



International Senior  
Lawyers Project

## ISLP Continues to Innovate and Collaborate

*ISLP Newsletter, March 2024 Edition*

### **Introducing ISLP's Responsible Technology Initiative**

ISLP is excited to announce our new Responsible Technology Initiative (RTI) being led by ISLP Senior Advisor and Fellow Gordon Myers. Gordon brings more than 35 years of experience in corporate and technology representation, including 27 years with the International Finance Corporation. Through this new area of focus, we will assist governments, social enterprises, and civil society organizations in addressing the new and complex challenges and opportunities related to technology, artificial intelligence, digitalization, and trust. Our RTI allows ISLP to support locally-led sustainable development initiatives in timely and important new ways.

We highlight two of the launch projects:

- *Supporting African creatives and entrepreneurs through intellectual-property based financing:* ISLP and volunteers from **Pinsent Masons** are confronting the challenge of supporting intellectual property-based financing, a global priority for the World Intellectual Property Organization. Specifically targeting several key African jurisdictions, this project is intended as a pilot for a potentially transformative initiative intended to facilitate entrepreneurship and growth. The immediate goal is to produce a succinct, accessible "plain-English" publication tailored for practitioners and policy makers that includes a survey of existing relevant legal frameworks and a gap analysis to establish a sustainable platform for intangibles-financing. Additionally, it will offer a set of concise recommendations for policymakers and practitioners, and a compelling "call to action." We believe that this strategic effort could have a profound impact, paving the way for the effective use of intangibles-based borrowing by creative organizations across the continent.

- *Preserving Indigenous communities' heritage and language in artificial intelligence*: ISLP and volunteers from **Winston & Strawn** are drafting two model contracts for IndigiGenius, a social enterprise established to preserve and protect the cultural heritage of Indigenous communities, while ensuring inclusion of their heritage and language in artificial intelligence applications. The model contracts are being developed to support Indigenous communities in the US and Canada and will help ensure that these communities are able to maintain control of their heritage and consent to any proposed use, disrupting the narrative of exploitation. The contracts will also enable IndigiGenius and its partners to pursue important research that respects Indigenous customs and ways of knowing. While the client's pilot projects target Indigenous communities in North America, ISLP and IndigiGenius hope to extend the project's learnings to inform future cooperation with Indigenous communities in other countries.

Our RTI is also supporting ISLP's freedom of expression practice and other projects involving cybersecurity, digitalization, and technology concerns. We welcome interest and suggestions from our partner law firms, as well as academics, donors, development organizations, government agencies, investors, and fund managers who may wish to partner with, support, and draw on ISLP's new responsible technology efforts. Please send inquiries to [info@islp.org](mailto:info@islp.org) with the subject line "Responsible Technology," and stay tuned for more news on exciting projects in this new ISLP focus area.

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## **ISLP partners with Stand for Her Land to promote global gender equity**

As part of ISLP's ongoing efforts to support global gender equity, we are thrilled to announce our new partnership with [Stand for Her Land \(S4HL\)](#), a global campaign dedicated to helping millions of women realize the transformative power of gender-equitable land rights.

We are proud to share this exciting collaboration as we attend the ongoing United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68) together with our S4HL partners from around the world. Through our partnership with S4HL, we can contribute our expertise to the vital cause of women's land rights. Legal empowerment is a crucial step towards achieving gender equality, economic empowerment, and addressing complex challenges such as food security and the climate crisis.



Melissa Eustace of ISLP with S4HL's Esther Mwaura Muiru and Dr. Monica Mhoja of Landesa at CSW68

By collaborating with S4HL, we aim to bridge the gap between policy and practice and ensure that every woman and girl can exercise her full potential. Our focus on advancing locally-led initiatives aligns seamlessly with S4HL's mission, and we're excited to be part of a movement that will help millions of women realize secure land rights.

To learn more about the S4HL campaign, please visit [www.stand4herland.org](http://www.stand4herland.org).

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## ISLP assists in protecting forests in Central America

ISLP was privileged to support a national environmental fund in Central America in its efforts to achieve a landmark climate finance deal under which multinational corporate buyers purchased high-integrity jurisdictional carbon credits designed to provide funds to preserve that country's tropical forests.

ISLP and volunteers from **Allen & Overy** provided strategic *pro bono* advice to the country's national forestry financing fund during its review of an Emissions Reduction Purchase Agreement (ERPA). The volunteers' objective was to ensure that the ERPA aligns with the highest international standards and best practices in carbon markets. The resulting ERPA provides a scalable, public-private model for forest preservation that protects Indigenous forest communities, advances sovereign sustainable development goals, and contributes to global efforts to combat climate change. The ERPA was signed at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai and illustrates a meaningful advancement in Central America's fight against climate change.

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## ISLP team in the news

Africa Legal recently interviewed ISLP Executive Director Sara Lulo on the power of *pro bono* to boost sustainable development. Sara noted that Africa plays a key role in the global energy transition, not least because the continent holds many of the world's largest deposits of critical minerals needed for clean energy sources. Additionally, ISLP has been working with our partners to support local efforts toward a “*just* energy transition,” including advising on “how African countries can maximize the opportunities and minimize the environmental and human rights risks that go along with it.” Please [read the interview in full at this link](#).

ISLP once again participated in the annual Investing in African Mining Indaba, a major extractives industry event held in Cape Town. This year, ISLP's Director of Programs Katerina Drisi delivered the opening remarks at the Evolution of Mining Industry Taxation event hosted by our longtime partners at the African Legal Support Facility (ALSF). ALSF recently commissioned ISLP to develop the Toolkit on Mining Taxation for the African Mining Legislation Atlas (AMLA). ISLP is honored to have a distinguished set of mining and taxation experts from our volunteer network contributing their time and expertise to the development of this practical new publication: Michael Lebovitz of **Eversheds Sutherland**; Professor Zach Pougá, Esq.; Sandy Bhogal and Adam Lapidus of **Gibson Dunn & Crutcher**; and Scot Anderson, Noah Zedek, Francisco Balduzzi and Daniella Landers of **Womble Bond Dickinson**. This is the next chapter in the collaborative efforts of ISLP, ALSF, and the World Bank towards responsible resource management and builds on the foundational principles established in the AMLA Toolkit for State Equity Participation, which can be found in the [publications section of ISLP's website](#). The new Toolkit will focus on key taxation issues, tax incentive approaches, and the impact of base erosion and profit shifting.



From Left to Right: Olivier Pognon, African Legal Support Facility (ALSF); Richard Kapasa, Zambia Revenue Authority; Professor Zach Pougá, Partner, EY and ISLP Volunteer; Thomas Scurfield, Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI); Oghor Okhai-



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## ISLP Supports the SDGs



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## About ISLP

The International Senior Lawyers Project (ISLP) is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit and non-governmental organization founded in 2000. Our mission is to provide *pro bono* legal support to governments, civil society organizations, and social enterprises in the Global South on matters that advance the rule of law and just, accountable, and inclusive economic development.



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