



Tropentag, September 20-22, 2023, hybrid conference
“Competing pathways for equitable food systems transformation:
Trade-offs and synergies”

An analysis of the European regulatory status of selected non-timber forest products from the Brazilian Cerrado

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Abstract

Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are not clearly defined, they are often referred to as a product or service other than timber that originates from forests. This for example includes fruits, nuts, herbs, and medicinal plants. With an increased demand of NTFPs from Europe and the United States of America, the marketing of these niche products has gained attention. In this context, the concept of NTFP governance has evolved which consists of different aspects like institutional arrangements, norms, and collective social practices. This overall development led to an increase in national and international regulations concerned with product quality and production systems around NTFPs. As a result, a very complex framework which contains numerous policy domains like agriculture and forestry as well as food safety and trade arose. Additionally, it involves various stakeholders including for example, harvesters, processors, and policy makers operating on diverse geographical levels (local, national, European, and international).

This thesis analyses the European regulatory status of five selected NTFPs from the Brazilian Cerrado. It is the aim to analyze whether the current legal frameworks of the EU enable the import of selected Cerrado NTFPs into the European market. Not only was a literature research done, but also multiple interviews with researchers were conducted. The results of this study indicate that the current regulatory framework prevents the development of value chains for NTFPs due to their complexity. Especially the European novel food regulation hinders the import of NTFPs into the European Union. It must be considered that further research is needed on analysis of the value chains, international regulatory framework and monitoring and reporting of NTFPs. In further research emphasis on the producer side shall be placed.

Keywords: Agriculture, Brazil, food supplements, forestry, governance, non timber forest products, policies