Soy EUDR Overview — Colombia

EUDR Context

Field	Value
eudr_commodity	soy
country_focus	Colombia
deforestation_risk	low
last_updated	2026-05-26

Overview

Soy is one of the seven commodities regulated under the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), though Colombia's role in global soy trade is fundamentally different from that of Brazil, Argentina, or the United States. Colombia is a minor soybean producer with fewer than 100,000 hectares under cultivation, but it is a significant importer—particularly of soybean meal for the animal feed industry. This dual position means the EUDR affects Colombia both as a potential producing country (where domestic soy expansion could encroach on forests in the Orinoquía) and as a consumer of imported soy that may carry deforestation risk from origin countries.

The EUDR requires operators to verify that soy products placed on or exported from EU markets were produced on land not subject to deforestation after December 31, 2020. For Colombian domestic production, the primary compliance pathway involves mapping the relatively small number of producing farms in Meta, Vichada, and the eastern plains. For imports, Colombian processors using imported soy in products ultimately destined for EU markets may face indirect due diligence obligations under the regulation's supply chain provisions.

Colombia's government has identified the Orinoquía (Altillanura) as a major agricultural expansion frontier, with UPRA estimating that Meta has approximately 5 million hectares and Vichada 4.7 million hectares suitable for agricultural development. While much of this land is currently degraded savanna rather than forest, expansion in certain corridors risks converting gallery forests and transitional ecosystems that the EUDR would classify as protected.

Colombian Context

Colombia's soybean production is concentrated in the departments of Meta and Vichada within the Orinoquía region, with smaller cultivation areas in Valle del Cauca and Tolima. USDA estimates for MY 2025/2026 project a national yield of approximately 2.94 MT/ha, indicating reasonable productivity but on a limited area base.

Domestic production covers only a fraction of national demand, with the United States being a major soy supplier alongside Brazil and Argentina.

The Orinoquía region presents a nuanced deforestation risk picture. The World Bank's BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes (ISFL) has been operating the Orinoquía Sustainable Integrated Landscape Program specifically to promote agricultural intensification without deforestation. The program recognizes that the Altillanura's well-drained acid soils can support soy and other crops without requiring forest clearing, provided expansion is directed to existing grasslands and degraded pastures.

Rare's regenerative agriculture program in the Orinoquía is working directly with farmers to protect tropical savannah biodiversity while enabling productive agriculture. These initiatives demonstrate that Colombia's soy expansion can be managed to meet EUDR requirements, but only with deliberate land-use planning that prevents encroachment into the gallery forests, morichales (palm swamps), and forest-savanna transition zones that are ecologically critical.

EUDR Compliance Requirements

For Colombian soy operators targeting EU markets, compliance requires:

- **Farm-level geolocation**: Provide GPS polygon data for all soybean-producing plots, with particular attention to plots near gallery forests, morichales, and forest-savanna boundaries in the Orinoquía.
- **Deforestation-free proof**: Verify through satellite monitoring that no forest conversion occurred on producing land after December 31, 2020. Given the relatively small number of farms involved, individual plot verification is feasible.
- **Savanna conversion distinction**: While the EUDR focuses on deforestation (forest-to-non-forest conversion), operators should document that soy expansion occurred on grassland/degraded pasture rather than on naturally forested land, including secondary growth areas.
- **Import chain due diligence**: Colombian processors who import soy from Brazil/Argentina and re-export processed products to the EU must maintain due diligence records covering the imported soy's origin, even though Colombian territory is not the source of deforestation risk.
- **Livestock-soy rotation documentation**: In areas where cattle ranching and soy farming alternate (common in Meta), document that neither the soy phase nor the cattle phase involved land cleared after the cutoff date.

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