



Tropentag, September 11-13, 2024, hybrid conference

“Exploring opportunities ...
for managing natural resources and a better life for all”

Safeguarding human and environmental rights in agricultural supply chains - A risk management toolkit

ANDRÉS CHARRY¹, JENNY WIEGEL¹, PABLO SILES¹, LUISA CLAROS¹, THUY THANH NGUYEN²,
MAI NGUYEN², TIFFANY TALSMA³

¹*The Alliance of Bioversity International & CIAT, Colombia*

²*The Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Vietnam*

³*The Alliance of Bioversity International & CIAT, Ghana*

Abstract

All actors involved in a supply chain benefit from the labour and environmental conditions that allow for the production and trading of their respective products. Consequently, they are jointly responsible for the negative effects derived from their productive and commercial activities. It could be argued that the degree of responsibility should be tantamount to the magnitude of revenues.

In recent years, this conclusion has gained greater prominence. Consumers now demand that companies be held accountable for adverse practices that may occur in their supply chains, even if they are not directly involved in those activities. Consequently, companies and financial institutions are becoming more cautious and interested in mitigating the adverse environmental and social effects that their operations may promote in various territories, particularly in the global south.

In response, the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT in collaboration with FMO and Mercon Coffee Group developed a supply chain risk assessment and management toolkit, with the objective of helping companies assess the risks of engaging with or endorsing unlawful/unethical practices in their agricultural supply chains, and defining adequate measures to prevent, minimise and mitigate their impacts. The toolkit groups risks in three major Areas: Labor (forced and child labour), Human Rights, and Environment, and allows analysing these risks at a Macro and Micro level, providing companies a contextualized, nuanced, and granular understanding of the challenges they (may) face, and guide the development of tailored risk management strategies.

In this study, we present the results of the macro risk assessment module applied for the coffee supply chain in eight countries, which highlights potential risks at the national level, providing insights and informing the potential presence of adverse practices in these coffee supply chains.

Keywords: Child labour, environmental impact, forced labour, risk assessment, supply chain, sustainability