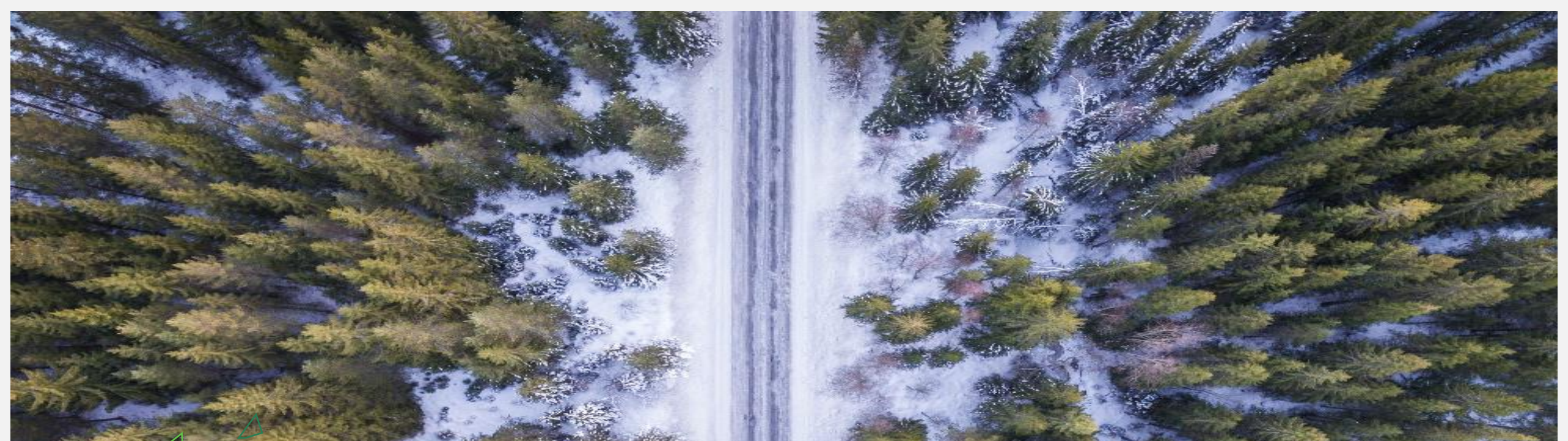


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Centre for Applied
Sustainable Transition Law

www.thecastl.org



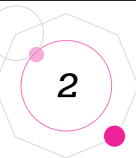
Focus

Achieving sustainable transition through the law.



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About Us

The CASTL was established in 2020 and formally incorporated in 2022. We focus on innovative, concrete and scalable solutions and partnerships to accelerate addressing key systemic sustainability challenges and global needs in specific sectors.

The founders of the CASTL, have a combined post-qualification experience of over 85 years across five continents in legal practice, academia, business, and finance. We undertake the development and supervision of the intellectual and organisational functions of the CASTL.



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Why?

Sustainability and delivering a just transition have captured the world's attention in politics, economics, business and academia and will be critical for human survival, prosperity and security. It will need concerted action throughout this decade.



Sustainability

1 NO POVERTY



2 ZERO HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY



6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



16 PEACE AND JUSTICE STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



The SDGs are the touchstone and overarching framework of the CASTL's work.


Justice, equality, inclusion, and environmental preservation are integral to our work.

The creative and intellectual output of the CASTL's research illustrates constructively how law can best support the SDGs.



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Based on the SDGs and international frameworks, the CASTL's guiding principle is **the role of law and governance** in achieving just transition. Its focus is across public and private sectors most in need of sustainable transformation where leveraging interdisciplinary insights and partnerships can accelerate scalable ESG related outcomes.

Sustainable Transition

Transition is essential to survival. It has many facets, including:



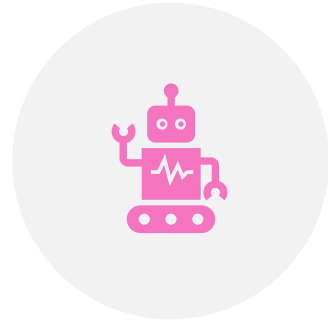
Private Sector

Critical transformation imperatives, are mainstreaming responsible and sustainable business conduct, innovation and aligning finance to support a just transition and the SDGs.



Governance

Alignment of public policy with law and regulation is needed. Calls on the public and private sector for increased transparency and accountability regarding sustainability performance, disclosure and audit.



Digitalisation

Technologies including AI, robotics, internet of things, digitalisation, big data, and process automation are transforming modern life.



Energy

There are increasing calls for carbon neutrality, net zero, circular, renewable and green economy, finance, goods and services.



Infrastructure & Connectivity

Public health, sustainable cities, trade, agriculture and water are essential for improving lives in a sustainable manner.





Law : A Critical Enabler

Using law as a catalyst, tool, and enabler.

Sustainability and transition. Delivering the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, addressing climate change and rebuilding back better post pandemic has focused the world's attention on sustainability and just transition.

Law has a pivotal role to play - as a potential obstacle to sustainable change or a profound enabler of just transformation. However, law and governance are often missing elements, or an afterthought.

The CASTL seeks to address this gap as a:

- leading global centre of excellence seeking solutions on how best to achieve sustainable transition through the law;
- through research, innovation, scholarship, consultancy, capacity building and training, advisory services and supporting multi-stakeholders.

Law

Covering both public and private norm setters, as well as governance.



State

Law and regulation by states, and other state entities.



Soft Law

Principles, declarations, guidelines and standards.



Private Actors

Industry, civil society, private standard setting bodies, transnational organisations, contracts and corporate practice.





Applied Research



The emphasis is on applied research, seeking to amplify the research outputs, through a focus on **impact, action, outcome and practical application**. The CASTL's research prioritises delivering realistic, scalable, and inclusive recommendations for law and governance; whether legal reform or new norms and mechanisms.



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Scalable Outputs

Accelerating transition by identifying key systemic challenges and where convergence across interdisciplinary insights, use of law and governance, technology and strategic partnerships can deliver impact in key sectors.

Objectives

Law is of central relevance as an enabler to achieve:

- Sustainability
- Global risk mitigation
- Resilience
- Good governance
- Rule of law, justice and equity
- Pioneering innovative programmes.

Components

Projects focus on (non-exhaustive):

- SDGs
- Finance
- Technology
- Energy and the Environment
- Trade
- Engineering and Science.

Outputs

Project outputs include:

- Research Reports and Publications
- Toolkits
- Proposals for Law Reform
- Knowledge Transfer
- Training and Education
- Forge new global partnerships with diverse stakeholders.





Our Focus

Global, Strategic, Interdisciplinary.



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The CASTL focuses on evolving **global legal approaches and tools** supporting just and sustainable transition and revealing common characteristics of law and identifies sectoral differences.

We leverage networked hubs and support **strategic partnerships** to accelerate scalable change.

We develop **multidisciplinary insights working with interdisciplinary teams** from around the world across government, industry, the legal profession, academia, scientists and engineers.




We work with those seeking to find innovative and scalable solutions to today's challenges and global needs, providing the necessary research and expertise on the implications of law.



Strategic Partnerships and Our Projects

Collaborating, Engaging, Multiplying Impact



The CASTL has formed strategic partnerships with a number of leading global organisations including the British Institute of International and Comparative Law ([BIICL](#)), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development ([EBRD](#)), Intergovernmental Authority on Development ([IGAD](#)), and International Chamber of Commerce ([ICC](#)).

It is inviting interested parties to develop collaborative partnerships, to participate in its funding and technical drive, and establish hubs worldwide.

Digitalising commercial trade documents

Legal Reform Technical Assistance Taskforce

For low- to middle-income countries



CASTL the Implementing Partner of the ICC United Kingdom, Centre for Digital Trade Innovation (C4DTI) Legal Reform Technical Assistance Taskforce

C4DTI is an ICC United Kingdom-led public, private partnership that enables government and industry to coordinate and accelerate the digitalisation of UK trade. The CASTL is Project Lead on the Taskforce's first project funded by the [FCDO](#). The project will be delivered in partnership with the Thailand Electronic Transactions Development Agency ([ETDA](#)) and UK government.

The aim of this project is to provide technical assistance to Thailand to support the alignment of national law with the [UNCITRAL](#) Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR), the global framework for the handling of commercial trade documents in digital form. The project will help enable more SMEs to trade at lower cost, remove unnecessary complexity caused by inefficient paper-based processes and speed up the flow of trade transactions.

Legal Reform Technical Assistance Taskforce UK- Thai Project



**Making Thai-UK
trade cheaper,
faster and simpler**

The first project was in Thailand, we run three workshops and launched our report in Bangkok at the British Embassy. The Report was drafted by Theodora and provides an action plan for fulfilment of the digital agenda.

The Report can be downloaded here: [Making Thai-UK trade cheaper, faster and simpler.](#)



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Blueprint Paper on Digital Trade and the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records

Supported by:



EBRD-CASTL Blueprint Paper

The Paper was commissioned by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The objective was for the CASTL to provide a Blueprint for achieving Digital Trade, using alignment of legal frameworks with the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable records (MLETR).

The paper provides an analysis of laws and related institutions in those countries which have aligned with MLETR and some countries whose laws are compatible. We detail the trade process, identifying the key actors and documents along the way and showing how easily electronic records can replace the paper based documents. An implementation matrix for reform sets out the key principles and enabling concepts for alignment with MLETR. The idea is that the paper will be a catalyst for reform.

An aerial, top-down view of a highly complex automated sorting system. The system consists of a dense network of silver-colored metal conveyor belts that branch, merge, and curve in various directions. Numerous brown cardboard boxes are scattered throughout the system, some resting on the belts and others in transit. Small red mechanical components, likely sensors or actuators, are visible at various points where the belts intersect or change direction. The overall scene is a chaotic yet organized industrial landscape of automation.

Digitalisation of the trade ecosystem will bring economic benefits, environmental benefits, and increase inclusion – it is an example of applied sustainable transition.



Meet our team

Our Directors and Advisory Board



Professor John L Taylor, Executive Director and Co-Founder of the CASTL, is Professor of International Finance and Trade Law at QMUL, Policy Fellow of BIICL, and an active member of global finance and law related associations. He has held managerial and senior executive positions at the World Bank and in several international finance and other companies, was a General Counsel of EBRD, lawyer at the Asian Development Bank and at major law firms in Australia, the UK and the USA.



Drawing on his diverse global corporate and finance experience, in addition to his writing and academic pursuits, John is a consultant on international law, finance and corporate governance. He has been with leading law firms in Australia, UK and USA and in senior international management roles in law and finance in banks, an international private equity firm, a global fund manager, and in three international financial institutions.

His professional life in law, finance and scholarship has been driven by an unwavering desire to undertake and lead innovative work in varied international positions in Australia, Asia, the United States and Europe in both the public and private sectors. He successfully built and managed teams of lawyers, corporate finance experts and others for more than 25 years, including as General Counsel at EBRD and elsewhere. In addition, he continued to contribute to a broad range of legal scholarship, including part time teaching/mentoring at law schools, authoring/co-editing two books and numerous articles on legal and financial topics, and arranging and participating in legal conferences and executive training. John has also been an active member for many years of two prestigious international Associations: the Committee on International Monetary Law of the ILA and the Bankers Association for Finance and Trade.

During his career, John has led the development of: an innovative World Bank guarantee programme that successfully attracted billions of dollars of financing for World Bank projects; the establishment of the “Legal Transition Team” at EBRD that for more than 25 years has provided valuable law reform services for many of EBRD's member countries; an award winning, “best client initiative” international strategy for a law firm, contributing to a substantial increase in the law firm’s international business and profile; and the creation of an innovative digital payment instrument for use in international trade transactions.





Dr Theodora A Christou, Co-Founder and Director of the CASTL, is Convenor of Transnational Law and Governance at QMUL, and of International Human Rights Law at the LSE, an elected Executive Committee member of the BHRC, and a former Research Fellow at BIICL. She has consulted globally on a range of law related issues.



Dr Christou is Convenor of Transnational Law and Governance at QMUL which considers the law's response to the irritations of globalisation, technology and business activities, as well as the role of law in promoting sustainable development. She is a Co-Convenor of International Human Rights at LSE and is an elected Executive Committee member of the Bar Human Rights Committee.

As a member of the International Bar Association Working Group on AI, her focus is on how legal frameworks can regulate AI effectively to foster trust and enable its continued use. This has included developing a human rights due diligence assessment.

She has participated in workshops organised by The Alan Turing Institute, where she was one of very few lawyers and appreciates the need for law to work with other disciplines including science, engineering, and policy.

Combining research and practical application, she was formerly a Research Fellow at BIICL and working with civil society organisations has advised on individual rights before regional and international systems.

She produced a report commissioned by the World Bank about the legal and regulatory implications for when it seeks to fund projects with technology elements, wanting to ensure that the legal framework in place, ensures the transition to the innovation is well received by the country and that it is sustainable.

As a Consultant she has worked on projects in over 20 countries and on over 80 jurisdictions funded by the World Bank, the EC, the FCO, DFID, and private trusts.



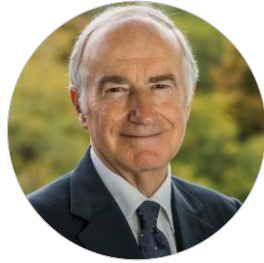
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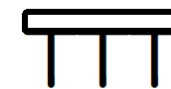
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