

ProdJus: Supranational Forest Governance in an Era of Globalising Wood Production and Justice Politics

About ProdJus

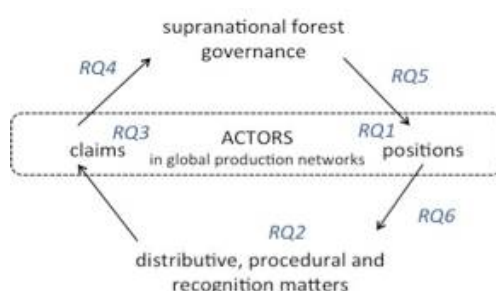
ProdJus research analyses supranational forest governance in and beyond Europe in relation to globalising production networks and justice politics. We have a particular interest in the differentiation of governance forms and outcomes between Europe and the South, among Southern countries and between the transnational, national and local levels. By looking at novel forms of forest governance (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade [FLEGT] and certified timber and wood products), ProdJus will improve understanding of how collective action can address critical challenges in an increasingly globalised world, and what this means for the future of the European continent in the presence of a more general shift from state-centred territorial governance to flow-centred arrangements (Sikor et al., 2013a).

ProdJus endeavours to achieve these theoretical aims through new research that combines analyses of global production networks and justice politics in an innovative and transdisciplinary manner, builds on an international partnership of leading researchers from Africa, Asia and Europe, and draws on empirical fieldwork in Ghana, Indonesia, Vietnam and Europe.

Global environmental challenges of natural resource management

The sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests is one of the most pressing global environmental challenges today. Tropical forests influence the provision of a range of global public goods, from climate change mitigation to biodiversity conservation and food security. Forests attain an additional global dimension due to the spatial reach of wood production networks connecting loggers in the Global South with consumers in the North, in particular Europe. Tropical forest governance has also given rise to claims of social and environmental injustices, such as the violation of forest people's rights, threats to the planet's ecological integrity and potential harm to future generations' capabilities (Forsyth and Sikor 2013). Claims of injustice increasingly feature in supranational forest politics (Sikor and Stahl, 2011). These globalising processes of wood production and justice politics challenge efforts to govern tropical forests at local, national and supranational levels and provide the impetus for unprecedented initiatives to facilitate collective action beyond the nation state (Bernstein and Cashore, 2007).

Theoretical framework



The ProdJus theoretical framework hypothesizes the dynamics between supranational governance innovations and justice issues in the governance of tropical forests. We direct analytical attention to the origins of justice claims in global production dynamics and justice politics, as captured in research questions 1-3, the uptake of certain notions of justice in the FSC and FLEGT (RQ4-5) and the effects of FSC and FLEGT on justice issues in tropical forest governance (RQ6-7).

Areas of research

Europe
Ghana
Indonesia
Vietnam

Interviews Planned

Villagers	135
Processors	115
Manufacturers	110
Exporters & Sub-national gov't	90
Importers & retailers	25
National gov't	50
Associations & Civil society	105
TOTAL	630

Duration

January 1, 2016-
September 30, 2018



Research Questions

The overarching research question of ProdJus is:

How do supranational governance innovations respond to issues of (in)justice associated with the governance of tropical forests?

The research considers these supranational innovations as interactive elements in forest governance that operate at local, national and supranational levels and across them. It does not take their supranational nature as given, but employs a bottom-up perspective to locate governance arrangements – i.e. their specific forms and effects – within production and political dynamics at various scales (Bulkeley, 2005).

More specifically, ProdJus will trace the origins of claims of (in)justice in global production networks and forest politics through the following research questions:

RQ1 How are different actors positioned in global production networks in the absence of FSC certification and before the enforcement of FLEGT agreements?

RQ2 What are the most critical justice issues with regard to the governance of tropical forests without FSC certification and before FLEGT?

RQ3 What claims of (in)justice do different actors assert in negotiations over FSC certification procedures and alignment with FLEGT rules?

ProdJus will then examine how claims of (in)justice are, or are not, taken up in the FSC and FLEGT.

RQ4 What notions of justice inform these claims, and which ones gain traction in public discourse?

RQ5 Why and how are particular notions of justice institutionalized in the FSC and FLEGT, whereas others are not?

Finally, ProdJus will determine the effects of FLEGT and FSC on justice issues in the governance of tropical forests:

RQ6 How do the justice notions enshrined in the FSC and FLEGT influence actors' positions in, and exclusion from, global production networks?

RQ7 What effects do changes in actors' positions create on justice issues in tropical forest governance?

ProdJus Partners

The International Centre at the School of International Development at the University of East Anglia (UEA), Norwich, UK.

Department of Silviculture and Forest Management at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana.

Faculty of Forestry of the Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Institute of Cultural Studies under the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Methods

ProdJus uses mixed methods to collect and analyse data. The empirical basis of the research is primarily interviews with industry actors, starting from the forest levels and working up to retailers, importers, policy-makers and social and environmental campaigners. These data will be focussed around claims that actors make, and the positions they take with regards to distributive, procedural and recognition matters. Whilst ProdJus focusses on FLEGT (and specifically the European Union Timber Regulation), FSC is used as a comparison to understand how different governance systems lead to different justice politics.

Outcomes

Critical reflection on the potential of supranational governance innovations.

Recommendations on how FLEGT, and other supranational natural resource product governance structures, may be improved from a social and environmental justice perspective.

Show how procedural notions of justice get taken up in FLEGT agreements through an emphasis on civil society participation in the reform of forest law.

Global Production Networks

Global Production Network thinking has grown out of concepts of commodity and value chains (Bair, 2005, Faße et al., 2009). The shared focus of these concepts is on capturing the full range of extractive, productive and consumptive activities that are required to bring a product from its conception through different phases of production to final consumers (see Kaplinsky and Morris, 2001). Input-output structures between different phases shape the creation and capture of value, thereby exerting significant influence on network dynamics (Henderson et al., 2002, Coe et al., 2008).

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice begins with people's actual claims about (in)justice (Walker, 2011, Sikor, 2013). This approach recognises the plurality of justice in the sense that more often than not, actors do not agree on a single definition of what is morally right and instead refer to plural notions of justice (Martin et al., 2013). Another key premise is that notions of justice are contextual and experiential, in the sense that they depend on the particular political and historical setting (Fraser, 2009). Research investigates how social actors justify claims of (in)justice in public discourse, lending support to some notions, establishing certain conceptions as dominant and contesting the legitimacy of others.



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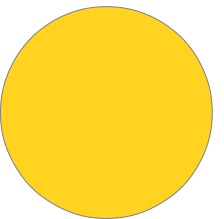
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Thomas Sikor was
instrumental to the
design of ProdJus

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