

# IJGlobal ESG Legal Adviser – EM – Webber Wentzel

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**Angus Leslie Melville**

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Webber Wentzel has won the IJGlobal ESG Legal Adviser Award for emerging markets for the second year on the trot with one judge saying the firm is “genuinely pushing the industry forward in South Africa, beyond BAU activities”.

Another of IJ’s independent panel of judges said of Webber Wentzel: “This law firm demonstrates clear evidence of success and utilises a somewhat innovative approach.”

Webber Wentzel repeats its success from [the 2022 awards](#) with another compelling submission that won over the judges.

The submission states: “ESG developments continue to conscientize corporations and financial institutions – paving the way for what is an exhilarating year for Webber Wentzel, advising on impactful and far reaching ESG mandates across the African continent.

“We have the privilege of working on numerous high-impact ESG and sustainability matters. We are also leading the charge on the continent for human rights due diligence work.

“As a firm, we are at the forefront of South Africa's 'just transition', advising existing clients on their carbon neutrality projects and new clients seeking to capitalise on Africa's potential to offer green economy solutions to the UK and European economies.

“We help clients to navigate regulatory developments, policy drivers and international benchmarks in pursuit of sustainable development and shared value in the long term.”

Sustainability-linked initiatives include the appointment of the first dedicated ESG knowledge lawyer in the South African legal market – Dalit Anstey – who joined the team in January 2023.

The firm has an ESG accelerator system and delivered a 24-module “ESG awareness and enablement” programme to its legal and business services staff, concluding in May 2023.

The submission states: “As a firm we are committed to improving the lives of all South Africans by encouraging the economic participation of disadvantaged individuals and communities; the protection and promotion of human rights; and the safeguarding of the rule of law.

“Our various pro bono and CSI initiatives are in support of achieving the crucial UN SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (partnerships for the goals).”

As at March 2023, women made up 47% of Webber Wentzel’s total partner body and 54% of the total legal services



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complement.

The firm produced more than 40 ESG-related insights including a 2023 ESG Outlook, sponsored the first ESG Africa Conference and launched an ESG, Business and Human Rights podcast series.

The submission states: “There is so much opportunity for the African continent to shape itself to meet our evolving environmental, social and governance challenges and to harness our innovation, youth and natural resources.

“We are passionate about providing clients with innovative, practical, and meaningful advice to guide them along their ESG journeys.

“We are extremely proud of our work in the ESG space as it affirms our deliberate steps to living our purpose of making a transformative and sustainable impact through our work and actions.”

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