



The multiple routes to responsible sourcing

Combining the best of approaches for conversion-free sustainable soy

Summary of the narrative and “Soy Magicube”

There is no single path to sustainable soy. At the Collaborative Soy Initiative we believe we can achieve our vision of 100% conversion-free sustainable soy production and market uptake on a global scale. However, there are several ways to get there, and they best work in combination.

It is the mission of the Collaborative Soy Initiative to inform expert stakeholders about the various approaches to conversion-free sustainable soy and actively support synergy amongst initiatives—including the diverse approaches and roadmaps they promote. By doing this, CSI seeks to support genuine impact on nature conservation, people’s rights and responsible land use.

Building on CSI “Meta Meetings” between global and regional soy initiatives, a narrative and “Soy Magicube” have been developed in collaboration with Proforest to provide insights and guidance for company and government policies. The aim is to optimize their impact by combining the added values of six leading approaches to tackle nine goals.

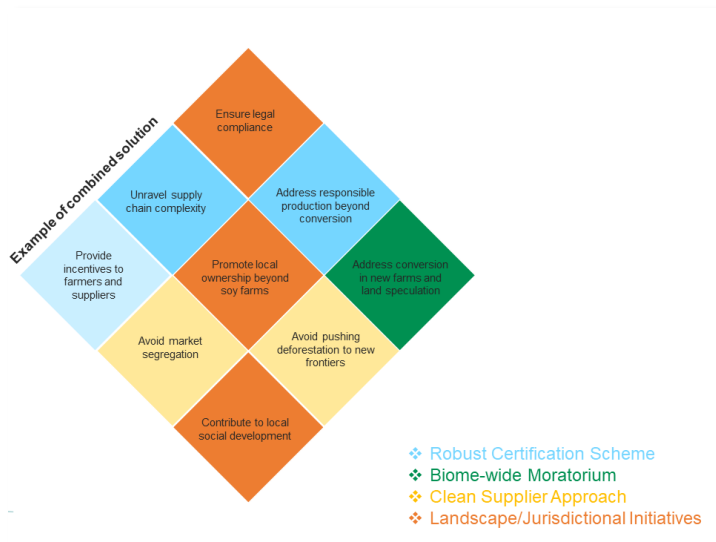
Six approaches reviewed:

- a. Robust certification schemes¹
- b. Biome-wide moratorium
- c. Clean supplier approach (focusing on no conversion)
- d. Landscape/jurisdictional initiatives
- e. Pre-competitive initiatives (sectoral/ soy platforms)
- f. Carbon Footprint Framework

Nine goals the approaches were held against:

1. Ensure legal compliance in production area/country
2. Deal with/unravel supply chain complexity to enhance transparency and traceability from farmer to consumer
3. Promote responsible production (including but also) beyond conversion, such as human rights, climate, and others
4. Provide incentives to farmers and suppliers
5. Promote local ownership beyond soy farms to ensure sustainability of the interventions in the long-term
6. Address conversion in new farms and land speculation in the same biome
7. Ensure a level playing field, to avoid market segregation
8. Promote soy expansion only over already cleared land
9. Contribute to local social and economic development, including production diversity, reduction of inequalities, etc.

¹ The Magicube here refers to a category of robust standards, with strong social and environmental criteria, i.e. no conversion of ecosystems, and a good level of assurance. We refer to benchmark studies to assess the criteria and quality of individual standards. See <https://thecollaborativesoyinitiative.info/info-hub>



Added values of the six approaches

Robust certification standards can (a) serve as models for criteria to apply in government and company policies. Then, (b) they are tools to implement and monitor these criteria, serving as proof of responsible behavior as well as data providers on deforestation free and responsible production. Furthermore, (c) if with sufficient premium or other benefit, they can also serve as incentives for producers and traders to step on board the sustainability journey. They, however, have not gained sufficient scale and effect on conversion frontiers

so far, and combination with other approaches can increase their effectiveness. A **biome-wide moratorium**, such as in the Amazon, can help clearly put an end to soy-driven deforestation or conversion, especially if accompanied by a strong verification mechanism. Then, to avoid leakage to other landscapes and markets, a relatively new **clean supplier approach** seeks to address all conversion by requiring suppliers to only source conversion-free wherever and for whatever destination. The three mentioned approaches may have best effect if combined with ambitious **landscape level/jurisdictional initiatives**, reaching out to producers at all levels of sustainability, and adding additional landscape conservation or restoration measures.

Pre-competitive initiatives can then level the playing field and create volume and impact by having the same requirements and adding combined resources. Finally, the **Carbon Footprint Framework** as such – with its current 20 year cut-off date – may not be a direct approach to attain sustainability, but carbon has a central role to play as a driver for companies to avoid conversion, and promote resource efficiency (including in protein diets) within planetary boundaries.

Incentives for suppliers, both sticks (such as legal compliance) *and* carrots (such as financial incentives) are a current challenge, but crucial to making these combinations work.

Please refer to the extended CSI narrative and our six-sided Soy Magicube for further explanation of the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches, and why and how to combine them.

This *concept of combining* can be tailored for various target groups and landscapes.

We welcome your feedback.

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Reference: CSI and Proforest (2021) The multiple routes to responsible sourcing; combining the best of approaches for conversion free sustainable soy. A narrative and “Soy Magicube” tool. The Collaborative Soy Initiative with Proforest, version 1.0