



IMPACT

A First for Public Interest Environmental Law in Liberia and Zimbabwe

Lawyers from both countries are working to establish their nations' first environmental laws.

Citizens with limited resources need help when ecosystems and their communities are threatened. For the first time, Liberia and Zimbabwe have public interest environmental law organizations working to help disadvantaged communities challenge environmental abuse.

Advocates from around the world call on E-LAW U.S. to help build strong organizations. Most of these lawyers are working to protect the environment without any formal training in environmental law. Some of these lawyers are working to draft their nations' first environmental laws.

In Liberia and Zimbabwe, E-LAW U.S. is helping lawyers create organizations that will protect biodiversity, defend the rights of indigenous groups and improve the environment in urban areas.

Alfred Brownell and colleagues formed Green Advocates in Liberia at the same time that Mutuso Dhliwayo and other advocates formed the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association.



Alfred Brownell

Alfred and Mutuso are working against steep odds. Zimbabwe and Liberia are in political turmoil and launching new organizations is not easy.

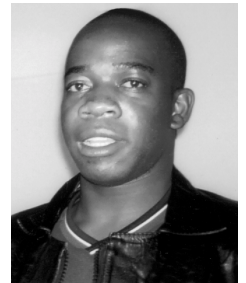
Alfred and Mutuso both called on E-LAW U.S. for advice. E-LAW U.S. introduced Alfred and Mutuso to each other, electronically, and introduced them to E-LAW advocates around the world. Using the E-LAW network, Alfred and Mutuso were able to get sample by-laws, advice about registering their organizations and other useful information. Mutuso and Alfred drew on the experience of colleagues at the Lawyers' Environmental Action Team in



Pygmy hippo, Liberia

Tanzania and other public interest environmental law organizations in Africa and around the world.

Mutuso and Alfred are both working to ensure that the framework environmental laws in their countries include provisions permitting non-governmental organizations to help protect the environment. Mutuso and Alfred sent draft environmental laws to E-LAW U.S. for comment. E-LAW U.S. Staff Attorneys offered suggestions to strengthen the laws. E-LAW advocates from México, India and Australia also sent comments. Both of these laws are now under consideration.



Mutuso Dhliwayo

Mutuso and Alfred join E-LAW's growing corps of environmental advocates working in their home countries to protect the environment through law. Now, nearly 300 advocates are winning victories for communities, the environment and public health in 60 countries.

For more information about this E-LAW Impact, Green Advocates or the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association, contact the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide at elawus@elaw.org.



Africa

Liberia

Zimbabwe