



## **Cooperative Law and Sustainable Development: Past, Present and Future**

5<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Cooperative Law

Moshi Cooperative University

Moshi/Tanzania, 13 and 14 November 2025

### **Call for Contributions**

International Forum on Cooperative Law brings together lawyers interested with international, regional and national cooperative laws. It is a platform for sharing experiences on diverse cooperative law issues. The Forum is mainly organised by Ius Cooperativism in collaboration with the International Cooperative Alliance Cooperative Law Committee (ICA-CLC). Four Forums have been organised so far since 2016.<sup>1</sup> Ius Cooperativum will hold the 5<sup>th</sup> Forum at the end of 2025 jointly in collaboration with ICA-CLC and the Moshi Co-operative University (MoCU). Returning to the original idea of holding the Forum bi-annually and alternately in one of the regions of the ICA, this Forum will take place in Africa precisely in Moshi, Kilimanjaro within the United Republic of Tanzania.

It is part of the events marking the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Year of Cooperatives within 13 years that the United Nations General Assembly declared in 2023 (UN Doc. A RES 78/289). The 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will explore the relationship between cooperative law and sustainable development from a juridical perspective. While related ideas, such as *'cooperatives and development'* and *'cooperatives and sustainable development'*, as well as concepts, such as *'cooperative law and development'*, *'law and sustainable development'* and especially the encompassing concept of *'law and development'*, which have evolved throughout the history of modern cooperatives with varying intensity and weight, have received considerable attention, *'cooperative law and sustainable development'* has hardly been dealt with yet.

Not denying the importance of other perspectives, especially the political, social and economic ones, the narrow juridical approach may be justified by the following: The substance of cooperative law is now being guided by cooperative principles that are recognized by public international law and sustainable development is gradually permeating all law as a concept recognized by public international law. Despite the radical change that the notion of sustainable development implies for the notion of development, the reflection on the subject of *'Cooperative Law and Sustainable Development'* might benefit from embedding it in the *'law and development'* discussion. Not only "[is] *'law and development'* [...] back" (Kennedy, *Laws and developments*, in: Hatchard/Perry-Kessaris (eds.), *Law and Development: Facing Complexity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 2003, 17 ff.), but the realities behind the concepts it encompasses subsist and lessons can possibly be drawn from them and

---

<sup>1</sup> The first International Forum on Cooperative Law, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 2016; the second in Athens, Greece, in 2018; the third in Seoul, South Korea, in 2021, the fourth in San Sebastian, Basque Country, in 2023.

from their theorization for the theme of the Forum. Noticeably, the literature on cooperative law and that on ‘law and development’ have not taken much notice of each other.

The theme of the Forum is multi-faceted. Its description operates with acceptations and connotations that have varied over time and in space and that are disputed. Because of the narrow juridical approach, the result of the Forum cannot be more than an approximation to the subject. These flaws justify fundamental criticism. Nevertheless, the organizers hope that the Forum will contribute to uncovering an unused potential of cooperative law for our all striving towards a sustainable development-compatible world.

## **Contributions**

Anyone interested in participating in the 5<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Cooperative law, in person or virtually, is kindly invited to submit an abstract on one of the following or on another subject related to the overall theme of the Forum and dealing with cooperative law, the legal nature of the cooperative principles, development and/or the legal principle/concept of sustainable development. The following categorization of the proposed subjects must not be construed as being binding in any way.

### **1. Cooperative law and development – lessons from the past**

- The first cooperative laws and development
- The so-called British Indian Pattern of Cooperation and development
- The influence of the so-called British Indian Pattern of Cooperation on cooperative law beyond India, then and now
- Cooperative law and the development paths of China, Japan and Korea
- Cooperative law, “home-grown” or “imported”?
  - / The encounter of a universal idea with local realities
  - // The weal and woe of colonial and post-colonial experiences in cooperative law-making/ “exporting” and “importing” foreign cooperative law
  - /// Cooperative law and laws related to (dis)similar entities, such as, for example Ujamaa in Tanzania, fokon-olona and fokon-tany in Madagascar or tontines in Cameroun
- Cooperative law, the ILO Recommendation 127 and development
- Cooperative law and the debate on ‘law and development’
- Cooperative law mirrored against the various notions of development – economic and others. For example, ‘evolution’, ‘progress’, ‘growth’, ‘degrowth’, ‘financial performance’, ‘human development’
- Cooperative law and development. Of the society, the state and/or the individual?

### **2. Cooperative law and development – where do we stand?**

- The legal nature of the cooperative principles
- Cooperative law, regional and national, development and the cooperative principles, considered individually or in their interrelatedness

- Cooperative model laws and new thoughts on cooperative principles
- The influence of the ICA Statement and/or the ILO R. 193 on cooperative law reforms and development
- Cooperatives, national constitutions and the legal principle of sustainable development
- Cooperative law, regional and national, and the legal principle of sustainable development
- Cooperative law and the legal principle of sustainable development. Is there anything special about cooperatives as compared to other enterprise types?
- Cooperative law and the legal principle of sustainable development versus the SDGs
- Cooperative law and the Corporate social and societal responsibility versus Cooperative social and societal responsibility

### **3. Cooperative law and development – views toward the future**

- Cooperative law, laws on social cooperatives, the social and/or solidarity economy laws and the legal principle of sustainable development
- Cooperative law, the cooperative principles and the principle of sustainable development
- Cooperative law, structural changes of enterprises and development: Data, data transferability, platforms
- Cooperative law, new types of cooperatives, the cooperative principles and the principle of sustainable development
- Cooperative law, value chains and development
- Cooperative law. Regulating collectives and/or regulating connectives?
- Cooperative law and decentralized autonomous organizations
- Cooperative law. From organized cooperatives to networks/platforms and from organized cooperative solidarity to cooperative institutionalized solidarity
- The notion of law in cooperative law and development: privative, relational, non-state, and/or oral law, blockchains, algorithms
- Cooperative law in research and teaching

### **Abstract submission and acceptance**

Abstracts in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese may be sent no later than July 15, 2025, to

[info@iuscooperativum.org](mailto:info@iuscooperativum.org)

The organizers will inform potential contributors by July 31, 2025, on whether their abstract has been accepted.

Presentations will have to be in English or French.

### **Organizing team:**

- Alphonse Mbuya

- David Hiez
- Hagen Henry
- Ifigeneia Douvitsa
- Itziar Villafañez
- Leonardo de Souza
- Mathias Nkuhi
- Santosh Kumar Padmanabhan

#### **Scientific committee**

- Akira Kurimoto, Ann Apps (Asia Pacific)
- Akram Belhadj Rhouma (North Africa, Middle East)
- Alphonse Mbuya and Mathias Nkuhi and Willy Tadjudje (Africa).
- Dante Cracogna and Leonardo de Souza (Americas)
- David Hiez, Cynthia Ciagnocavo, Ifigeneia Douvitsa, Dominik Bierecki, Itziar Villafañez (Europe)

#### **Follow up**

Outstanding contributions to the 5<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Cooperative Law might be accepted for publication in the International Journal of Cooperative Law and/or in a book.