



Jean-Eric Sauzier

Senior Partner | ALN Mauritius | BLC Robert & Associates Top Law Firm in Mauritius

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Background

Jean-Eric Sauzier is a Senior Partner at BLC Robert & Associates, heading the Banking and Finance team. Distinguished as a “leading lawyer” by IFLR1000, he specialises in Banking, Project Finance and Insolvency. He possesses long standing expertise in the fields of energy, real estate, hospitality and information technology.

He is regularly instructed by major banking corporations and financial institutions on both domestic and cross-border financing. His work starts as early as providing preliminary advice on the structuring of the debt, identifying key legal risks and defining key terms and conditions pertinent to the type of assets and financing at hand.

His sector expertise on various asset classes allows him to provide lenders with an enhanced insight on key terms of lending. He also provides more transactional support to lenders, DFIs and corporate creditors by assisting in credit evaluation as well as the preparation of subsequent finance, security and disbursement documentation. He is also often solicited by sophisticated borrowers and industry operators for purposes of providing assistance in the raising of their debt financing, negotiation of conditions of same and assisting them towards completing their financial closings.

In the infrastructure and projects sphere, he has acted for both governmental bodies as well as procurement bidders and private parties. He is quite specialised in energy, where he is solicited by energy operators as well as by financial institutions looking forward to financing energy assets, both in Mauritius and in African continent. He has also been involved in the development and financing of other types of projects/assets which include road infrastructure, water distribution, waste management facilities, petroleum storage – to name a few. He also has substantial experience in the hospitality financing space, having worked on the financing of hotels and resorts both locally and overseas and has similarly been involved in both local and foreign real estate projects. Some of his past public sector finance work has been seen as having economic strategic importance – such work includes the drafting of financial instruments which allowed for the granting of COVID financing support to various corporates and industry players which the Government of Mauritius considered as having strategic economic value.

His insolvency work consists primarily of advising banks on their recovery routes as well as providing them with handholding support through either client insolvency situations, both in and out of formal insolvency procedures. He has relevant track record for having been involved in various types of such procedures,

whether administrations, receiverships (both with and without receiver managers) as well as liquidations. He is also solicited to advise insolvency practitioners on specific legal aspects of such procedures as well as for the purposes of providing general handholding support.

His past public sector work includes the drafting of various pieces of legislation which served either as foundation for or improvements to the Mauritian information technology, intellectual property and data protection legal and regulatory frameworks.

He works closely with the banking association and assists the banking community in the handling of key sector issues and developments.

Professional Membership

- Mauritius Bar Association
- Honourable Society of Gray's Inn

Professional Qualifications

2001 – Bar Vocational Course, Nottingham Law School (With Mention: 'Very Competent')

2000 – LLM in International Trade Law, University of Essex (Distinction)

1999 – Bachelor of Laws, LL.B, University of Essex (First Class Honours)

1998 – Diploma in French Law, Université de Lyon III, Faculté de Droit Jean-Moulin, France (First Class Honours)

Career Summary

2006 – Date: Partner, BLC Robert & Associates

2002 – 2005: Private practice as a barrister, Callendavelloo Chambers (Mauritius)

Awards and Recognition

- Jean-Eric is distinguished as a "Leading Lawyer" by IFLR1000
- Sweet and Maxwell International Arbitration Law Review, 3(3), pp114-121 "From arbitrator's immunity to the fifth theory of international commercial arbitration" (2000).
- Euromoney Prize for "Outstanding LLM Trade Finance Performance" (2000)
- Sweet & Maxwell Prize for "Best LLB Overall Performance" (1999)
- London Institute of Directors Prize for "Best LLB Company Law Performance" (1999)
- Recognised as "leading individual" by Legal 500 EMEA 2023

"Organised and efficient. Always fulfils the brief. Attentive to detail and also considers more structural issues."

"Responsive and sensible pragmatic advice, lots of relevant experience."

"He is knowledgeable of all aspects of corporate finance and banking considerations. He is analytical, trustworthy and good at negotiation (including excellent client management)."

Top Matters

Banking & Finance

- Advising Agence Francaise de Developpement, a French development finance institution, in connection with a sovereign loan to the State of Mauritius to support to budget implementation program of the Mauritian government, including to provide support linked to the impact of Covid19 in the jurisdiction.
- Advising the Mauritius Investment Corporation in connection with a bonds subscription to the operators of tourism and manufacturing industry as part of the Covid19 support program of the government of Mauritius.
- Advising a major financial services holding company in connection with the holding of its various banking structures in sub- Saharan African countries.
- Advising Agence Francaise de Developpement in connection with the structuring of 'green' financing lines with local banks.

Project Finance

- Advising Cape Biologix Technologies and Cape Bio Pharms in connection with the structuring of financing from European Investment Bank for the construction of a production facility in Mauritius to produce plant protein used as reagent in quick detection kits for Covid-19 and endemic diseases in Africa (in particular HIV, Ebola, dengue and yellow fever).
- Advising Société de Promotion et de Participation pour la Cooperation Economique S.A. (Proparco) and Deg – Deutsche Investitions – Und Entwicklungsgesellschaft Mbh (DEG), development finance institutions, in connection with a USD 65 million loan to the Mauritius Commercial Bank to finance its support program to support Mauritian businesses, especially SMEs, affected by the Covid-19 crisis.
- Advising ABSA Bank (Mauritius), part of Absa Group Limited, an African financial services group that is listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in South Africa and is one of Africa's largest diversified financial services groups, in connection with the structuring of Covid-19 relief financing.
- Advising a leading African energy company and independent power producer in connection with a USD 550 million financing structured by a syndicate of international banks.
- Acting for the bookrunners and mandated lead arrangers and Standard Chartered Bank as documentation agent in connection with the USD 460 million syndicated facilities to a multilateral development bank.
- Advising Mauritius Commercial Bank in connection with the financing of activities of a major African telecommunication group of companies in Africa.
- Advising a consortium of international development finance institutions and commercial banks in connection with the financing of the first wind farm project in Mauritius valued at USD 65 million.
- Advising an England based renewable energy financier with operations focused in sub-Saharan Africa in connection with a multi-tranche facility in relation to the financing of exploration, drilling and construction of a 70 MW geothermal plant in Kenya.
- Advising a German bank in connection with the refinancing of a 15 MW solar farm in Mauritius.
- Advising a consortium consisting of a pan African bank and Indian bank in connection with the financing of a 30 MW windfarm in Mauritius.
- Advising an American private equity firm and asset manager in connection with the financing of a 151.8 MW windfarm in Senegal

M&A

- Advising a multinational petroleum company in connection with the acquisition of companies in various

- African countries, including Mauritius, to the value of USD 1 billion.
- Acting as Mauritian counsel to BPCE IOM in connection with the sale of its entire shareholding in Banque des Mascareignes to Banque Central Populaire.
- Advising a major international Northern-American bank in connection with the acquisition of a stake in a local bank.

Energy

- Advising a Mauritian/European consortium in connection with the award and setting up of two solar farms in Mauritius for an aggregate production of approximately 30 MW.
- Advising a leading Mauritian bank in connection with the regulatory regime and procurement documentation for the supply of electricity in Mauritius for solar farms with power production output ranging between 1-9 MW.
- Advising a leading Mauritian bank in connection with the regulatory regime and procurement documentation for supply of electricity in Mauritius for solar farms with power production output ranging between 10-15 MW.
- Advising a Mauritius based operator in connection with the financing of petrol storage facility in Mozambique in Beira and Matola.
- Advising an established French owned Mauritian bank on the ongoing financing of a windfarm in Mauritius.
- Advising a leading Mauritian bank in connection with the setting up of photovoltaic structures on existing commercial buildings for occupier usage and grid supply on a net metering basis in Mauritius.
- Advising international development banks in the financing of the first wind farm project in Mauritius of a value of USD 65 million.
- Advising Agence Française de Développement in connection with its Sunref 3 project involving the structuring of 'green' financing with local banks.
- Advising numerous producers in connection with a number of solar and wind renewable projects as well as non renewable power projects in Mauritius