Silvopastoral Systems & Sustainable Ranching

EUDR Context

Field	Value
eudr_commodity	cattle
country_focus	Colombia
eudr_article9_field	deforestation_risk_assessment, compliance_statement
eudr_evidence_type	primary_field_data, certification
deforestation_risk	MEDIUM (reduced through silvopastoral conversion)
last_updated	2026-05-26

Overview

Silvopastoral systems integrate trees with pasture and livestock, offering a pathway to reconcile cattle production with forest conservation. These systems reduce or eliminate the need for pasture expansion into forests by intensifying production on existing land while simultaneously sequestering carbon, improving soil health, and increasing biodiversity. For EUDR compliance, silvopastoral farms represent lower deforestation risk profiles and may serve as demonstration cases for sustainable cattle production that meets EU market access requirements.

Colombia has been a global pioneer in silvopastoral adoption through the Ganaderia Colombiana Sostenible (GCS) project, a landmark initiative supported by the Global Environment Facility, the World Bank, The Nature Conservancy, Fedegan, and CIPAV. The project operated on 4,100 farms across 87 municipalities in 12 departments, establishing 38,390 hectares of silvopastoral systems and sequestering 1.56 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent. The project demonstrated that silvopastoral conversion can increase stocking rates, improve farm productivity, and deliver measurable environmental co-benefits.

Colombia's NDC targets the agricultural sector for 13.46 MtCO2e/year in emissions reductions by 2030. Good pasture management and silvopastoral systems could deliver up to 77% of this agricultural NDC target, making cattle sector transformation a cornerstone of Colombia's climate commitments. The NDC includes specific targets for 69,000 hectares of livestock landscape restoration through intensification and silvopastoral conversion.

Colombian Context

Fedegan promotes silvopastoral adoption through its sustainable cattle programs, offering technical assistance and financial incentives for ranchers transitioning from extensive to intensive systems. Key silvopastoral models in Colombia include leucaena-based intensive silvopastoral systems in the tropical lowlands, scattered-tree silvopastures in the Andean foothills, and living fence systems that connect forest fragments across cattle landscapes.

Challenges to scaling include upfront investment costs for tree establishment, a 2-3 year lag before silvopastoral systems reach full productivity, limited availability of suitable tree seedling nurseries in frontier regions, and the need for technical assistance to manage complex tree-pasture-animal interactions. The GCS project demonstrated viable business cases but nationwide adoption remains below 5% of total cattle area. The EUDR could accelerate adoption by creating market-access incentives for sustainably produced beef and leather.

Cleantech Taxonomy Nodes

Directly relevant: CT-EX-007 (Silvopastoral systems — already exists, needs eudr_cattle=Y), CT-AF-007 (Livestock and Fisheries — needs eudr_cattle=Y for sustainable ranching technology). New extension needed: CT-EX-030 (Pasture restoration and livestock intensification technology) covering degraded pasture recovery, rotational grazing systems, carrying capacity optimization, and the technology platforms that support the transition from extensive to intensive cattle production.

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