



Concerned about the CO2 impact of flying?

by Manon Zwart and the OCC Environment Team

Here's one way to offset your trips

As cruisers we are very aware of our environment and changes occurring in the marine environment in particular. The impact of cruising is small when we are wind-powered, but even so, we do like to minimize our environmental impact and reduce our carbon footprint. As OCC members we grow by meeting fellow cruisers and exchanging ideas and experiences. Now, with Covid restrictions easing in many parts of the world, the opportunity to return to locked down boats and go cruising is growing and often this involves flying to or from far away destinations.

Therefore, we have been looking into the different ways that we can travel without the negative effect of increasing CO2 emissions. This can be achieved by compensating for carbon emissions via an offset scheme. Although this might not be a long-term solution, in the short-term it does provide a means to make good the CO2 we produce from flying, for example.

We have identified Blue Carbon as an appropriate carbon offset means for OCC members – this will not only protect vital coastal zones where we enjoy so many pleasant anchorages, but will also contribute sequestering and storing carbon.



What is Blue Carbon?

Coastal ecosystems of mangroves, tidal marshes, and seagrass meadows provide numerous benefits and services that are essential for climate change adaptation along coasts globally, including protection from storms and sea level rise, prevention of shoreline erosion, regulation of coastal water quality, provision of habitat for commercially important fisheries and endangered marine species, and food security for many coastal communities.

Additionally, these ecosystems sequester and store significant amounts of coastal CO2 (Blue Carbon) from the atmosphere and ocean and hence are now recognised for their role in mitigating climate change.

Seagrass

Seagrasses may have more carbon mitigation potential than mangroves simply because there are so many of them, but they're rapidly disappearing at about 2 to 7 percent per year. Nowadays we all aim to avoid anchoring in seagrass meadows, but a lot of damage has been done. This is why we are suggesting restoring seagrass meadows as one way that OCC members can offset carbon emissions.

There are different organisations offering compensation tools or running projects that capture carbon. In The Ocean Foundation we have found one that does both. The Ocean Foundation's mission is to support, strengthen, and promote those organisations dedicated to reversing the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world.

Some members may be aware of the Ocean Foundation and its SeaGrass Grow projects from the support given by [11th Hour Racing Sailing Team](#) and the Volvo Ocean Race.

You can learn more about the way to offset your carbon footprint on: [Why let seagrass grow](#)

A simple to use calculator is provided, allowing users to find out how much CO2 is produced by taking a trip and what would be an appropriate financial donation to seagrass projects under the umbrella of The Ocean Foundation: [Calculator](#)

For example, a 2000 miles trip by aeroplane would produce 0.36 tonnes of carbon and an appropriate offset of \$7.60, and a 500 miles round trip by train would produce 0.08 tonnes of carbon and an offset of \$1.60, or you can donate any amount that you choose

