



UNIDROIT
International Institute for the Unification of Private Law
Institut International pour l'Unification du Droit Privé



UNIDROIT CENTENARY

PRIVATE LAW AND AGRICULTURE WORKSHOP

Venue: Rome, Villa Aldobrandini

Friday 18 September 2026, 9:00 – 13:00 CEST

To mark its Centennial year, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) has established seven Workstreams to develop strategic White Papers on UNIDROIT's main areas of work. The purpose of the White Papers is to critically evaluate the development and success of existing instruments, as well as lay out future initiatives UNIDROIT could undertake to achieve its purpose of harmonising international private and commercial law in the respective legal fields.

The Centenary Workstream on Private Law and Agriculture was established in 2025 to develop a White Paper reviewing UNIDROIT's existing international instruments and ongoing projects related to private law in agriculture. Over the past months, the Workstream has prepared the Private Law and Agriculture draft White Paper, which assesses UNIDROIT's work in relation to (i) contracts and investment in agriculture, (ii) business organisations in agriculture, and (iii) legal frameworks for agricultural finance.

This Workshop will provide an opportunity to review and discuss the draft White Paper in advance of its finalisation and submission to the UNIDROIT Governing Council and General Assembly for approval in December 2026. The Workshop will feature a discussion on the relevance of private law to agriculture, followed by three panels focussing on particular instruments and projects covered by the White Paper, as well as a panel on reflections and recommendations for future work.

This event is by invitation only. Institutions and individuals with expertise in private law and agriculture have been invited to participate. Online participation is possible, although in-person attendance is strongly encouraged in order to facilitate active participation and discussion. Invited participants can register their participation using the [Workshop registration link](#).

This event is held in conjunction with UNIDROIT's International Programme for Law and Development (IPLD) for the Balkans, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, and the Caucasus (BEPCAC). It will be followed by the UNIDROIT Centenary Sustainable Development Workstream, which will also take place at UNIDROIT on 18 September 2026, from 14:00 to 18:30 CEST. Participants are warmly invited to consider attending both workshops.

AGENDA

9:00 - 9:10 Opening & Introduction

Professor Henry Gabriel, Elon University, and UNIDROIT Governing Council Member a.h. (Chair of the Committee for the UNIDROIT Workstream on Private Law and Agriculture)

9:10 - 10:00 The White Paper and the Relevance of Private Law to Agriculture

Participants are invited to reflect on the scope and structure of the draft White Paper, as well as on the conceptual foundations, functions and core domains of private law in agriculture (Part One of the draft White Paper).

Professor Henry Gabriel, Elon University, and UNIDROIT Governing Council Member a.h. (Chair of the Committee for the UNIDROIT Workstream on Private Law and Agriculture)

10:00 - 10:30 Panel I - Contracts and Investment in Agriculture

The panel will review the impact of the UNIDROIT/FAO/IFAD Legal Guide on Contract Farming and the UNIDROIT/IFAD Legal Guide on Agricultural Law Investment Contracts.

Chair: Dr. Philine Wehling, Legal Officer, UNIDROIT

SPEAKERS

Ms Carmen Bullón, Legal Officer, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

Dr. Lorenzo Cotula, Head of Programme – Law, Economies and Justice, International Institute for Environment and Development

10:30 - 10:45 Panel II - Business Organisations in Agriculture

The panel will review the impact of the forthcoming UNIDROIT/FAO/IFAD Legal Guide on Collaborative Legal Structures for Agricultural Enterprises.

Chair: Dr. Priscila Andrade, Legal Officer, UNIDROIT

SPEAKERS

Professor Paola Iamiceli, University of Trento

Professor Hagen Christian Knuth Henrý, University of Helsinki

10:45 - 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 - 11:30 Panel III - Legal Frameworks for Agricultural Finance

The panel will review the impact of the Protocol to the Cape Town Convention on Matters Specific to Mining, Agriculture and Construction Equipment (MAC Protocol); the UNCITRAL-UNIDROIT Model Law on Warehouse Receipts and its Guide to Enactment; and the recently initiated project to develop a Legal Guide on Agricultural Financing (and possible development of a UNIDROIT Model Law on Crop Receipts).

Chair: Dr. Priscila Andrade, Legal Officer, UNIDROIT

SPEAKERS

Dr. Marek Dubovec, Director of Law Reform Programs, International Law Institute

Professor Leonardo Fabio Pastorino, University of Verona



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11:30 - 12:50 Panel IV – Reflections and Recommendations for Future Work

The panel will discuss the reflections and recommendations for future work by UNIDROIT as outlined in Part Four of the draft White Paper.

Chair: Dr. Philine Wehling, Legal Officer, UNIDROIT

SPEAKERS

Ms Carmen Bullón, Legal Officer, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

Professor James Thuo Gathii, Loyola University Chicago

12:50 - 13:00 Conclusions and Closing Remarks

Professor Henry Gabriel, Elon University, and Governing Council Member a.h. (Workstream Chair)

13:00 Close of Workshop

Ms Marina Schneider, Principal Legal Officer, UNIDROIT