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RECONCILING TRADE AND SUSTAINABILITY: THE EU-MERCOSUR TRADE AGREEMENT AS A DRIVER FOR MULTI-FUNCTIONAL AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS IN SOUTH AMERICA

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Abstract & Introduction

The EU-Mercosur trade agreement is a pivotal mechanism aligning South American agricultural production with European sustainability standards. This agreement necessitates a transition toward climate-resilient, multifunctional systems integrating crops, livestock, and forestry. It focuses on sustainable intensification and overcoming traceability challenges to foster One Health landscapes.

The Trade Catalyst: EU-Mercosur Agreement

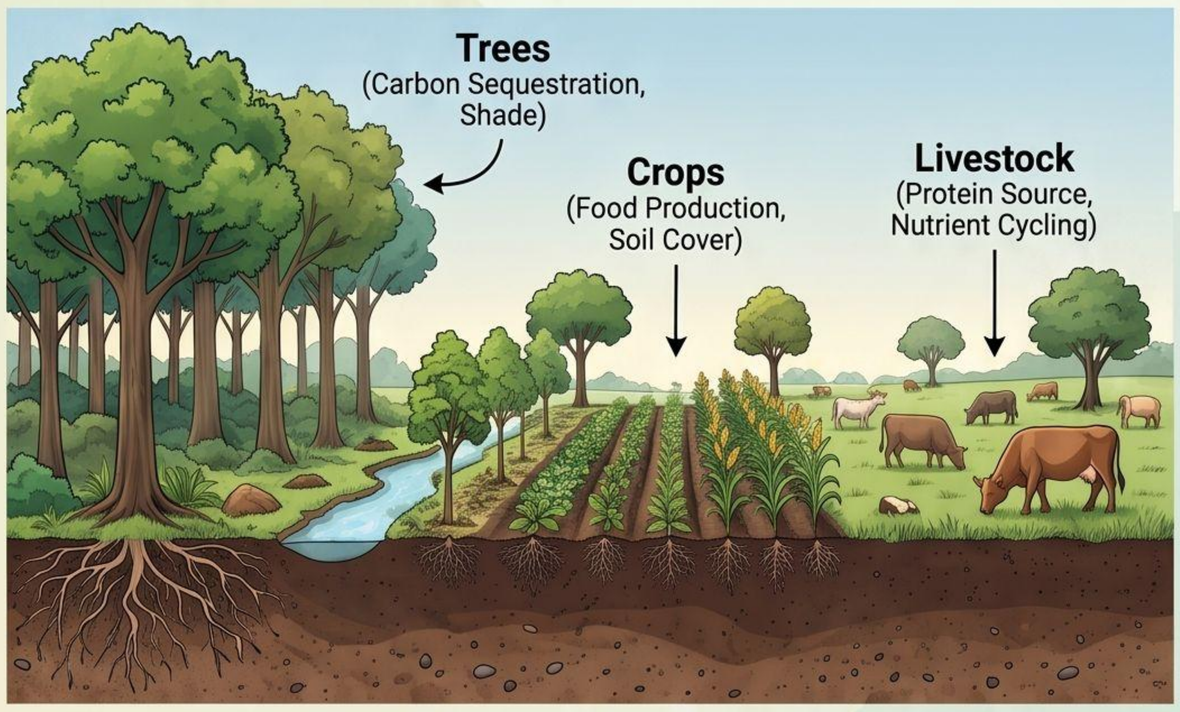
MERCOSUR

Agreement Signed January 2026

42.7%
of Mercosur Exports to the EU

Agricultural products constitute nearly half of all Mercosur exports to the European Union, making sustainability compliance a commercial necessity and driving high environmental standards.

Key Sustainable Systems: Integrated Crop-Livestock-Forestry (ICLF)



ICLF systems treat trees, crops, and livestock as interconnected components, enhancing soil fertility and water management through sustainable intensification, increasing output without expanding frontiers.

No-Till Farming Adoption

Brazil utilizes no-till farming across vast areas to diversify rural incomes and significantly reduce climate risks.

Regulatory Frameworks & Compliance Challenges

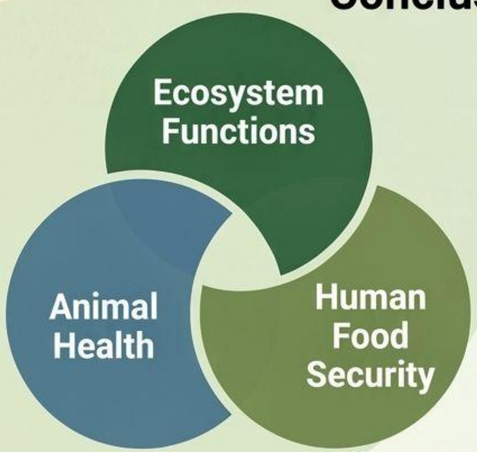
EUDR

EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR): A critical regulatory hurdle requiring Mercosur producers to prove products are not linked to deforestation.

ABC+ Plan
Framework for low-carbon agriculture providing auditable metrics for carbon sequestration and animal welfare.

The Traceability Gap
High compliance costs and complex data requirements risk excluding small-scale producers from sustainable value chains.

Conclusions & The One Health Vision



One Health Framework

An approach viewing ecosystem functions, animal health, and human food security as a single, interconnected system. Success is supported by **harmonized sanitary protocols** and **digital georeferencing tools** ensuring transparency, fostering multifunctional landscapes with equitable resource distribution.