

Effectiveness of Czech NGOs and Public Pressure on the Protection of Rainforests in Developing Countries

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1. Introduction

- Forests are indispensable for people on the planet providing fresh air, enabling water circulation and natural protection against soil erosion (European Commission, 2019).
- Forests are endangered by widespread deforestation and agricultural expansion is the primary cause for deforestation (European Commission, 2019).
- Deforestation in Indonesia, the palm oil production leader, has been closely related to the production of palm oil. The forest area in Indonesia decreased from circa 1,185,450 sq. km in 1990 to about 903,256 sq. km in 2016 (World Bank, 2020).
- Soya is the major commodity in Brazil concerning the production capacity and the cultivated territory. (Cattelan and Dall'Agnol, 2018).
- Production of soy has caused deforestation of the vast forest areas in South America (WWF, 2014).
- The primary reason for deforestation since 1960s in the Amazon region in Brazil was mainly the enlargement of grazing land associated with farming of the cattle (Pacheco et al., 2017).
- NGOs focused on the environmental issues represent a powerful group capable to influence both public and the government sphere. The NGOs and other public groups can trigger multinational cooperation via public involvement and support of global conventions (Gemmill and Bamidele-Izu, 2002).

2. Objectives

To investigate:

- Attitude and opinions of Czech NGOs concerning rainforest protection
- Extent and coverage of the topic within the Czech Republic
- Czech contribution to improve the environmental situation of DCs concerning deforestation

3. Materials and methods

In-depth face to face and telephone interviews

- With representatives of the 4 Czech NGOs
- Selection according to NGOs scope and willingness to participate in an academic research

Representatives of the Coalition Against Palm Oil, Czech Coalition for Biodiversity Conservation, Greenpeace & the Palm Oil Watch International took part in the study

- All participating NGOs have a substantial influence both in the Czech Republic and with international reach
- Interviews took place during the period of October 2019 until January 2020
- Interviews were recorded, then transcribed and analysed using the content analysis technique (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017), drawing relations among the initiatives and their resulting effects

4. Selected Results

Main Problems Related to Palm Oil Production in Indonesia & Soya & Beef Production in Brazil

Global Problems

Concern of international community

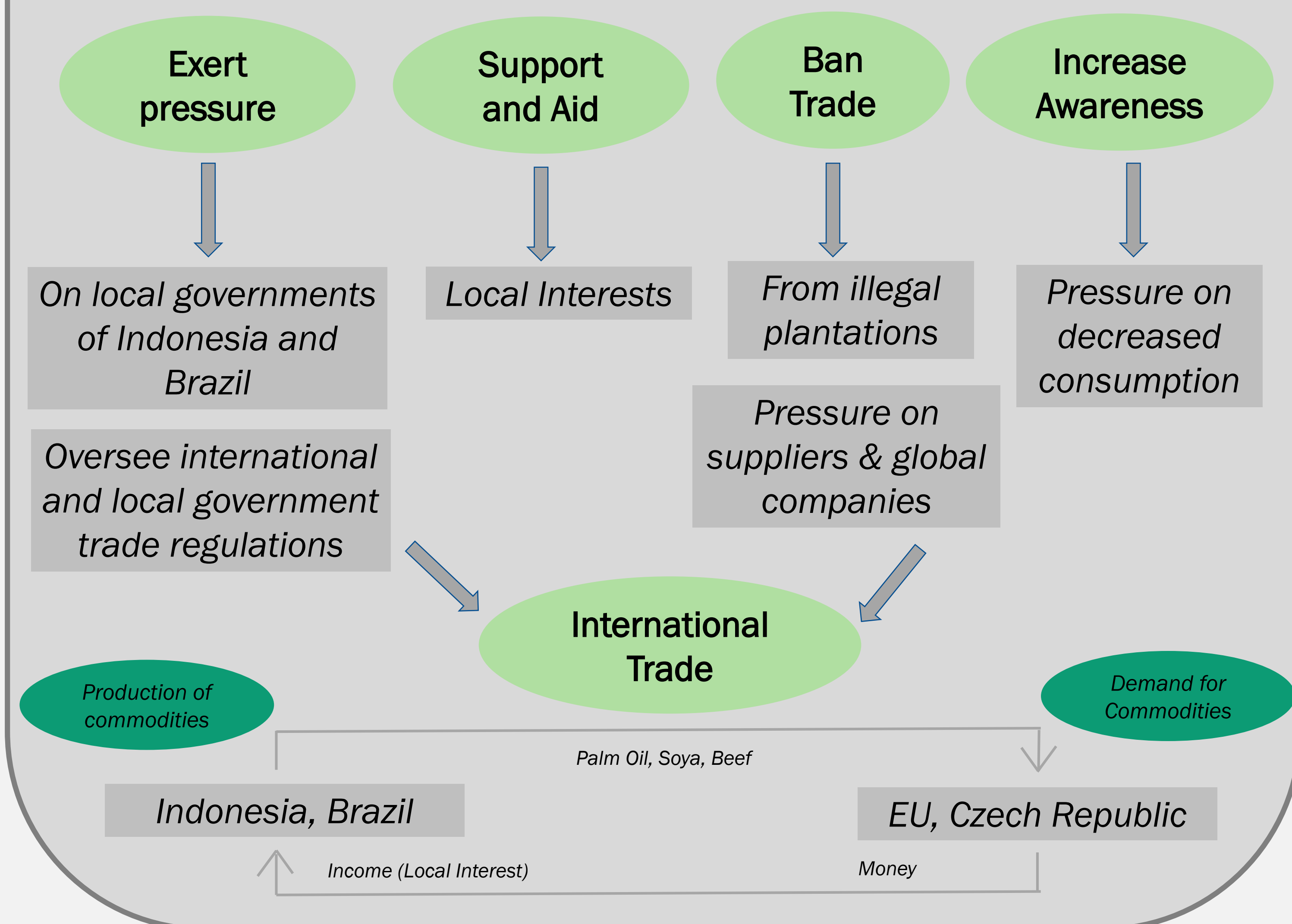
- Deforestation affecting climate change
- Biodiversity loss
- Land degradation
- Pollution

Local Interests & Concerns

- Livelihood of small growers
- Income, eradication of poverty
- Social conflicts
- Production

Positions & Activities of Czech NGOs Concerning Environmental Protection in Tropical Countries

NGO & Civil Society Pressure and Activity



5. Conclusions

- The topic is covered by numerous organizations in The Czech Republic including smaller projects and large platforms.
- NGOs work directly in the Czech Republic, some of them also in Indonesia or Brazil.
- Some NGOs take slower, educative approach. Others take more radical approaches, including strikes.
- NGOs are capable to influence lawmakers & public.
- The campaign related to adverse impact of palm oil production was successful in the Czech Republic among the public.
- People were able to avoid buying products containing palm oil. Share of products with palm oil dropped as a result of this initiative. Key impact of EU Legislation on compulsory labeling of palm oil content in food products.
- Impacts of meat consumption topic is new for the Czech NGOs. People in general do not know that animal feed might contain soybeans from areas connected with deforestation.
- Thus, campaign aiming to protect the Brazilian rain forests and alter the patterns of meat consumptions shall be intensified.

6. References

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