

# EPICC

## Environmental Policy Instruments across Commodity Chains (EPICC): Comparing multi-level governance for Biodiversity Protection and Climate Action in Brazil, Colombia, and Indonesia

### DURATION

15/12/2020 - 14/03/2024  
15/01/2021 - 14/04/2024

### BUDGET

199 393 €  
149 580 €

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Context:** The conversion of natural ecosystems for agricultural land use and minerals' extraction is one of the main drivers of global biodiversity loss. At the same time, deforestation and forest degradation in the tropics is the second largest source of global greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions. Despite the scientific evidence about agriculture and mining as major threats to biodiversity and the global climate, the frontiers of global value chains continue to be expanded into tropical forests, causing deforestation, forest degradation and biodiversity loss.

The planetary organization of value chains is part of the problem: it intensifies the need for meat and minerals, increases the distance between the locations of extraction and production, and places of processing and final consumption. This telecoupling disconnects spaces of consumption with the local socio-ecological impacts of production. In the last years, consumers, governments and companies based in the EU are increasingly looking for solutions to address environmental and social externalities of imported commodities such as meat and minerals. This renewed sensitivity has led to new regulations (e.g., the EU FLEGT), but also transnational corporations to adopt best practices guidelines and certification schemes (e.g., Fairmined).

**Main objectives and methodology:** EPICC applies a polycentric governance and environmental justice approach to investigate four selected commodity chains (cattle, palm oil, gold and tin) that 'feed' the European market. EPICC seeks to map the governance and power links that connect the multiple territories of production and transformation and their plural legal systems with the European regulatory, political and socio-economic space. By doing so, EPICC identifies and analyzes leverage points (chokeholds) and blind spots, and sheds light on the micro and macro conditions that may facilitate the mitigation of environmental and social impacts that occur at the selected locations of production (in Brazil, Colombia and Indonesia).

Potential impact: EPICC will contribute to the production of new bottom-up and co-constructed multidisciplinary scientific knowledge about the interactions between transnational commodity chains reaching the EU, climate change, social and biological diversity loss and territorial ecological injustices.

It will challenge the geographical and disciplinary silos in which loss of social and environmental diversity and climate change are often put. It will study them through the lenses of the complex set of material and immaterial relationships that exist between the local and the global economy, their institutions, actors and interactions (including through the regulations, legislations and private interventions that are undertaken by the EU and EU actors such as NGOs, civil society organizations and DE private actors)

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It will enrich mainstream governance studies with a political ecology, ecological justice and transnational value chains perspective.

It will bring to light the interconnectivity of decision making, from global to local, so that policies and interventions at all levels of the chain are defined by a locally rooted, ecologically just, complex and multi-disciplinary understanding that what happens on the ground is connected with the network of private actors, institutions and power dynamics that shape, govern and operate within the value chains.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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