

Preamble

Recognising:

- the criticality of restricting increases in global temperatures to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels including, consistent with IPCC recommendations, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from 2010 levels of 45% by 2030 (“the **Global Imperative**”)
- the need for action to achieve the Global Imperative overall to support and not to exacerbate the related challenges of biodiversity loss, social injustice and the focus of the Sustainable Development Goals (“the **Integrated Approach**”)
- the critical role that the law and lawyers have to play in achieving the Global Imperative through the Integrated Approach
- the need to act as swiftly as possible on these issues whilst acknowledging to do so meaningfully requires fundamental changes in the way we live, work and practise law which require the support of colleagues and a process of transition
- the need to encourage other law firms and stakeholders to engage with the Principles and projects with a view to building a legal and business culture consistent with, and contributing to, achievement of the Global Imperative through the Integrated Approach
- the need to act in accordance with our professional duties

participating law firms (“**we**”) will collaborate in this initiative to optimise our contribution to the Global Imperative through the Integrated Approach.

The Principles referenced here represent shared goals. Given the complexity of the issues they seek to address they are not, at this stage, comprehensive and they will be refined and evolve as we engage with them particularly, but not exclusively through engagement in projects.

Ground Rules

Purpose: to optimise our contribution to achieving the Global Imperative through the Integrated Approach and by leveraging our collective influence.

Collaboration: we will collaborate, with each other and our stakeholders (including employees/members, clients, professional bodies, regulators and communities- both present and future), to further the fulfilment of the Purpose, working together in a manner consistent with the Principles.

Ambition: by consistently demonstrating ambition of the highest order, we will support, reinforce and enhance existing activities being conducted by others (including our clients, other law firms, legal bodies and networks, NGOs and governmental bodies) to achieve the Global Imperative.

Principles: we believe the Principles collectively constitute the means for law firms to influence positively and profoundly a credible transition pathway to achieve the Global Imperative.

Projects: we recognise words are meaningless without action. The projects referenced here demonstrate a willingness to act swiftly. The projects mentioned are indicative and not all signatories are expected to participate in every project. The projects are not exhaustive and participants are encouraged to propose additional ones. We recognise that participants may also seek to achieve similar outcomes through their own efforts and being a signatory to the Charter does not imply the projects are the only method of achieving the Global Imperative within the legal sector. Participants may contribute to projects through (a) firm-specific plans falling under broad project headings and (b) cross-firm teams implementing joint plans in respect of projects. The projects are proposed as areas of activity to be implemented in accordance with the Principles, with a view to creating measurable and monitored standards for participants and, potentially, the legal profession.

Standards: we will have regard to the following when implementing the Principles and projects, interpreted by the participants in their reasonable discretion by reference to the recommendations of the IPCC in relation to the delivery of the Global Imperative:

- the Principles and projects will be refined and improved by the participants, and applied for so long as demonstrably contributing to delivery of the Global Imperative
- any disagreement about the improvement of the Principles or development of the projects will be handled with equanimity and with a commitment to finding an alternative formulation
- participants will give due consideration to the importance of a just transition, generational equity and the restoration and improvement of biodiversity and earth's ecosystems..

Principles

1 Leadership: we commit to reducing our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions in line with Science Based Targets¹ in a manner and timescales consistent with achieving the Global Imperative. Where it is not in our control to reduce those emissions to zero we shall offset such emissions in a manner consistent with achieving the Global Imperative. We shall work with our key stakeholders (including clients, colleagues and suppliers) where appropriate to encourage and support their efforts towards achievement of the Global Imperative. We regard ourselves in doing so to be acting in the best interest of our clients and in the public interest. Our leadership teams are committed to supporting, engaging with and delivering this business-critical initiative.

Potential project: the implementation of executive led decision-making informed by board (or equivalent level) representatives tasked with achieving the Global Imperative

2 Advised emissions to deliver a 1.5°C transition: we shall support the development of a robust methodology to measure the impact of our advice upon the Global Imperative, and work to apply that methodology as soon as practically possible to:

understand the impact of each of our firm's advice on emissions globally;

inform our approach to contribute to the Global Imperative, including via our firm's advice; and

support our work with our clients to achieve the Global Imperative.

Potential project: participants collectively committing to (i) the principle of acknowledging the impact of matters we advise on; (ii) agreeing to contribute to the development of a robust methodology based on verifiable data to identify and monitor such matters; and (iii) using the methodology to inform the work we do with clients, consistent with the Global Imperative. Any such methodology should take into account any listing, or other regulatory requirements that a firm may be bound by.

3 Applying our commitment to achieving the Global Goal through the Integrated Approach to our matter opening: we recognise that the Global Imperative cannot be achieved without organisations and people transitioning away from high-emitting activities. We will increasingly engage with clients, where appropriate, to understand how they seek to address this challenge and how we may support them. We will endeavour to support credible transition activities (whilst taking into account negative social and environmental impacts of those activities). We shall, when deciding whether to act on a matter, consider the need to achieve the Global Imperative through the Integrated Approach.

Potential project: achieving consensus as to appropriate requirements in relation to incepting clients and matters in both contentious and non-contentious scenarios, in

¹ Or others generally recognised as providing equivalent rigour

conformity with all applicable laws and regulations, but keeping the Global Imperative in mind. However, there is scope for collective action to set standards for ceasing to act in respect of matters where that outcome cannot be achieved (e.g. exploring the scope for agreeing upon common standards consistent with the Purpose).

4 Identifying and promoting constructive reforms and informing public policy: we shall identify legal and regulatory reforms best calibrated to achieving the Global Imperative through the Integrated Approach and will promote reforms related to the role of our profession in achieving the Global Imperative.

Potential projects: identifying potential legal, practical and systemic enablers and actual inhibitors of the Global Imperative; establishing a prioritised programme for developing constructive solutions and attracting the necessary investment and policy support to scale existing and innovative interventions and technologies required to achieve the Global Imperative.

5 Accountability and reporting: we commit to report annually on our progress towards achievement of the Global Imperative.

Potential projects: establishing a common approach to reporting on delivery against the Principles which illustrates participating firms' efforts, encourages others to engage with the aspirations of this initiative and supports improvements in future practice

6 Education and upskilling: we commit to training our staff to support achievement of the Global Imperative.

Potential projects: training all staff on transition pathways, the impact of failing to achieve the Global Imperative, the ways in which individuals within our organisations can contribute to achieving - or failing to achieve – the Global Imperative, and the steps that should be taken to achieve a just transition to the Global Imperative. Solicitors' Assemblies as a means to build understanding and ownership of the climate challenge across business and the ability of the profession to enable the Global Imperative.

7 Focused pro bono: we shall participate in collaborative pro-bono projects best suited to using our combined resources and influence to achieve the Global Imperative in line with the Integrated Approach, with a focus on activities aligned with principles of climate and social justice and access to justice.

Working in partnership with the One Million Hours project.

8 Meaningful offsetting: alongside reducing our own emissions in line with Principle 1 in a manner and timescale aligned with the Global Imperative, we shall seek to create best practice guidelines that enable the legal industry, where each respective law firm's Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions are unavoidable, to use robust and trusted offsetting mechanisms that are best suited to support the Global Imperative and avoid greenwashing.

Potential projects: exploring the feasibility of a collective approach to offsetting unavoidable emissions and the scope for developing best practice guidelines, common standards, and credible data-based decision-making processes, that prevent firms from greenwashing; e.g. an approach that uses consistent standards (including in respect of offsetting mechanisms) and has enough visibility/measurement of the detail of the practical steps that are being taken.