hundreds of athletes across 50+ sports. Together, they have influenced millions of dollars in donations, improving hundreds of thousands of lives, protecting millions of animals, and eliminating hundreds of thousands of tonnes of CO₂e.

THE HIA MODEL

HIA has built a repeatable, scalable system for athlete-led impact:

- Evidence-based strategy: We don't guess; we evaluate. All donations are routed exclusively to charities vetted by independent evaluators such as GiveWell, Founders Pledge, and Giving Green. This ensures every dollar achieves maximum ROI.
- 100% impact model: HIA does not take a cut. 100% of athlete donations flow directly to the selected solutions, ensuring the focus remains entirely on impact, not overheads.
- Radical transparency: Donors receive tangible impact reports, lives improved, tonnes of CO₂e mitigated, or animals protected. This validates the "win" and builds long-term trust.
- Performance-linked giving: Campaigns are co-designed with athletes to link sporting performance directly to outcomes. A canoeist's clean run funds clean water; a tennis ace protects biodiversity. This turns sporting stats into social change.
- Scalable tech stack: The platform uses secure global payment infrastructure and AI-powered automation to manage donor journeys, keeping HIA low-overhead and globally scalable by design.

Note: The climate strategy and analysis detailed in the following sections is a synthesis of [Giving Green's independent research and public-facing work](#), and some private research that High Impact Athletes commissioned.

STRATEGIC RESEARCH PARTNER: GIVING GREEN



Giving Green

Giving Green is the research engine behind the Sport One Carbon Zero Fund. They are a team of impact evaluators dedicated to identifying the most effective, evidence-based solutions to the climate crisis.

Unlike traditional charity evaluators that focus on overhead costs, Giving Green assesses leverage. They identify underfunded, high-potential strategies, such as policy change, technology innovation, and market transformation, where a marginal dollar can unlock outsized emissions reductions.

The Research Methodology: Giving Green's analysis is rigorous and open-source. They rely on deep data (emissions modeling), academic literature, and expert interviews with policymakers and scientists to build a thesis for every recommendation.

Their researchers utilize a specific "Scale, Feasibility, Funding Need" framework to score opportunities:

- Scale: If this succeeds, how much carbon does it remove?
- Feasibility: Is the technology or policy win actually achievable?
- Funding Need: Is this area neglected by other large funders?

The Selection Process: To determine the portfolio, Giving Green executes a five-step high-impact filter:

1. Identify Impact Strategies: Scan the landscape for systemic levers (e.g., aviation policy).
2. Assess Viability: Stress-test the strategy against the Scale/Feasibility/Need framework.
3. Long-list Organizations: Map the key players driving those specific changes.
4. Evaluate Opportunities: Deep-dive into specific nonprofits to ensure they can absorb and deploy capital effectively.
5. Publish Recommendations: Release full transparency reports so donors can trace exactly how their contribution drives change.

SPORT ONE, CARBON ZERO FUND STRATEGY

The Sport One Carbon Zero Fund was engineered to achieve maximum leverage against sport's three major emissions drivers: Travel, Energy, and Infrastructure.

To build this portfolio, High Impact Athletes partnered with climate researchers at Giving Green. Acting as 'impact coaches', Giving Green rigorously assesses the climate landscape to pinpoint where a dollar goes furthest. Just as elite athletes rely on data to optimize performance, this fund relies on evidence to maximize emissions abatement. The strategy moves beyond 'defense' (offsetting past emissions) to play 'offense', funding the policy shifts, innovations, and market-shaping initiatives needed to decarbonize the future of sport.

THE SELECTION CRITERIA

The Fund selects organizations based on a rigorous set of performance metrics:

- **Extreme Cost-Effectiveness:** We target opportunities with the potential to avert emissions at a cost of roughly \$1 per tonne, making this portfolio ~10x more effective than high-quality offsets and ~50x more effective than standard tree planting.
- **Systemic Scalability:** We prioritize solutions that change the rules of the game. This means funding policy advocacy (to change laws) and technology catalysis (to lower costs of green tech), rather than small-scale, localized projects.
- **Room for Funding:** We only fund organizations where the marginal dollar matters. If a charity is fully funded, we move on. We target high-potential organizations with a demonstrated "funding gap" where new capital can be immediately deployed to accelerate impact.
- **Rigorous Vetting:** Every organization in the portfolio has undergone deep due diligence by independent evaluators like Giving Green and Founders Pledge to ensure governance, efficacy, and scientific validity.

STRATEGIC PORTFOLIO ALLOCATIONS

In addition to raw carbon efficiency, the Fund is optimized for the specific context of the sports world:

- **Relevance (The Sport Nexus):** The portfolio specifically targets the sectors that sport relies on. We fund aviation decarbonization because athletes fly; we fund green steel and cement because sport builds stadiums; we fund geothermal energy because venues need 24/7 power.
- **Diversification:** To mitigate risk, the Fund operates as a diversified portfolio. By spreading capital across multiple high-leverage sectors (policy, tech, heavy industry), we hedge against individual project failure while maintaining a high expected value for total emissions reduced.
- **Communicable Impact:** We prioritize solutions that are complex in execution but clear in purpose. This ensures that while the work is technical, the story, "fixing travel", "cleaning the grid", is legible to fans, enabling us to mobilize public donations alongside athlete pledges.

MAJOR EMISSION SECTORS

TARGET SECTOR 1: TRAVEL EMISSIONS (AVIATION & SHIPPING)

Why it matters to Sport: Modern sport is built on global movement. Athletes fly to compete; equipment ships to venues. We cannot "efficiency" our way out of this; we need to change the fuel and the physics.

Aviation: Aviation contributes ~2.5% of global CO₂ emissions, but its true warming impact is likely double that due to non-CO₂ effects like contrails. Without intervention, aviation could consume over 20% of the global carbon budget by 2050. Yet philanthropic funding here is anemic, receiving less than 1% of total climate giving.

The Offensive Strategy: Instead of buying offsets, the Fund targets the levers that will decarbonize flight itself:

- **Contrail Mitigation (The Quick Win):** Research suggests that rerouting just 10% of flights could eliminate up to 80% of contrail-induced warming. We fund the research and advocacy to make this industry standard.
- **Policy & Demand Management:** We support advocacy for market-based regulations (like frequent flyer levies) that generate revenue to fund low-carbon innovation.
- **Zero-Emission Technology:** We back the long game, accelerating the R&D for hydrogen aircraft to replace fossil fuels on long-haul routes.

Reducing Aviation Emissions: Strategy Report Giving Green, Nov. 2025.

Maritime Shipping: Shipping moves 80% of global trade, including the gear, courts, and infrastructure of sport. It accounts for ~3% of global emissions, and like aviation, it is massively underfunded, receiving just 0.2% of the capital needed to reach net zero.

The Offensive Strategy:

- **Policy Leverage:** We fund advocacy targeting the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to enforce stronger emission targets and incentivize low-carbon fuels.
- **Green Corridors:** Supporting the development of trade routes that exclusively use zero-emission fuels (like Green Hydrogen/Ammonia) to prove the technology at scale.

Based on scale, feasibility, and funding need, the strongest philanthropic plays target research and advocacy to cut aviation's non-CO₂ impacts.

Reducing Maritime Shipping Emissions Report Giving Green, Nov. 2025.

TARGET SECTOR 2: HEAVY INDUSTRY (INFRASTRUCTURE)

Why it matters to Sport: Every record-breaking stadium, velodrome, and aquatic center is built on steel and cement. These materials are the "embodied carbon" of sport.

The Challenge: Heavy industry (steel, cement, chemicals) accounts for one-third of global emissions. It is historically "hard-to-abate" due to high heat requirements and long facility lifespans. Despite this, it receives only ~2.6% of foundation climate funding.

The Offensive Strategy: We target the "green premium" to make clean materials competitive for future stadiums:

- **Green Public Procurement:** We fund advocacy that pushes governments (the world's biggest buyers of concrete) to mandate low-carbon materials. This creates the market demand needed to drive down costs for everyone, including sport.
- **Innovation Catalysis:** Supporting the R&D of alternative materials (e.g., low-carbon cement chemistries) and green hydrogen inputs for steel manufacturing.

Decarbonizing Heavy Industry: Strategy Report Giving Green, Nov. 2025.

TARGET SECTOR 3: ENERGY

Why it matters to Sport: From floodlights to ice rinks to broadcasts, sport is energy-hungry. We need a grid that provides reliable, carbon-free power 24/7, not just when the sun shines or the wind blows.

The Challenge: Solar and wind are essential, yet intermittent. To reach true Net Zero, we need 'Clean Firm Power' to fill the gaps. This critical sector, advanced nuclear, geothermal, and grid transmission, gets only a fraction of the attention given to renewables, leaving a dangerous gap in the energy transition.

The Offensive Strategy: We invest in a portfolio of "technology-agnostic" solutions to ensure the lights stay on without burning fossil fuels.

- **The Multi-Tool Approach:** We fund the Clean Air Task Force (CATF), a technology-agnostic advocacy group driving the "neglected" solutions required for a carbon-free grid:
 - **Advanced Nuclear:** Pushing policy to commercialize small modular reactors (SMRs) for scalable, zero-carbon baseload power.
 - **Grid Modernization:** Advocating for the infrastructure upgrades needed to move clean energy from generation sites to stadiums and cities.
 - **Zero-Carbon Fuels:** Accelerating the hydrogen and ammonia markets, technologies that not only clean the grid but are essential for decarbonizing the shipping and aviation sectors mentioned above.
 - **The Geothermal Moonshot:** We support Project InnerSpace, which is working to unlock "Geothermal Anywhere". By mapping global resources and de-risking exploration, they aim to transform the heat beneath our feet into a globally accessible power source, turning the ground sport is played on into the battery that powers it.

CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The full list of recommended charities can be found in [the linked Google Sheet](#). The Fund is currently deployed across four high-impact organizations. Each has been rigorously vetted by Giving Green for cost-effectiveness, scalability, and capacity to absorb funding.

QUICK SUMMARY

We recommend four non profits to the 2025 portfolio:

- **Opportunity Green:** Opportunity green engages in policy work to reduce aviation and marine emissions, accelerate the development of zero carbon fuels, and works broadly to decarbonise international transport emissions.
- **Clean Air Task Force (CATF):** CATF engages in policy work, focused on decarbonising international transport and energy emissions.
- **Future Cleantech Architects (FCA):** FCA focuses on decarbonising construction, including production of steel and cement, which are significant contributors to athlete emissions, through their use in stadium construction.
- **Project Innerspace:** Focuses on reducing energy emissions by making geothermal energy more accessible. Geothermal provides clean, reliable electricity that can run consistently, even when solar and wind power are low.

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OPPORTUNITY GREEN

OPPORTUNITY GREEN

Opportunity Green is a U.K.-based nonprofit organization using legal, policy, and economic frameworks to advance climate action. It primarily focuses on reducing emissions from aviation and maritime shipping.

Opportunity Green works to cut emissions from aviation and shipping by shaping international and EU rules and driving private-sector climate action. Its advocacy pushes low-carbon fleets and fuels while targeting aviation's contrail emissions.

Their approach to reducing aviation and maritime shipping emissions incorporates four main strategies:

- Supporting contributions from climate-vulnerable countries in international policy discussions.
- Advocating for ambitious policies and regulations in the EU.
- Identifying and pursuing strategic legal action to influence policy, financial institutions, and industry.
- Facilitating a private-sector coalition to promote clean alternative fuels.

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In 2025, Opportunity Green grew its staff capacity from 21 to 29 members. Key activities include opening an office in Brussels to strengthen its EU-level policy advocacy, launching a major legal filing against the EU to challenge its green finance rules, and supporting climate-vulnerable countries through negotiations surrounding the IMO's new global shipping levy.

More funding would boost Opportunity Green's aviation and shipping capacity, support its climate diplomacy, and ready it for key EU policy shifts, while developing new work on steel, data-center, and agricultural emissions.

We believe Opportunity Green fills critical gaps in nonprofit advocacy for the hard-to-abate aviation and shipping sectors. Its theory of change is strong, using coalitions, capacity building, policy advocacy, and legal action to drive impact.

Relevance to Sport: Aviation and international travel constitute ~65% of sport's carbon footprint. Opportunity Green targets the only level of intervention (international law) capable of decarbonizing this sector at scale.

- [Giving Green Research: Opportunity Green](#)
- [Giving Green Evaluations Report: Opportunity Green](#), Nov. 2025



CLEAN AIR
TASK FORCE

CLEAN AIR TASK FORCE (CATF)

Founded in 1996, CATF is a U.S.-based nonprofit that advances technologies and policies to reduce carbon emissions across the economy. While it originally focused on the U.S., it has since expanded its work to the EU, the Middle East, and Africa.

CATF has a history of successfully advocating for a wide array of climate provisions, most prominently in the U.S. and EU. CATF focuses on clean technologies that are either nascent or lack broad support from civil society. By raising awareness and advocating for favorable policies in these neglected areas, we think CATF can accelerate decarbonization in sectors that might otherwise struggle to secure funding.

CATF's technical analysis, stakeholder engagement, policy research and education work is impressive. It has decades of experience influencing U.S. policy, while remaining agile in its focus areas to ensure impact is continuously maximized across changing technological and policy landscapes. CATF has played a substantial role in securing key historic climate policies, including wins in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Global Methane Pledge. It continues to adapt its strategies to current social and political conditions, most recently by launching a program to accelerate deep decarbonization of the electricity system. The program promotes practical solutions with bipartisan support, such as advancing clean firm technologies and streamlining regulations for faster clean energy deployment.

Giving Green has not assessed all of CATF's program areas in detail. The recommendation is based mostly on its work on decarbonizing the grid, superhot rock geothermal energy, aviation, and shipping; Giving Green is confident in CATF's overall effectiveness and recommend unrestricted funding.

CATF has 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) entities. This is an opinion on the charitable activities of CATF's 501(c)(3) arm, and not on CATF's 501(c)(4) entity.

Relevance to Sport: CATF addresses the ~85% of athlete emissions comprising Travel and Energy. Its work on zero-carbon fuels and grid resilience ensures the infrastructure of sport, from stadium power to team jets, has a viable path to decarbonization.

- [Giving Green Research](#)
- [Clean Air Task Force Evaluation Report](#), Nov. 2025

project innerspace

PROJECT INNERSPACE

Launched in 2022, Project InnerSpace is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on expanding geothermal energy globally. It is based in the U.S. with global work in the U.K., India, Indonesia, Africa, and others.

Geothermal energy can cut emissions by providing clean electricity and heat, making it a cleaner alternative to coal and gas. Next-generation technologies could unlock geothermal resources in more regions, potentially meeting energy needs across Africa, China, Europe, Southeast Asia, and the U.S.

Project InnerSpace aims to fast-track this transition through:

- Resource mapping through its tool GeoMap
- Supporting innovative early-stage start-ups and projects
- Promoting next-gen geothermal to link projects with potential buyers and encourage policy support.

Project Innerspace's work can help reduce financial risks and boost investor confidence, leading to more projects being built and lower costs over time.

Project InnerSpace has an ambitious plan for expanding access to geothermal energy. Its theory of change is backed by strong evidence and addresses key barriers to commercializing next-gen geothermal. It also has a strong case for room for more funding.

Relevance to Sport: Sport requires reliable power. Geothermal provides the "clean baseload", always-on electricity that runs consistently even when the sun isn't shining, ensuring stadiums can operate 24/7 without fossil backup.

- [Giving Green Research: Project Innerspace](#), Nov. 2025
- [Giving Green Evaluation Report: Project Innerspace](#), Nov. 2025

FUTURE CLEANTECH ARCHITECTS

Future Cleantech Architects (FCA) is a climate innovation think tank based in Germany. FCA was founded in 2020, and its work focuses on neglected and hard-to-decarbonize sectors, including heavy industry, aviation, and firm power.

Heavy industry, baseload power, and aviation all require significant technological advances to decarbonize, yet are often neglected by funders and governments. FCA works to close these innovation gaps by:

1. Engaging with policymakers to prioritize R&D for critical interventions and
2. Leading research consortia to advance scientific knowledge for these applications.

Giving Green specifically assessed FCA's work to decarbonize heavy industry, reduce emissions from aviation and shipping, and advocate for cross-sector prioritization of scarce resources, such as green and low-carbon hydrogen. FCA has impressive in-house expertise, depth of engagement with technical research, and sophisticated understanding of the innovation and policy landscapes.

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Despite being a relatively new organization, FCA has developed an effective track record of shaping EU policy by providing policymakers with technical insights to clarify impactful and cost-effective policy pathways, and introducing new narratives into policy discussions.

FCA has also contributed to international climate discourse through engagement with intergovernmental organizations, such as the United Nations.

FCA fills a critical gap in the climate policy ecosystem by connecting lessons and learnings from its 'boots on the ground' technical work to high-level policymaking. Giving Green is confident with FCA's strategy and track record, and think they could further expand their impact with additional funds to expand their technical and advocacy capacity.

Relevance to Sport: Steel and cement are the building blocks of every stadium, track, and pool. By accelerating innovation in these sectors, FCA targets the "embodied carbon" of sport's physical infrastructure.

- [Giving Green Research: Future Cleantech Architects](#), Nov. 2025
- [Giving Green Evaluation Report: Future Cleantech Architects](#), Nov. 2025

IMPACT & PERFORMANCE

In high-performance sport, we measure results, not intentions. We apply the same rigor to climate action.

Currently, the majority of climate funding in the sports sector is directed toward low-leverage projects like traditional offsets, which, while well-intentioned, fail to address the root causes of emissions.

Our portfolio targets the specific leverage points of the global economy: aviation policy, heavy industry regulation, and energy innovation. By funding technology and advocacy in these sectors, we help pass laws and drive down costs that unlock billions in government and private sector spending.

Though the exact impact of a donation to Giving Green's Top Climate Nonprofits is difficult to quantify, their research suggests donations to these organisations can avert emissions at a cost of roughly \$1 per tonne of carbon, making them ~10 times more effective than high-quality carbon offsets, or ~50 times more effective than donating to planting trees.

What \$10,000 Can Do: Based on Giving Green's modelling, a contribution of this size has an expected value of averting ~10,000 tonnes of CO₂e. To put that systemic impact into perspective, it would be equivalent to contributing the impact of:

- **700,000 pairs of running shoes:** Manufacturing a standard pair of synthetic running shoes emits roughly 14 kg (0.014 tonnes) CO₂e.
- **6 English Premier League Matches:** A single Premier League match emits approximately 1,700 tonnes CO₂e (mostly fan travel and stadium energy).
- **1 Formula 1 Grand Prix:** The total carbon footprint of a single F1 race weekend, including the freight, team travel, and track operations is estimated at ~10,000 tonnes CO₂e.

(Note: expected values based on the probability of policy and technology outcomes, verified by Giving Green's methodology).

But money is only half the equation. The other half is influence.

Sport is the only language the entire world speaks. Athletes are among the most trusted voices in society - ranking higher in public trust than politicians, CEOs, or media figures.

When sport leads, the world follows. By combining the financial leverage of high-impact philanthropy with the cultural leverage of our athletes, we aren't just reducing emissions. We are accelerating the inevitable transition to a zero-carbon future.

THANK YOU

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