

International Bar Association

Climate Change Engagement Toolkit for Bar Associations and Law Societies

Bar Issues Commission Climate Change Working Group

2026



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the legal profession®

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Disclaimer and Acknowledgements

Disclaimer

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About the Climate Change Working Group

In 2025, the IBA Bar Issues Commission (BIC), under the leadership of BIC Chair Steven Richman, launched a Climate Change Working Group (CCWG). The group, which is convened by Dominique Hogan-Doran SC (Chair, IBA BIC Regulation Committee) and Fiona McLeod AO KC (Senior Officer, IBA BIC), with support from the IBA Legal Policy & Research Unit (LPRU), comprises a steering committee of individuals with expertise in working on climate change issues within national and state/provincial bar associations and law societies, and IBA committee representatives.

The CCWG steering committee includes:

Dominique Hogan-Doran SC, CCWG Co-Convenor

Fiona McLeod AO KC, CCWG Co-Convenor

Selina Lee Andersen, Honorary Member-at-Large, National Environmental, Energy and Resources Law Section, Canadian Bar Association

Ana Bastida, Vice Chair, IBA Mining Law Committee

Matthew Baird, Asian Research Institute for Environmental Law and the College of Law Australia ESG Centre Law and Practice

Markus Beham, Chair, IBA Human Rights Law Committee

Ana Chagas, Membership Officer, IBA Water Law Committee

Anil Changarov, Member, ESG Working Group/Co-Chair, International Relations Committee, Singapore Law Society

Nazar Chernyavsky, Co-Chair, IBA Technology Law Committee

Estelle Dehone OBE KC, Co-Chair, Bar Council of England & Wales Climate Crisis Working Group

John Dernbach, Professor Emeritus, Widener University Commonwealth Law School/Member, American Bar Association

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CCWG mandate

The CCWG's mandate is to undertake activities to build capacity of bar associations and law societies to engage on climate change issues and help their members advise on climate change in an informed and competent manner. The CCWG's mandate includes the following activities:

1. Developing a toolkit to help bar associations, particularly for those new to the issues involved, to engage on climate change-related issues;
2. Working with academic experts to design a global model curriculum for professional education for lawyers on climate change-related issues; and
3. Providing a platform for showcasing and encouraging innovative climate initiatives by bar associations.

This Climate Change Engagement Toolkit completes item 1 of this mandate.

Acknowledgements

This Climate Change Engagement Toolkit has been developed by the CCWG in consultation with legal experts from academia and private practice from across the globe, and with support from the IBA LPRU. The CCWG extends its gratitude to the expert observers for their contributions to design and content, and to the legal and academic experts for their review and feedback.

This version is current as at 8 October 2026.

1 Introduction

1.1 What is this toolkit designed to do?

The Climate Change Engagement Toolkit is designed to assist bar associations, law societies and similar organisations (collectively, 'bar associations' in this toolkit) wanting to develop and implement climate-related initiatives, drawing on examples from bar associations around the globe. This toolkit is not prescriptive, but serves as a capacity-building tool aimed at supporting lawyers in understanding climate-related legal issues so they can provide competent legal advice consistent with their professional and ethical obligations. It can be used by any individual member of a bar association with an interest in developing climate initiatives within their organisation. This toolkit contains a range of examples and case studies from different bar associations around the globe. These examples and case studies have been included to provide sources of inspiration and ideas, rather than to dictate best practice.

1.2 What does this toolkit address?

The Climate Change Engagement Toolkit is designed to assist bar associations around the world, particularly those new to the issues involved, to engage on this subject and to develop as well as implement climate initiatives. It serves as a practical implementation guide, which bar associations can adapt to their own legal systems.

While many bar associations may be enthusiastic about engaging with the Climate Change Engagement Toolkit, they may nevertheless not be sure how to begin. This is the precise purpose of this road map. It addresses the question of how such engagement can begin and explains how different bar associations can use this toolkit to educate members, strengthen or initiate climate-conscious legal practice, engage stakeholders, and contribute to law and policy reform. The toolkit can be used by individual members of bar associations who have interest in developing climate initiatives within their law firms and chambers as well as bar associations themselves. It can also be used by continuing professional development (CPD) teams of bar associations where these exist.

This toolkit is designed in a way that will allow bar associations to initiate their engagement at varying entry points depending on the available expertise and institutional capacity.

1.3 Overcoming challenges that may be associated with developing climate initiatives

Bar associations operate in diverse legal, political and institutional environments. As a result, climate initiatives should be tailored to the bar association's mandate and be responsive to member needs.

Where there are hurdles to developing and implementing climate initiatives, experience from bar associations highlight several practical mitigation strategies to address common challenges:

Challenge	Practical mitigation strategies
Resistance from members or leadership	Frame initiatives around lawyers' professional competence, risk management and service to clients rather than political advocacy. Integrate climate training modules into CPD programmes and facilitate opportunities for members to provide pro bono services to climate-affected communities. Emphasise that climate change increasingly affects many areas of legal practice irrespective of personal views about climate policy. Start with educational initiatives before considering public policy positions where appropriate. Consider regular reporting to members on climate initiatives to monitor implementation and support continuous improvement.
Political sensitivities	Recognise that climate policy may be politically contentious in some jurisdictions. Where appropriate, focus on matters within the bar association's institutional role, including legal education, professional standards, access to justice and the administration of justice. Ensure

	that any public statements remain evidence-based and consistent with the bar association's mandate.
Regulatory role of bar associations	Organisations with regulatory responsibilities should distinguish between educational guidance and mandatory professional obligations unless changes are formally adopted through established regulatory processes. Guidance should support lawyers in understanding emerging legal risks without creating unintended professional obligations beyond existing legal or ethical duties.
Limited financial or administrative resources	Begin with low-cost initiatives such as establishing a working group, curating existing resources, hosting webinars or collaborating with other bar associations. Adapt existing guidance from other jurisdictions rather than developing new materials where appropriate.
Limited internal expertise	Engage volunteer practitioners, academics, judges and external experts. Collaborate with universities, environmental law experts, climate scientists, international organisations and other professional bodies. Draw upon existing resources developed by organisations such as the IBA and other national or state/provincial bar associations (eg, via the IBA Climate Registry) to demonstrate that climate engagement is now a mainstream, cross-jurisdictional activity.
Keeping pace with rapidly evolving law	Engage volunteer practitioners, academics, judges and external experts. Collaborate with universities, environmental law experts, climate scientists, international organisations and other professional bodies. Establish a periodic review process for guidance materials and educational resources. Focus on principles that are less likely to become outdated, supplemented by regular updates on legislative and judicial developments.
Different practice areas engage differently	Tailor education to practice-specific contexts. Engage with mid-level and senior lawyers to facilitate mentoring and training. Lawyers are generally more receptive when climate-related issues are presented through examples directly relevant to their daily work, such as corporate transactions, property, insurance, litigation or finance.
Operating in jurisdictions with different legal or political contexts	Adapt initiatives to local legal systems, levels of regulatory development and institutional capacity. Bar associations need not adopt every initiative described in this toolkit; selecting a small number of achievable measures may produce more durable outcomes than attempting comprehensive reform immediately.
Operating in conflict-affected areas or other capacity-constrained environments	Some bar associations operate in jurisdictions affected by armed conflict, political instability, natural disasters or other significant disruptions that limit institutional capacity. In these circumstances, climate initiatives may need to be adapted to reflect available resources and competing priorities. Bar associations may wish to: prioritise practical educational activities; leverage existing international guidance and partnerships; use virtual delivery where appropriate; and adopt a staged implementation plan that can evolve as institutional capacity increases.

A number of bar associations have focused successfully on issues that fall squarely within their institutional mandates, including lawyer competence, professional ethics, access to justice, the rule of law, legal education, and understanding the implications of emerging legislation and jurisprudence. Framing initiatives in this way can assist bar associations in maintaining institutional neutrality while supporting members to respond to evolving legal risks. More information about these challenges is available on the IBA Climate Crisis page at www.ibanet.org/LPRU/Climate-Crisis

2. The toolkit in context

2.1 Climate change and the rule of law

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperatures and weather patterns. Human activities – principally greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from burning coal, oil and gas – have been the main driver of climate change. Carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere, raising global temperatures. Climate change is already affecting every region, with consequences for human health, ecosystems, food and water security, infrastructure and livelihoods. These impacts create 'climate-related physical risks', including property damage and business disruption caused by storms, floods, wildfires, extreme heat and sea-level rise.[1]

The scale of these impacts is reshaping economies, communities and legal systems. International treaties (most notably the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 2015 Paris Agreement) support collective action on climate mitigation and adaptation. Rulings by international tribunals clarify that states have legal duties to mitigate climate change under customary international law and human rights law. Governments are adopting laws and policies to promote renewable energy, decarbonisation and climate risk management, while courts are asked increasingly to determine the climate-related obligations of states and businesses. The transition to a low-carbon economy also creates climate-related transition risks, including policy, legal, technological, market and reputational risks.[2]

These developments are changing the legal landscape for bar associations and their members. Climate considerations increasingly arise across areas such as company law, where directors may need to consider material climate-related risks; insurance law, as climate-related losses and coverage disputes increase; and contract law, where contractual provisions are being used to allocate climate risk and encourage decarbonisation. These issues extend to jurisdictions without comprehensive climate legislation because businesses, financial institutions, insurers and supply chains operate across borders. Lawyers may therefore need to understand material climate-related risks to discharge professional obligations, including the duty of competence.

These risks are not merely prospective. They are already producing measurable legal and financial consequences. Failure to identify and address material physical and transition risks may expose clients to:

- asset impairment or stranded assets in areas vulnerable to flooding, wildfire, extreme heat or sea-level rise;
- unavailable or increasingly costly insurance, undermining the viability of financed or leased assets;
- reduced access to capital as lenders and investors incorporate climate considerations into their decisions;
- regulatory and litigation exposure, including for inadequate or misleading climate-related disclosures; and
- potential claims against professional advisers who fail to identify or advise on material climate-related legal risks.

Climate litigation illustrates the growing exposure. The United National Environmental Programme (UNEP) reported 3,099 cases in 55 national jurisdictions and 24 international or regional forums as of June 2025.[3] The London School of Economics (LSE) reported that, in 2025, 249 new climate cases were filed, bringing the total since 1986 to more than 3,600 cases filed across 62 countries.[4] Over three-quarters of these cases have been filed since 2015, the year of the Paris Agreement. Corporate-focused proceedings increasingly extend beyond companies to directors, officers and actors in the financial and professional services sectors.

[1] *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report* (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2023), available at www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf.

[2] 'The Paris Agreement', (UNFCCC), available at https://wedocs.unep.org/items/d24911d5-d873-42f8-9e41-d5921264a66d, accessed 26 October 2026.

[3] Global Climate Litigation Report: 2025 Status Review (UNEP, June 2025), available at https://wedocs.unep.org/items/d24911d5-d873-42f8-9e41-d5921264a66d.

[4] *Global Trends in Climate Change Litigation: 2026 Snapshot* (LSE Grantham Research Institute, 25 June 2026), available at www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/publication/global-trends-in-climate-change-litigation-2026.

2.2 Understanding the intersection between climate change and human rights

The United Nations Secretary-General has stated that 'climate change is, quite simply, an existential threat for most life on the planet – including, and especially, the life of humankind'.[5] Climate change has disastrous consequences on weather patterns, ecosystems and biodiversity. These impacts directly and indirectly affect all human rights, including the rights to life, food, health and water. The impacts of climate change also exacerbate social and economic inequalities, disproportionately affecting people already in vulnerable situations including children, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.[6]

2.3 The business case for bar associations to engage on climate change issues

Lawyers play many roles in the transition to a sustainable world that is aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement. The advice that lawyers give not only facilitates compliance with hard law, but also soft law such as facilitating corporate compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)[7] and duties to respect human rights through business and human rights (BHR) practice. Lawyers play central roles in all major transactions which shape the transition to a net zero economy. Lawyers also need to understand sufficiently the different climate-related legal risks and their implications for clients, so that they can advise clients in a manner consistent with their professional and ethical duties.

To fulfil these important roles and comply with their professional and ethical obligations, lawyers need education and guidance. As trusted sources of professional education and guidance, bar associations are well placed to support their members in navigating these issues.

Bar associations themselves can also be powerful players in society – by engaging in law and policy reform discussions, they can help to shape future domestic and international climate law and policy.

Representing a diverse range of members, bar associations can have a powerful voice on the domestic and global stages, including through engaging on platforms such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) for the UNFCCC.

Against this background, bar associations around the world have taken steps such as:

- developing organisation-wide climate policies, resolutions and declarations;
- preparing climate change guidance and educational materials for legal practitioners; and
- calculating and publishing reports on the bar association's carbon footprint.

Many of these initiatives are accessible through the IBA Climate Registry and were first highlighted in the IBA 2025 Roundtable on bar association and law society climate initiatives.

[5] António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, keynote address at the R20 Austrian World Summit, Vienna, 15 May 2018.
[6] *Information Note on Climate Change and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, June 2023), available at https://media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/Information-Note-Climate-Change-and-UNGPs.pdf.
[7] The UNGPs comprise the first global standard for preventing and addressing the risk of adverse impacts on human rights linked to business activity, and the internationally accepted framework for enhancing standards and practice regarding BHR.

3. Toolkit

3.1 Roles and responsibilities

Clarifying and assigning roles and responsibilities within bar associations can provide assurance to the successful implementation of climate change-related initiatives.

Suggested allocation of roles and responsibilities with respect to the various actions and opportunities described further in this toolkit are as follows.

Bar association leadership

- approval of climate change policy statement;
- appointment of climate change committee;
- approval and adoption of a climate change engagement toolkit;
- allocation of resources;
- integrating climate modules/trainings into CPD and training programmes;
- providing CPD credit for the provision of free legal services to climate-affected communities as part of pro bono service delivery; and
- review of climate change committee progress reports.

Climate change committee/climate engagement task team

- adaptation of climate change engagement toolkit to national or state/provincial legal and policy contexts;
- coordination of implementation of the climate change committee's activities; and
- reporting on progress to bar association leadership.

3.2 Forming a climate change committee

A central mechanism to develop and implement climate activities is a useful starting point.[8]

Bar associations with limited institutional capacity or at an early stage of engagement on climate matters are not expected to implement all of the suggested actions below simultaneously. Initial foundation steps may include the following:

- adopting a short mission statement for the committee and obtaining formal authorisation for its establishment;
- appointing a committee leader with relevant expertise and designating administrative support; and
- identifying one initial activity, such as a public statement, a member education session or a written submission to a government consultation.

These three steps are sufficient to establish a functioning committee and provide a basis for expanding activities over time.

Further development steps could include:

- development of committee terms of reference;
- membership expansion;
- establishment of assessment indicators; and
- development of a long-term work plan.

3.2.1 Suggested actions

- **Adopt** a short and clear mission statement for what the committee's activities will focus on (eg, '*The Climate Change Committee will support the bar and the legal profession in understanding, addressing, and responding to climate-related legal issues, including mitigation, adaptation, and climate justice*'). The mission statement may evolve over time as the committee is established and its activities get underway.

[8] *Climate Crisis Statement* (IBA, 2020), available at www.ibanet.org/document?id=822C1967-F851-4819-8200-2FE298164922.

- **Obtain** formal authorisation for establishing a new committee through appropriate channels.
- **Establish** committee leadership – it can be useful to ensure that at least one committee leader has legal expertise with respect to climate change, and strong organisation skills.
- **Create** a diverse and expert-inclusive membership model:
    - When determining the membership structure for the committee, it can be helpful to prioritise diversity across genders, ages and legal practice areas. Where permissible, enable non-lawyer experts to be part of the committee (eg, co-opted members, non-voting advisory members), so that experts from fields such as climate science, economics, engineering and operational sustainability can contribute to the committee's activities.
    - Ensure administrative support for the committee to support activity implementation and scheduling.
- **Draft** formal terms of reference for the committee – these terms should clearly state participation and voting rules.
- **Recruit** members (consider breadth and frequency of calls for expressions of interest).
- **Identify** initial and longer-term activities for the committee to undertake (these could look similar to the activities highlighted in this toolkit: eg, drafting a climate resolution, developing educational activities, or assessing operational GHG footprint).
- **Ensure** a regular review process for committee activities as activities get underway. Committees may need to adjust approaches as legal and policy responses to climate change shift, and climate risks change.
- **Consider** informal and formal reporting processes within the association to ensure support from and engagement by association leadership.

3.2.2 Assessment indicators

To support internal accountability and demonstrate progress to association leadership and members, committees may find it useful, at the outset, to define indicators against which their work can be assessed. Relevant indicators may include:

- number of members actively participating in committee work;
- number of guidance documents, training sessions or events delivered;
- number of written submissions made to government or regulatory consultations on climate-related matters; and
- progress against any operational GHG reduction targets adopted by the association.

These indicators should be reviewed annually and reported to association leadership as part of the committee's regular reporting obligations.

Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA) **Climate Change Committee Terms of Reference (2024)**

Established by the President of the IHCBA in 2024, the Climate Change Committee operates under the following terms of reference:

- Enhance climate literacy among lawyers to equip them with knowledge necessary to navigate legal complexities surrounding the climate crisis, environmental challenges, sustainability and environmental/climate justice.
- Make recommendations to the Islamabad Bar Council regarding demonstrating sustainability in legal practice and increasing climate literacy.
- Work in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC & EC) to leverage its expertise, resources, and networks for knowledge sharing on interdisciplinary aspects of climate change including legal, scientific, technological and socio-economic.

- Conduct activities of a professional or educational nature among current and prospective members of IHCBA.
- Advocate for the recognition and dissemination of the committee's activities and accomplishments concerning climate change on behalf of IHCBA both domestically and internationally.
- Monitor judicial decisions, legislation, policies and programmes for their impacts on climate change and Pakistan's commitment to its international obligations, and work in collaboration with the MoCC & EC to compile the aforesaid to be uploaded on relevant international knowledge sharing platforms like UNEP.
- Assist MoCC & EC in seeking legislative support from available international platforms.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, academia, other climate change lawyers, bar associations, professional bodies, NGOs and international organisations, to promote synergies and partnerships for effective climate action.
- The committee shall appoint volunteer researchers, contributors and youth ambassadors when necessary to carry out its tasks.
- Provide support in drafting papers containing policy and legislative recommendations to aid the legislature or the executive, as the case may be.
- Curate a pool of legal experts specialising in climate change and related sectors, establishing a resource for individuals or organisations seeking legal expertise in these areas.

This document can be accessed through the IBA Climate Registry via www.ibanet.org/document?id=Islambad-high-court-bar-association-2924

3.3 Publishing a public climate statement, resolution or declaration

Many bar associations have published organisation-wide statements setting out their position in relation to climate change, to help guide organisational activities (including those undertaken by their climate change committee). While the content of a statement will depend on the nature and jurisdiction of the bar association, based on contributions to the IBA Climate Registry, a public climate statement could include the following:

- **Recognise the evidence and urgency:** acknowledge the scientific basis of climate change, its adverse impacts and the urgent need for mitigation and adaptation, alongside action on the interrelated biodiversity crisis.
- **Set out the bar association's commitment:** describe how the bar association will address climate change and sustainability through its operations, member services and external activities.
- **Define the profession's role:** explain the role of lawyers, law firms and the wider legal profession in responding to climate change, consistently with professional duties and the administration of justice.
- **Commit to education and guidance:** develop practical resources that help lawyers identify climate-related legal risks and advise clients on the legal implications of mitigation and adaptation measures, consistent with applicable law and professional obligations.
- **Participate in law and policy reform:** state whether and how the bar association will contribute to climate-related legislative, regulatory and policy discussions.
- **Lead by example:** measure and report the bar association's carbon footprint, reduce operational emissions in line with the Paris Agreement's temperature goals and publish progress.
- **Encourage action across the profession:** call on law firms and legal sector organisations to set credible, science-based targets, reduce their environmental impacts and report transparently on progress.
- **Promote human rights and a just transition:** support climate action consistent with human rights and the UNGPs, including meaningful participation by indigenous peoples and other affected or vulnerable groups and support for workers, businesses and communities through the transition.

- **Call for effective government action:** encourage governments to adopt and implement measures such as emissions-reduction requirements, carbon pricing, ecosystem protection and restoration, circular-economy policies and safeguards for environmental and other human rights.
- **Address institutional responsibilities:** Recognise the distinct roles of legislatures, courts, governments and businesses in strengthening climate accountability and advancing an effective and equitable response.

IBA Climate Crisis Statement (2020)

The introduction to the IBA Climate Crisis Statement recognises that there is a consensus within the scientific community that climate change represents an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to humanity and life on the planet: the increase in global temperatures, rising sea levels and ever-increasing amounts of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and other GHG emissions in the atmosphere have all contributed to this threat. These changes are increasingly being recognised as culminating in a 'climate crisis'. The failure to respond effectively will be disastrous for the earth's current inhabitants and future generations and is already impacting the planet's capacity to support a prosperous society and economy.

Among other things, the IBA statement:

- **Recognises** that lawyers have an important role to play in addressing the climate crisis and its consequences, including by supporting their clients' efforts to do so.
- **Urges** lawyers, acting in accordance with their professional conduct rules and the rule of law, to consider:
    - taking a climate-conscious approach to problems encountered in daily legal practice;
    - advising clients of the potential risks, liability, and reputational damage arising from activity that negatively contributes to the climate crisis;
    - encouraging corporate clients to disclose voluntarily the risks posed by the climate crisis to the corporation's entire business operation (including supply chains) when reporting to regulators, investors and stakeholders; and
    - engaging in climate dispute resolution generally (including mediation, negotiation or litigation), and specifically on a pro bono, volunteer or reduced fee basis, for those negatively affected by the climate crisis.
- **Encourages** lawyers to engage with current and future legislative and policy-making efforts to address the climate crisis.
- **Implores** lawyers to support and engage with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Recommends** that bar associations, law societies and similar bodies around the world each consider:
    - engaging with law students and schools concerning education on legal elements of the climate crisis and its impact on human rights;
    - developing practical educational tools for qualified lawyers to use in continuing their legal education and implementing the Framework Model Curriculum on Continuing Legal Education in Environmental Law;
    - establishing a committee focusing on the climate crisis and its consequences (where not already in place) to encourage lawyers and legal practices to support actively, engage with and record their efforts in combatting the climate crisis; and
    - calling upon lawyers and legal practices in their respective jurisdictions to report their efforts in combatting the climate crisis to the climate crisis committee for analysis and cross comparison to develop best practice guidelines for others in the jurisdiction.
- **Urges** lawyers to live responsibly in the face of the climate crisis and, where possible, take steps including reducing their environmental footprint.

The statement can be accessed at: www.ibanet.org/document?id=822C1967-F851-4819-8200-2FE298164922

Law Association of Zambia Climate Change Statement (2024)

Against the backdrop of a severe drought affecting Zambia as a result of climate change, in 2024, the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ), representing the legal profession in the country, adopted a climate change statement, to declare its resolve to support government, the business community and other stakeholders towards responding to climate change, and advancing green initiatives and sustainability.

The statement (among other things):

- **Affirms** Zambia's commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement and recognises climate change as an urgent, anthropogenic threat that disproportionately impacts vulnerable groups.
- **Calls** on legal professionals to adopt climate-conscious approaches to their work by advising clients on climate-related risks, enhancing national level environmental justice initiatives, promotion of sustainable business practices and engaging in legal and policy reforms.
- **States** that the LAZ supports the creation of specialised environmental courts, enhanced climate-focused legal education, and stronger national and international legal frameworks to advance a just transition and protect human rights in the face of climate change.

The statement can be accessed at: www.ibanet.org/document?id=Climate-registry-law-association-of-zambia-statement

3.3.1 Why publish a climate statement?

Bar associations report a number of reasons for choosing to issue a public statement (as opposed to an internal document). Motivations include to:

- **Demonstrate** leadership and encourage comparable action across bar associations.
- **Align** with evolving professional expectations and maintain the bar association's credibility and relevance.
- **Create** public accountability for the bar association's commitments and provide a benchmark against which progress can be assessed.
- **Clarify** the bar association's position and provide a consistent basis for its advocacy, education and public engagement.
- **Influence** climate-related law and policy development and contribute the profession's perspective to public debate.
- **Signal** that climate change is a professional risk management issue, rather than solely an environmental or political concern.
- **Provide** members with a credible reference point when discussing climate-related issues within their firms, organisations and client relationships.
- **Support** collaboration with governments, regulators, courts, civil society and other professional bodies.
- **Respond** to member demand, as well as to attract and engage members (particularly younger lawyers) for whom climate leadership and organisational purpose may be important.
- **Connect** climate action with the bar association's broader commitments to the rule of law, access to justice, human rights and the public interest.
- **Establish** an institutional position that can endure beyond changes in leadership or annual priorities.
- **Communicate** the bar association's expectations to external partners, suppliers and service providers.
- **Build** public trust by recognising the legal profession's role in addressing a significant societal challenge.

3.3.2 Publishing a climate statement: what are the benefits?

Bar associations have reported a number of benefits that have flowed from publishing public statements, including:

- **Supporting constructive member engagement**: Provides a clear and credible foundation for discussing sensitive or contested issues concerning climate change and the legal profession's role.
- **Demonstrating leadership and shared purpose**: Communicates the bar association's commitment to climate competence within the legal profession and connects it with a growing global community of legal and professional bodies addressing climate change.
- **Catalysing further action**: Creates an institutional mandate and momentum for practical initiatives, including member guidance, professional education, conferences and reductions in the bar association's operational emissions.
- **Strengthening member confidence and engagement**: Demonstrates responsiveness to member concerns and may increase member support, participation and recognition of the bar association's leadership.
- **Enhancing influence and collaboration**: Establishes the bar association as a credible participant in climate-related legal and policy discussions, increasing opportunities to contribute to government consultations and collaborate with other organisations on climate initiatives.
- **Promoting accountability and continuity**: Provides a public framework against which progress can be assessed and helps sustain climate-related work through changes in leadership and organisational priorities.

3.4 Hosting a webpage for promoting climate and sustainability initiatives

Many bar associations have published dedicated webpages where readers can access their climate-related initiatives, including resolutions, training, recordings or articles from past events, and guidance.

For example:

- IBA Climate Crisis and ESG Issues in focus pages;
- Law Society of Scotland (LSS) Sustainability webpage;
- Law Society of Singapore ESG Hub; and
- Law Society of New South Wales (LSNSW) Legal Implications of Climate Change webpage.

3.5 Publishing an operational sustainability strategy or objectives

In addition to a formal resolution, bar associations may wish to determine a set of objectives which govern their approaches to managing operational environmental impact as well as member engagement.

Law Society of Scotland Sustainability Objectives

According to LSS's sustainability objectives, the organisation aims to:

- continuously improve its environmental performance;
- integrate environmental considerations into all business decisions, including procurement, travel, and into the design of the office where possible;
- minimise energy use in the office without impeding business activities or welfare of colleagues;
- encourage active and public transport whenever possible;
- manage waste according to the waste hierarchy;
- lead its members and colleagues in improving their impact on the environment; and
- annually review its carbon footprint, develop carbon management plans, and produce progress reports.

LSS has appointed a Governance Manager to monitor and improve environmental performance.

3.6 Educating members on how climate change impacts daily legal practice

Bar associations may wish to educate their members on how climate change impacts daily legal practice, through publishing guidance or initiating training programmes. Such education may address how climate change relates to lawyers' professional duties (including the duty of competence), and legal aspects of climate change. This section sets out the different types of guidance or education which could be provided.

As its second project, the CCWG has been working with academic experts to design a global model curriculum (Model Curriculum) for professional education for lawyers on climate change-related issues to help bar associations to educate their members on these matters.

3.6.1 Publishing guidance on how climate change relates to lawyers' professional duties

Escalating climate risks are shifting what is required of lawyers in order to fulfil their legal professional duties. Examples of professional duties which may be particularly relevant in the context of climate change include:

- duty to carry out their work in a competent and timely manner;
- duty to exercise reasonable care and skill;
- duty to warn clients of potential risks;
- duty to disclose to clients all information material to that matter of which the lawyer has actual knowledge; and
- duty of candour to the court in the context of litigation

Bar associations are well placed to provide guidance for lawyers to help them adhere to professional and ethical obligations, and to advise competently, in the context of escalating climate-related legal risks. Guidance can be general or may be specific to a particular type of legal practitioner (eg, property conveyancers). Key elements of this guidance can include:

- the professional duties of lawyers that are impacted by climate change;
- concrete examples of how climate change impacts those duties;
- guidance on legal risks specific to certain practice areas (eg, corporate law, M&A transactions, real property transactions), coupled with jurisdiction-specific guidance on legal frameworks and policies, which would, of course, be specific to each jurisdiction;
- tips for recognising what types of climate-related risks fall within the scope of a lawyer's practice (ie, legal risks) and what types of risks lawyers are not competent to advise on and should seek external advice in regard to (eg, physical risks);
- examples of different types of climate-related legal risks which can arise in practice; and
- tips for addressing climate risks at the stage of defining the scope of an engagement letter (when discussing the scope of a client's retainer).[9]

The connection between climate risk and individual professional responsibility is direct and operational. For example:

- A lawyer advising on a real property transaction without identifying documented physical climate risks affecting the asset may be in breach of the duty to exercise reasonable care and skill and the duty to disclose material information.
- A lawyer advising a corporate client on a financing or acquisition without addressing applicable mandatory climate risk disclosure requirements may be in breach of the duty to provide competent and timely legal advice.

Bar associations are encouraged to communicate to members that the standard of competence expected of a reasonably skilled practitioner is evolving in line with the expanding scope of climate-related legal risks, and that this evolution is already being reflected in litigation against professional service providers in multiple jurisdictions.

[9] *Framework for Net Zero Alignment* (Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, May 2024), available at www.netzerolawyers.com/publications/framework-for-net-zero-alignment.

Case study: General guidance for practitioners

Law Society of England and Wales (LSEW) guidance: Impact of climate change on solicitors (2023)

In the LSEW's 2021 Climate Change Resolution, it committed to: 'provide guidance to solicitors on how, when approaching any matter arising in the course of legal practice, to take into account the likely impact of that matter upon the climate crisis in a way which is compatible with their professional duties and the administration of justice'.

In 2023, the LSEW published guidance for solicitors in England and Wales that addressed:

- how organisations and law firms can manage their business in a manner that is consistent with the net zero transition; and
- considerations for solicitors, including how climate change physical risks and legal risks may be relevant to legal advice; issues which may be relevant when considering the interplay of legal advice, climate and solicitors' professional duties; and issues which may be relevant when considering the solicitor-client relationship in the climate context.

The guidance notes that the expanding scope of climate legal risks may impact lawyers' professional duties to their clients, in particular the following:

- general legal duty to exercise reasonable care and skill;
- duty to warn a client about potential risks by pointing out hazards of a kind which should be obvious to the solicitor but that the client may not appreciate;
- duty to disclose to the client all information material to that matter of which the solicitor has actual knowledge; and
- duty to provide competent and timely legal advice.

The guidance also explains that climate-related legal risks may increasingly fall within the scope of competent legal practice. It notes that where solicitors lack the knowledge required to advise on such risks, they should not advise beyond their competence and should consider further training, as well as discussing with clients whether specialist third-party expertise is needed. It also recommends clearly defining the scope of the retainer and documenting any limits, assumptions or specialist referrals.

View the guidance at www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/climate-change/impact-of-climate-change-on-solicitors

Case studies: Practice-specific guidance

Law Society of New South Wales Climate Change Practitioner Guidance

Annexure B ('Advising on Climate Risk') of the LSNSW guidance describes how climate change risks relate to the following practice areas:

- corporate law, and specifically how climate change risks affect interpretation of directors' duties of care and diligence and to act in good faith and best interests of the company;
- mergers and acquisitions;
- construction and infrastructure; and
- real property transactions, including rural property, commercial leases, and renewable energy leases.

View the guidance at: www.lawsociety.com.au/resources/practice-resources/my-practice-area/climate-change

LSEW Climate Change and Property Practice Note (2025)

The LSEW published a practice note in May 2025 providing solicitors with insights on how to manage climate change-related risks more specifically in residential, commercial and mixed-use property transactions. The practice note identifies three main types of climate risks: physical, transition and legal/liability risks. The note discusses how these risks affect insurability, property value, the potential for development, leasing and financing. Accordingly, solicitors are advised to be clear on the scope

of their retainer, and to be clear on the legal ramifications of these risks. The note further advises solicitors to document their advice, to communicate risks and scope clearly with their client, and to collaborate with relevant experts to restructure the climate risks associated with properties to address the climate risks. The full practice note is available at www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/climate-change/climate-change-property

3.6.2 Helping lawyers understand links between climate change and BHR

The UNGPs are relevant to bar associations and law firms in two respects. First, they have a responsibility to respect human rights in accordance with the UNGPs. Second, as providers of support, guidance and education to the legal profession, they have a critical role to play in helping their members and clients to respect human rights in accordance with the UNGPs.[10]

There are a range of steps that bar associations can take to ensure their members understand how to apply the UNGPs in practice – this includes with respect to climate change.[11] For example, lessons may be learned from the guidance provided by bar associations to lawyers on climate change advice, due to the recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as an international human rights standard within the scope of the UNGPs.

Legal practitioners should be cognisant of developments in the interpretation and application of climate change instruments, legislation, policy, litigation proceedings and procedural rights. Practitioners should be also aware of the potential risks that even certain efforts to mitigate climate change pose to human rights, and support mitigation options that have a limited ability to impact adversely human rights.

IBA Business and Human Rights Guidance for Bar Associations (2024)

In 2024, the IBA adopted new guidance for bar associations on business and human rights. This guidance builds on initial guidance issued for bar associations by the IBA in 2015. It reflects the increasing integration of the UNGPs into hard and soft law around the world, including in the form of human rights and environmental due diligence regulations and the integration of BHR considerations in judicial and non-judicial decisions. Bar associations can play a critical role in assisting lawyers and law firms to address the challenges and opportunities posed by these developments.

The guidance provides a roadmap of steps that bars can take to help their members understand and apply the UNGPs in legal practice, including:

- **Developing a strategy:** Bar associations may wish to develop a strategy for engaging with members on BHR issues. To help develop this strategy, associations could establish an independent committee or working group on BHR, with members from many different practice areas and legal communities.
- **Setting objectives:** An association's strategy for engaging with members on BHR could set specific objectives about what associations want to achieve through engagement with its members on BHR, and initiatives that help achieve these objectives. The strategy should include realistic timelines for completion of objectives, indicators of success, and responsibilities for implementation.
- **Awareness raising:** Take advantage of any opportunities to raise awareness of the existence and relevance of BHR instruments and principles among all members and consider extending this to the public. Awareness raising can be done through, for example, holding special BHR sessions at conferences, and featuring BHR issues on the association's website and in publications.
- **Comprehensive education:** Associations can promote, participate in and/or establish educational programmes – including mentoring programmes – for law students and practitioners on the relevance of BHR to legal practice. The guidance lists a range of ideas for subjects that these programmes could deal with.

[10] Updated Guidance Note on Business & Human Rights for Lawyers (2nd ed, IBA, 2024), available at www.ibanet.org/Updated-business-and-human-rights-changing-role-of-lawyers.
[11] Ibid.

- **Increasing lawyers' awareness of ethical considerations associated with BHRs:** Advising clients on compliance with applicable law – including laws that incorporate or reflect the UNGPs or other human rights standards – is a fundamental legal competence, and advising clients on relevant soft law implications of the UNGPs is wise counselling. Associations are strongly encouraged to draw to members' attention the ethical considerations which lawyers should consider related to business and human rights when advising clients. If an association publishes a professional code of conduct for lawyers, consider amending this code so that it encourages or requires lawyers to take account of any risks of human rights impacts – and how to address potential dilemmas – when advising business clients.
- **Providing technical assistance and guidance:** The association can provide a range of assistance to help strengthen lawyers' institutional and human capacity to adopt effective BHR practices. This includes ensuring that lawyers have access to international and domestic BHR instruments, preferably in their own language.
- **Sharing examples of best practice and experiences among members and other bar associations:** Associations can help bring the legal profession together and enable member lawyers and law firms who have had success in embedding BHR principles in their advice to clients to share their experiences. Bar associations may also wish to share, with other bar associations, their own experiences, ideas, best practices and challenges faced, to help strengthen their own approaches to human rights. As part of this, associations may wish to consider publishing the steps that they are taking to address business and human rights.
- **Acknowledging good human rights practice:** Associations may wish to acknowledge publicly successful business and human rights measures or programmes adopted by legal practitioners in the jurisdiction (eg, through issuing awards and promoting successful BHR programmes in the association's publications).
- **Involving the legal profession in work to integrate business and human rights principles in domestic policy and legislation:** BHR principles are being increasingly integrated into domestic policy and legislation, and into industry standards. Associations may wish to ensure that the views of the legal profession are represented in consultation processes relating to the development of these instruments.

Read the full guidance at: www.ibanet.org/LPRU/Guidance-on-Business-and-Human-Rights-for-Bar-Associations

IBA Nature-Intelligent Legal Services Series (2026)

Since climate is one of the five main drivers of nature degradation, climate risks are a subset of nature risks. There is broad recognition that the global biodiversity crisis is inextricably linked with the climate crisis: just as climate change is a driver of nature loss, so the destruction of nature exacerbates the impacts of climate change.

In February 2026, the IBA Environment, Health & Safety Law Committee and IBA Law Firm Management Committee ESG Subcommittee published the Nature-Intelligent Legal Services Series. The three-part series provides insights on the business case for lawyers and law firms to understand nature-related risks and how they impact corporate clients; how to assess clients' nature-related exposures; and guidance on how to add value for clients by embedding nature considerations into legal services.

For further information, see www.ibanet.org/IBA-Nature-Intelligent-Legal-Services-Series

3.6.3 Educating members on legal aspects of climate change

Educating members about the legal aspects of climate change is a powerful way for bar associations to help lawyers advise competently and build resilient legal practices. This might take the form of a webinar on a specific issue (eg, trends in domestic and international climate litigation), a report, or the form of a more comprehensive training course.

Elements which may be included in a training course include:

- how climate change intersects with the roles of lawyers and law firms, including issues of legal ethics, professional responsibilities, and business and human rights;
- fundamentals of climate science, climate risks and global warming scenarios;
- the international climate change legal regime including key principles, climate treaties, international jurisprudence and advisory opinions, and how international climate law impacts domestic law;
- domestic and regional regulatory responses to climate change, including climate change framework laws and links with nationally determined contributions (NDCs), risk disclosure and due diligence laws, and sector-specific regulation;
- an overview of climate finance, carbon pricing and carbon markets;
- forms of international and domestic climate litigation and key trends; and
- practical approaches to addressing climate change risks in everyday practice, for example, through contracting approaches.

These examples are illustrative and can be supplemented with jurisdiction-specific topics and resources.

The CCWG's Model Curriculum project seeks to help bar associations to educate their members on legal aspects of climate change. The Model Curriculum will:

- assume no prior knowledge of climate change or the legal regimes that respond to it;
- be designed to facilitate a basic level of climate competence and understanding of legal risk, not to advocate for specific policy outcomes or to provide specialist climate legal training;
- be intended as a facilitative tool for bar associations, not a prescriptive one;
- be designed for bar associations to adapt to the specific legal and policy environment in their jurisdiction; and
- include suggested 'case studies' to ensure relevance of each module to everyday legal practice, although bar associations may choose case studies which are most relevant to the lawyers in their jurisdictions.

IBA ESG Accelerator Training Programme (2024–2025)

The IBA ESG Accelerator Training Programme is a specialised online seven-module environmental, social and governance (ESG) training focused on legal practitioners across Africa, convened by the IBA African Regional Forum, and supported by Webber Wentzel, the IBA Energy, Environment, Natural Resources and Infrastructure Law Section, the IBA Business Human Rights Committee and the IBA LPRU.

Featuring a diverse array of legal experts and case studies from across the African continent, this programme provides lawyers with a sound understanding of how a wide range of ESG issues impact their daily legal practice. Topics covered include:

- key trends in ESG and how ESG is relevant to the role of lawyers and the legal community;
- ESG disclosures, reporting and due diligence;
- ESG litigation and dispute resolution trends;
- sustainable finance;
- climate change, nature and just transition;
- business and human rights; and
- governance.

While this programme is tailored for lawyers practising in Africa, it has relevance for every member of the legal profession. Further information is available at www.ibanet.org/IBA-ESG-Accelerator-Training-Programme

3.6.4 Embedding climate change in compulsory training requirements

Many bar associations who are responsible for regulating the legal profession in their jurisdiction require members to complete a minimum annual number of CPD hours. Bar associations should consider mandating a minimum CPD session relating specifically to climate change and climate-related legal issues for their members.

The Model Curriculum could serve as the foundational framework for CPD programming, and assist in:

- supporting climate competence across the profession;
- reducing regulatory and liability risk for practitioners; and
- demonstrating institutional leadership by bar associations.

3.6.5 Publishing guidance on climate change and pro bono services

There are many ways that pro bono legal services can support access to justice for climate-affected communities, and broader climate change and sustainability initiatives that promote human rights and positive environmental outcomes. Bar associations can educate their members about the role of pro bono services in responding to climate change. To do this, bar associations may wish to draw on the IBA 2025 Pro Bono Declaration and its accompanying guide, which specifically addresses this subject.

Climate change in the IBA Pro Bono Declaration Guide (2025)

Examples of climate-related pro bono services highlighted in the guide include:

- **Supporting** those negatively affected by climate change to engage in dispute resolution mechanisms (eg, strategic litigation and non-judicial dispute resolution mechanisms).
- **Supporting** law reform through assistance with legislative drafting and/or submissions that advocate for strong environmental and climate protections, consistent with best available science and fundamental principles of good lawmaking (eg, rule of law, accountability, access to justice and robust consultation processes in planning approvals).
- **Supporting** initiatives that embed climate and nature considerations in private law instruments, such as model contracts and contract clauses.
- **Offering** legal advice and services to climate or nature-focused non-profit organisations (eg, in relation to charity status, governance, directors' duties, etc) and research support for such organisations (eg, report preparation, and case law analysis).
- **Establishing** climate justice clinics in collaboration with relevant stakeholders (eg, universities).
- **Providing** secondees to non-profit organisations who are working to address climate change.
- **Convening** or supporting legal education and training initiatives for law students and qualified lawyers (eg, in collaboration with law schools, law associations and law firms).
- **Supporting** non-profits and developing country delegations in international negotiations and proceedings (eg, under the UNFCCC, or proceedings before international courts).
- **Providing** legal advice for persons impacted by climate-related extreme weather events and disasters, experiencing climate-related displacement, or otherwise adversely impacted by environmental degradation.
- **Supporting** whistleblowers and climate and environmental defenders who face risks of harm due to the nature of their work.

3.7 Engaging constructively with government on climate policy and lawmaking

Bar associations may wish to represent their members in response to opportunities to engage in domestic or international climate policy and law reform (eg, responding to public consultations). It can be helpful to include in the bar association's climate statement or resolution principles to guide this engagement. Drafting of submissions may be a task undertaken by the bar association's climate change committee. Bar associations may wish to make their submissions publicly available.[12]

Bar associations may wish to adopt a structured process for government engagement, including:

[12] For example, see Law Society of New South Wales (www.lawsociety.com.au/resources/practice-resources/my-practice-area/climate-change), New Zealand Law Society (www.lawsociety.org.nz/professional-practice/law-reform-and-advocacy/law-reform-committees/climate-change-law-committee/), Law Society of Scotland (www.lawscot.org.uk/members/sustainability/), and Law Society of England and Wales (www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/climate-change). All accessed 5 November 2026.

- identifying a clear mandate for engagement, grounded in the association's objects, climate statement or climate change committee terms of reference;
- selecting priority issues based on legal significance, member relevance and public interest;
- assigning drafting responsibility to a committee or working group with appropriate expertise;
- consulting relevant sections of the membership, including practitioners from affected practice areas
- checking alignment with professional duties, rule of law principles, and applicable domestic and international legal frameworks;
- securing internal approval through the appropriate governance process;
- publishing the final submission where appropriate to promote transparency and public confidence; and
- reviewing the effectiveness of the engagement to inform future advocacy.

When developing a more detailed process for engaging in climate law reform opportunities, it may be helpful for the bar association or its climate change committee to:

- **Designate** a member of the bar association or climate change committee who is responsible for tracking submission opportunities from relevant bodies which relate to climate change and law and regulation and updating the committee quickly when relevant opportunities arise. Examples of relevant bodies could include:
    - international bodies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR);[13]
    - national and local government environment/climate departments; and
    - statutory climate advisory authorities (for example, the relevant country or state's climate change commission[14] or equivalent).
- **Develop** a process for efficiently deciding whether a submission opportunity is aligned with the committee's and the bar association's values, strategy and expertise – including any climate statement in place.
- **Prepare** in collaboration with other specialist committees and bodies within the bar association submissions on climate and regulatory issues.
- **Notify** early the bar association's council (or equivalent) when a submission is to be prepared, so that appropriate review and approvals can take place in a timely way. This is particularly important given that submission deadlines are often short and inflexible.
- **Consult** where appropriate with members or stakeholders on draft submissions.

Law Council of Australia (LCA) Climate Change Policy Statement (2021)

This statement sets out 'principles for the development of the law' to guide how the LCA will assess and advocate on federal and national law and policy reforms responding to human-induced climate change. These principles are:

- Australia's international law obligations with respect to climate change should be fully implemented domestically.
- Australia's response should give effect to rule of law principles.
- Australia's response should be fair and equitable and should promote public confidence.

For access to the policy statement, see https://lawcouncil.au/resources/policies-and-guidelines/policy-statement-climate-change-policy

3.8 Measuring and reducing organisational climate impacts

Climate transition planning is a tool that bar associations can use to help ensure their long-term resilience.

[13] See OHCHR's Calls for Input at www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input-listing.
[14] See, eg, New Zealand's He Pou a Rangi/Climate Change Commission (www.climatecommission.govt.nz).

Some bar associations have calculated their operational GHG emissions, and have published reports on these emissions, along with plans of action for reducing those emissions.

Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) Carbon Footprint Report (2024)

In 2023, the CCBE adopted its initial statement on climate change. In its statement, the CCBE committed to (among other things) 'taking action in relation to its own activities in a manner consistent with restricting global warming to 1.5°C, and to report in a transparent way to the Plenary Session on the actions it has taken and their outcome' and 'submitting on a short term its activities to a thorough and concrete analysis by external experts, including a calculation of its CO_2 footprint'.

The CCBE has subsequently prepared and published multiple carbon footprint reports. The 2024 report includes calculations developed using the free calculator provided under the United Nations Carbon Offset Platform, and represents the footprint generated by the professional activities of the CCBE Secretariat, and by the business travels of the CCBE Presidency.

The CCBE decided to contribute up to an amount ten per cent higher than its estimated carbon footprint by financing the plantation of 1,260 trees.

Read the 2024 report and previous reports in the IBA Climate Registry (www.ibanet.org/IBA-Climate-Registry).

3.9 Supporting member lawyers or law firms to address operational carbon impacts

As expectations grow for organisations and individuals to minimise their climate impacts, bar associations may also wish to educate lawyers and law firms on approaches to addressing operational emissions. This might take the form of training programmes, publishing guidance, or engaging individually with members.

Examples of elements which may be addressed include:

- **Developing** sustainable travel policy to address the emissions generated by business travel.[15]
- **Supporting** climate and sustainability risk reporting and due diligence. Depending on the jurisdiction, law firms may fall within the scope of mandatory climate-related financial risk disclosure or due diligence legislation or may be required to report their carbon footprint and other climate data to clients or other parties in their supply chains. Bar associations can provide jurisdiction-specific materials to help their member lawyers and law firms to comply with such reporting requirements and pursue best practice (eg, guidance on reporting in line with the requirements of the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations, ISSB IFRS S2 climate disclosure standards, or EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)).[16]
- **Adopting** new technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), in a manner that recognises they may create both opportunities and challenges for organisations seeking to manage their operational environmental impacts. While AI may increase energy consumption associated with digital operations, it can also improve organisational efficiency, expand access to education, reduce administrative burdens and reduce emissions associated with activities such as travel and paper-based processes. Bar associations may wish to review periodically how emerging technologies affect energy use, operational efficiency, member services and broader sustainability objectives, and adapt internal policies and practices as technologies and available evidence evolve.

[15] For example, the Legal Sustainability Alliance publishes a 'Practical Guide to Business Travel' (https://legalsustainabilityalliance.com/resource-library/).
[16] For examples, see https://legalsustainabilityalliance.com/resource-library/.

Law Society of Northern Ireland Carbon Literacy Training Programme

The Law Society of Northern Ireland, in partnership with Business in the Community NI, has developed a CPD accredited two-day programme to support law firms in understanding and measuring their carbon footprints, setting climate targets, developing environmental strategies and making public climate action pledges. This programme is directed at partners, practice managers, operations leads, ESG champions, and law firm personnel responsible for compliance, risk or business strategy.

Elements of the training include:

- **Measuring** and reporting the organisation's carbon footprint, by reference to the Climate Action Pledge.
- **Setting** ambitious climate targets by exploring climate-related business risks, establishing Scope 1, 2 and relevant Scope 3 targets, and working through solicitor-specific examples.
- **Developing** a tailored environmental strategy, covering sustainability planning, assessing business and environmental impacts, and designing a forward-looking strategy.
- **Making** a public Climate Action Pledge.

3.10 Addressing increasing scrutiny on legal services with climate-related impacts

In some jurisdictions, law firms and lawyers are facing increasing scrutiny regarding the role of legal services in matters that have climate-related impacts. This scrutiny may give rise to legal, reputational or professional risk for professional service providers.[17]

Resources have been developed by parts of the legal profession to help law firms and lawyers understand emerging climate-related legal risks, consider how those risks may affect legal practice, and strengthen their own governance and operational resilience.

For law firms and lawyers interested in these issues, bar associations may wish to make available educational resources that help members understand emerging developments, assess their relevance to particular areas of legal practice, and support competent legal advice consistent with applicable professional and ethical obligations. Legal organisations have published voluntary frameworks to assist law firms in understanding climate-related governance, risk management and operational considerations.[18]

[17] For example, an accounting firm has been named as a co-defendant in *Multnomah County Oregon v Exxon Mobil* (2023, Oregon Circuit Court) based on the emissions associated with its consulting services; in addition, a complaint has been filed against an advertising firm for allegedly violating the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct, asking the firm to disclose its advertised emissions and take steps to cease promoting high-polluting industries.
[18] For example, the Legal Charter 1.5 matter classification tool and the Net Zero Alliance's Framework for Net-Zero Alignment.