Europe Soya Standard

The Europe Soya programme has been established to promote and propagate the cultivation, processing and marketing of GM-free, origin-controlled and sustainable **quality soya from Europe**. Our vision is to develop and guarantee a sustainable, safe and European protein supply.

Europe Soya is a product of controlled origin and quality. Historically, it has two essential characteristics: The soya originates from Europe (**European origin**), and the soya beans and their products are **GM-free**. Food produced from or using Europe Soya soya beans may be labelled as "Europe Soya" or "Fed with Europe Soya". Use of the **brand** is subject to signing a Licence Contract as well as to compliance with the Donau Soja and Europe Soya Agreement for Logo Use.[1]

Partners located in both **EU and non-EU member states** shall comply with the current **legal provisions of EU law**[2], particularly those concerning Good Agricultural Practices, the use of pesticides in soya bean cultivation and the processing of raw soya beans along the processing chain. Furthermore, both EU-wide and international regulations on labour and social rights[2] (ILO Conventions) shall apply. Farmers producing Europe Soya soya beans (hereinafter referred to as "Europe Soya soya bean farmers") shall undertake in writing to comply with all Europe Soya requirements (**Declaration of Self-Commitment**[3]).

Whereas Donau Soja certified produce may be used in Europe Soya programmes, Europe Soya certified produce must **not** be used in Donau Soja programmes due to its wider geographical scope.

The Europe Soya Standard is based on the following ten **Europe Soya principles of soya bean cultivation**. These principles cover Europe Soya's two essential characteristics of "European origin" and "GM-free status", along with **additional social, environmental and economic aspects**.

1 European origin of soya beans and soya products
2 GM-free status of soya beans and soya products
3 Responsible farm management and community relations
4 Use of best practices in soil and nutrient management
5 Use of best practices in crop protection
6 Use of best practices in water management
7 Use of best practices in waste management
8 Responsible land use and biodiversity protection
9 Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
10 Compliance with human and labour rights and safe working conditions

All applicable provisions of the Europe Soya Standard, like those referring to Good Agricultural Practices, environmental and biodiversity protection as well labour and social rights, are based

[1] Donau Soja and Europe Soya Agreement for Logo Use: http://www.donausoja.org/en/downloads
[2] All relevant EU directives und EU regulations as well as the individual ILO conventions are listed in the **Annex 1** to the Europe Soya Guidelines.
[3] For details, see document *Declaration of Self-Commitment – Farmers*

on EU legislation.[2] However, the requirements of the Europe Soya Standard exceed the legal requirements passed by the EU in several aspects.[4]

Overview of Europe Soya Principles of Soya Bean Cultivation

The following section provides a brief overview of the Europe Soya principles of soya bean cultivation.

- **European origin of soya beans and soya products (Principle 1)**

The countries and regions of origin of Europe Soya soya beans are defined in both political and geographical terms. The borders of the Europe Soya region are based on Philip Johan von Strahlenberg's definition regarding the boundaries of the Russian border regions. The countries and geographical regions detailed on the Europe Soya Map (= Europe Soya bean cultivation areas) are a permanent feature of the Europe Soya Standard.

- **GM-free status of soya beans and soya products (Principle 2)**

Europe Soya soya beans and soya products are derived from GM-free cultivation using GM-free soya bean varieties either listed in the EU common catalogue of plant varieties or in the respective national catalogue of plant varieties. Europe Soya soya bean farmers are not allowed to grow GM soya beans or any other GM crop. Animal feed with the quality label "Europe Soya" is suitable as feed for livestock, whose products may subsequently be marketed with the quality label "Ohne Gentechnik hergestellt" / "Produced without GMOs".

The GM-free status shall be based on the minimum requirements set out by the following European "GM-free" certification schemes:

- German *EG-Gentechnik-Durchführungsgesetz (EGGenTDurchfG)*[5]*,* with audits performed as stipulated by the German Verband Lebensmittel ohne Gentechnik (VLOG);
- Austrian Food Codex (Codex Alimentarius Austriacus) and the corresponding *Leitfaden zur risikobasierten Kontrolle auf Gentechnikfreiheit* (Guideline on the Risk-Based Monitoring of GMO-Free Production);[6]
- Non-GM Danube Region Production and Labelling Standard & Non-GM Danube Region Inspection Standard.[7]

In other words, apart from the possibility of obtaining a non-GM certification in accordance with the Austrian Food Codex, German VLOG or Non-GM Danube Region Standards, the GM-free status can also be verified during Europe Soya audits and certifications by checks conducted in compliance with the Non-GM Danube Region Standards[6], both published in 2015.

[4] For details, see document *Requirements 01b: Europe Soya Principles of Soya Bean Cultivation*
[5] *EG-Gentechnik-Durchführungsgesetz (EGGenTDurchfG):* www.gesetze-im-internet.de/eggentdurchfg/BJNR124410004.html
[6] *Richtlinie zur Definition der "Gentechnikfreien Produktion" von Lebensmitteln und deren Kennzeichnung* (Guideline on the Definition of GMO-Free Production of Food and its Labelling) in the Austrian Food Codex, IV edition: www.verbrauchergesundheit.gv.at/lebensmittel/buch/codex/beschluesse/Gentechnikfrei_RL_15_1_2018.pdf?6fdsmn
Leitfaden zur risikobasierten Kontrolle auf Gentechnikfreiheit (Guideline on the Risk-Based Monitoring of GMO-Free Production): www.bmwfw.gv.at/TechnikUndVermessung/Akkreditierung/Documents/Leitfaden%20L25_Risikobasierte%20Kontrolle%20Gentechnikfreiheit_V03_20150304.pdf
[7] Non-GM Danube Region Production and Labelling Standard & Non-GM Danube Region Inspection Standard: http://www.donausoja.org/en/downloads

- **Responsible farm management and community relations (Principle 3)**

Europe Soya soya bean farmers shall comply with all applicable legislation. All forms of bribery, conflict of business interest and fraudulent practices shall be prohibited. Existing land rights shall be respected. Negative impacts on the wider community shall be avoided and communication channels shall be in place.

- **Environmental responsibility and Good Agricultural Practices (Principles 4–7)**

The relevant legal provisions of EU law shall apply. Europe Soya soya bean farmers within the EU shall participate in the implementation of the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) with mandatory cross compliance inspections. Europe Soya soya bean farmers shall apply best practices in soil, water and waste management to protect soil, water and air. Only pesticides containing EU-approved active ingredients may be used for the cultivation of Europe Soya soya beans—this also applies to farmers located outside the EU. Furthermore, substances listed in the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions[8] as well as all substances the World Health Organization (WHO) has categorised as extremely hazardous (Class 1a) and highly hazardous (Class 1b)[9] shall be prohibited. Lastly, the use of desiccants prior to harvest (e.g. glyphosate and diquat) as well as aerial application of pesticides (aerial spraying) shall be prohibited. The Best Practice Manual, published and continuously updated by the Donau Soja Organisation, shall serve as a non-binding recommendation for both improving the profitability of soya bean production and reducing the use of plant protection products.

- **Responsible land use and biodiversity protection (Principle 8)**

Deforestation and conversion of natural ecosystems (including, but not limited to, wetlands, peatlands and grasslands) for the cultivation of Europe Soya soya beans shall be prohibited. The farmer shall only use land that was dedicated to agricultural use no later than 1 January 2008, hence excluding any further agricultural expansion for the cultivation of Europe Soya soya beans. Europe Soya soya beans shall not be cultivated in protected areas unless the use of such areas for agricultural purposes is explicitly allowed in the respective management plan.

- **Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (Principle 9)**

Europe Soya soya bean production shall contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and climate protection. Europe Soya soya bean farmers shall have knowledge of how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase the sequestration of greenhouse gases on their farms. Any applicable data, such as yields, seed inputs, fertiliser application, pesticide application and fuel use, shall be recorded. The farmer shall implement measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase sequestration.

[8] Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants: www.pops.int/Portals/0/download.aspx?d=UNEP-POPS-COP-CONVTEXT-2017.English.pdf
Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade: www.pic.int/Portals/5/download.aspx?d=UNEP-FAO-RC-CONVTEXT-2017.English.pdf
[9] World Health Organisation (WHO) Classification of Pesticides by Hazard: https://www.who.int/ipcs/publications/pesticides_hazard/en/

- **Compliance with human and labour rights and safe working conditions (Principle 10)**

Europe Soya soya bean production shall comply with both EU-wide and international labour and social standards (see Annex 1 for a list of relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization [ILO][10]). These include the following fundamental principles and labour rights: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; the effective abolition of child labour; the elimination of discrimination with respect to employment and occupation. Also included are: transparent and legally compliant employment conditions, safe working conditions and training of workers.

Inspections:

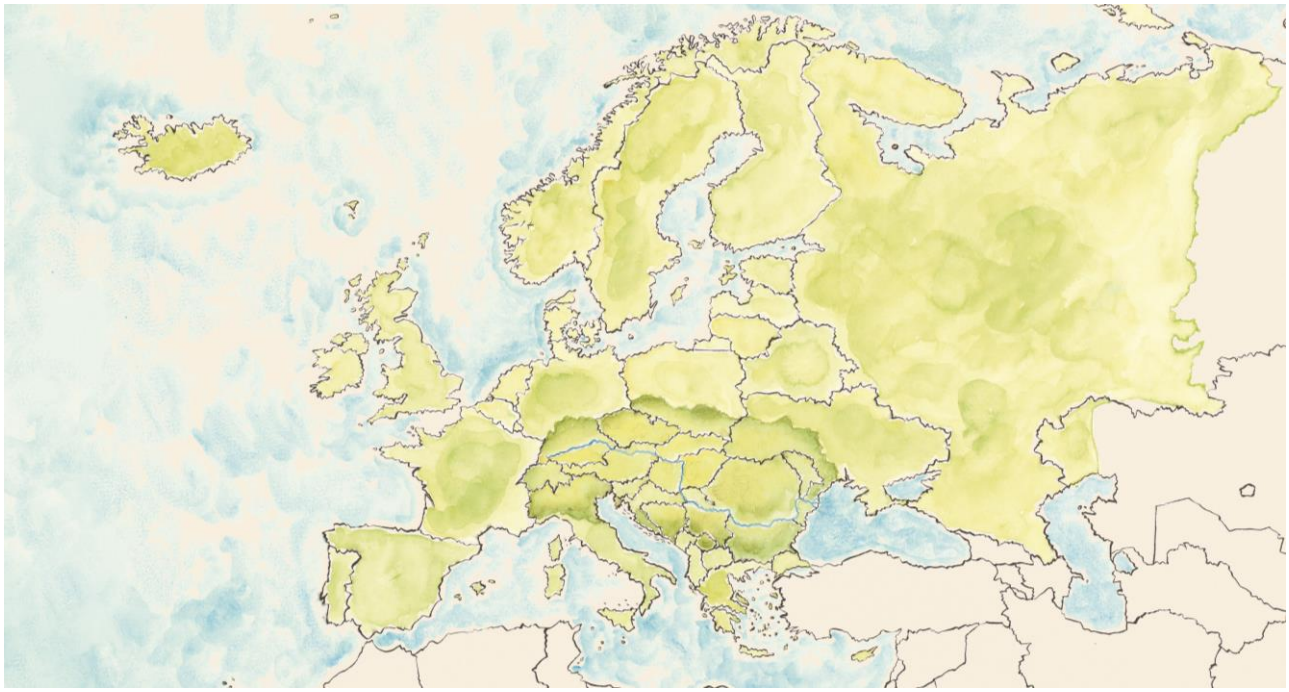
Compliance with the Europe Soya Standard shall be verified against the detailed requirements specified in the Europe Soya Guidelines by an independent external certification body accredited in accordance with the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 standard. Furthermore, the Donau Soja Organisation shall commission risk-based supervisory inspections.

If there is reason to suspect that any provision has not been complied with, special inspections shall be conducted. Any breach of the Europe Soya Guidelines shall result in remedial measures, including the payment of penalty fees, up to and including exclusion from the Europe Soya programme.

[10] Introduction to the standards-related work of the International Labour Organization: https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/information-resources-and-publications/publications/WCMS_672549/lang--en/index.htm

Geographical map showing the Europe Soya cultivation areas

Europe Soya Map



All countries of the Donau Soja region are located within the Europe Soya defined area. The following countries are part of the Europe Soya Region: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan (European part), Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation (Nenetsia, Komi-Permyak, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk, Orengburg), Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey (European part), Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Core Principles of Inspection (Overview)

Europe Soya is a product of controlled quality and origin. The requirements specified in the Europe Soya Guidelines provide the details for complete inspection of the origin of the produce (Principle 1), ensuring a GM-free status throughout the entire value chain (Principle 2) and implementing all other sustainability criteria (Principles 3–10).

As a rule, the relevant legal provisions of EU law shall apply for the production, treatment and processing of Europe Soya. The GM-free status shall be based on the minimum requirements set out by the following European "GM-free" certification schemes:

- German *EG-Gentechnik-Durchführungsgesetz (EGGenTDurchfG)*[11], with audits performed as stipulated by the German Verband Lebensmittel ohne Gentechnik (VLOG);
- Austrian Food Codex (Codex Alimentarius Austriacus) and the corresponding *Leitfaden zur risikobasierten Kontrolle auf Gentechnikfreiheit* (Guideline on the Risk-Based Monitoring of GMO-Free Production);[12]
- Non-GM Danube Region Production and Labelling Standard & Non-GM Danube Region Inspection Standard.[13]

Other certification schemes assessing compliance with the criterion of ensuring GM-free status may be recognised by the Donau Soja Organisation as being equivalent to the above-mentioned certification schemes. In any case, Europe Soya products and Europe Soya animal feed shall be of such a quality that it can be labelled as non-GM food or feed or is suitable for use in non-GM food production.

For reasons of general quality assurance, all oil mills and compound feed producers shall be obliged to participate in a QA programme recognised by the Donau Soja Organisation. A list of recognised programmes and standards can be found in the requirements specified in R 04 (Soya Bean Primary Processor) and R 05 (Compound Feed Producer).

The Europe Soya inspection system is comprised of three stages:

- quality assurance and self-monitoring systems operated by the participants in the Europe Soya system themselves;
- external inspections and certifications commissioned by the licensees; these shall be conducted by ISO/IEC 17065:2012-accredited certification bodies approved by the Donau Soja Organisation;
- supervisory inspections conducted in collaboration with a certification body or inspectors, directly commissioned by the Donau Soja Organisation; supervisory inspections shall be risk-based; 10 % of the licensed quantity of Europe Soya soya beans and soya bean products are sampled for testing.

[11] *EG-Gentechnik-Durchführungsgesetz (EGGenTDurchfG):* www.gesetze-im-internet.de/eggentdurchfg/BJNR124410004.html
[12] *Richtlinie zur Definition der "Gentechnikfreien Produktion" von Lebensmitteln und deren Kennzeichnung* (Guideline on the Definition of GMO-Free Production of Food and its Labelling) in the Austrian Food Codex, IV edition: www.verbrauchergesundheit.gv.at/lebensmittel/buch/codex/beschluesse/Gentechnikfrei_RL_15_1_2018.pdf?6fdsmn
Leitfaden zur risikobasierten Kontrolle auf Gentechnikfreiheit (Guideline on the Risk-Based Monitoring of GMO-Free Production): www.bmwfw.gv.at/TechnikUndVermessung/Akkreditierung/Documents/Leitfaden%20L25_Risikobasierte%20Kontrolle%20Gentechnikfreiheit_V03_20150304.pdf
[13] Non-GM Danube Region Production and Labelling Standard & Non-GM Danube Region Inspection Standard: http://www.donausoja.org/en/downloads

Europe Soya certification shall apply to the following levels of operation throughout the entire food and feed value chain:

- Soya Bean Farmer (Producer)
- Agricultural Soya Bean Collector and Primary Collector
- Soya Trader
- Soya Bean Primary Processor
- Compound Feed Producer
- Agricultural Processor
- Food Processor through Marketer

To guarantee comprehensive monitoring, all participants in the Europe Soya programme shall be subject to inspections. **Confirmation of compliance** with the Europe Soya Guidelines resulting from external inspections shall be passed on within the value chain in the form of a **certificate**. The certificates are published on the Donau Soja website. In case of certified unprocessed soya beans, lot-based certificates (**lot certificates**) shall additionally be issued by the agricultural collector to the primary processor. In case of certified processed soya produce, **certificates of traceability** may additionally be issued by the primary processor to the marketer. All participants in the Europe Soya system may be inspected at any time, and on a risk basis, in the form of risk-based sampling in supervisory inspections.

Europe Soya soya bean farmers shall be registered with the agricultural collector. During this registration, farmers shall undertake to comply with the Europe Soya Guidelines on behalf of their agricultural holdings by signing the **Declaration of Self- Commitment – Farmers (Soya Bean Producers)**[14], and shall be individually certified or part of a group certification. Additionally, the farmer shall accept risk-based sampling in supervisory inspections. The inspection scope may include fields where soya beans are cultivated, but may also include any non-soya growing areas, uncultivated areas, infrastructure, and facilities as well as other areas that form part of the farm.

Primary processors (such as oil mills, toasters, food producers and producers of food ingredients and food additives), processing and/or treating soya beans chemically or physically most substantially, shall conclude a contract with the Donau Soja Organisation in which they pledge, among other things, to:

1. know and comply with the Europe Soya Guidelines;
2. conclude, at their own expense, a certification contract with an external ISO/IEC 17065:2012-accredited certification body approved by the Donau Soja Organisation;
3. accept risk-based sampling in supervisory inspections directly commissioned and paid by the Donau Soja Organisation;
4. pay a Europe Soya fee to the Donau Soja Organisation (the fee shall only be charged once within a continuous processing chain, namely at the primary processor stage);
5. impose bullets 1 to 3 on all their suppliers (including their suppliers' suppliers upstream) by contract, up to and including the agricultural collector.

[14] For details, see document "Declaration of Self-Commitment – Farmers"

This ensures that all participants in the Europe Soya system are aware of the Europe Soya Guidelines, have compliance with these Guidelines verified externally by certification bodies that are approved by the Donau Soja Organisation, and agree to supervisory inspections.

Compound feed producers shall also conclude a contract with the Donau Soja Organisation in which they undertake to comply with the above-mentioned points 1 to 3.

Marketers intending to place products with the Europe Soya logo on the market shall undertake not only to comply with the above-mentioned points 1 to 3, but also to impose the obligation to comply with the Europe Soya Guidelines, together with the audit requirements, on their suppliers and their suppliers' suppliers upstream by contract.

The frequencies of external inspections and the frequency of supervisory inspections as well as additional requirements for Soya Bean Farmers (Producers) within the Donau Soja system shall be based on five risk categories (a-e).

a. Contamination with GMO
b. Geographical origin
c. Pesticide use and desiccation practices
d. Legal compliance
e. Land conversion and soya bean cultivation in protected areas

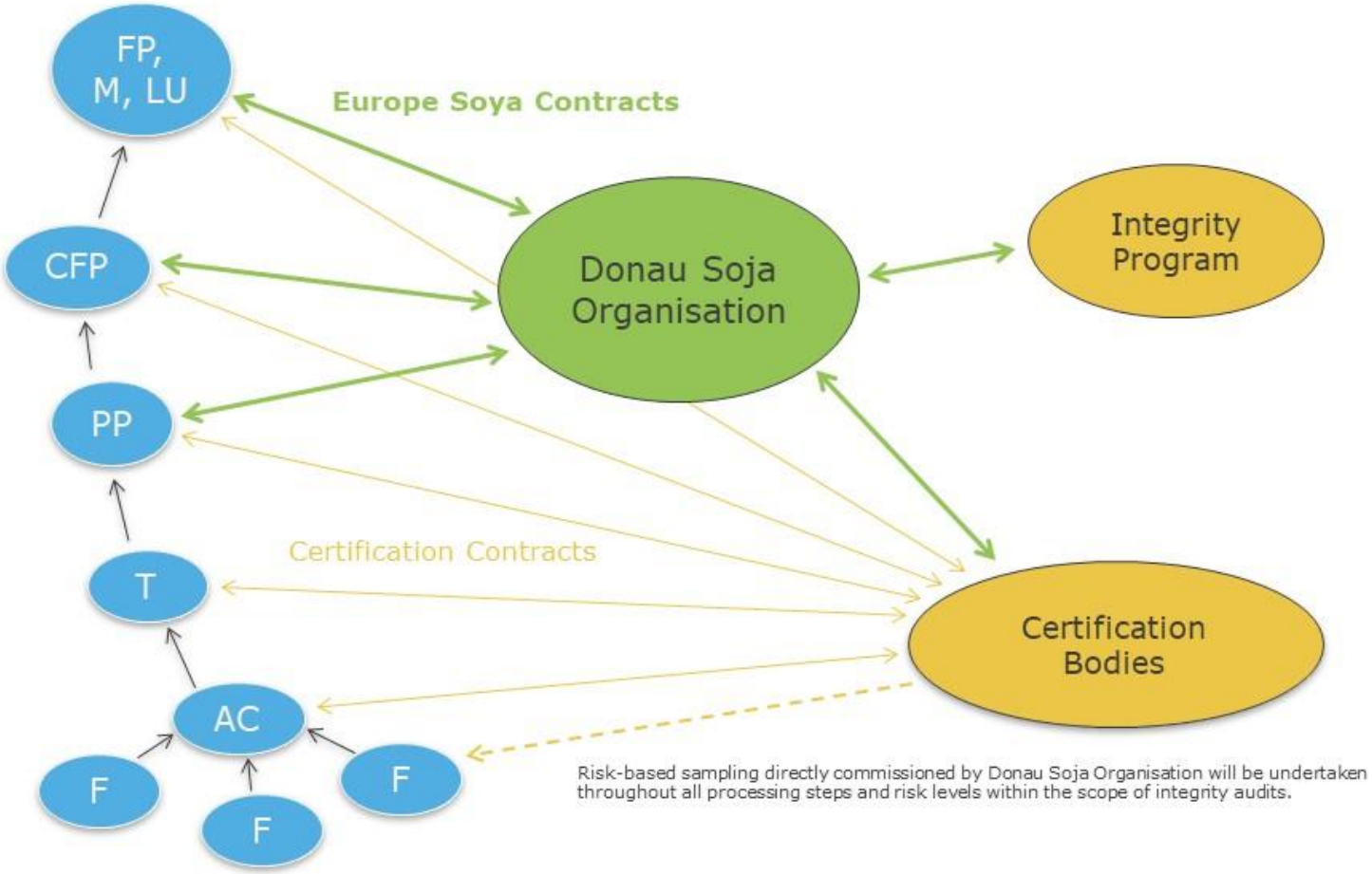
The frequencies of external inspections and the frequency of supervisory inspections for certified companies in the supply chain, other than farmers, (e.g. collectors, traders, processors, compound feed producers, marketers) shall be based on the risk of contamination with GMO.

For details on the risk assessment see Annex 4 "Risk-Based Donau Soja Inspection System".

Precise requirements and obligations for the different risk levels (RL) at the stage of farmers, traders, agricultural collectors, primary processors, compound feed producers, agricultural processors and marketers, as well as binding inspection frequencies shall be specified in the requirements for all participants in the Europe Soya system.

September 2021

Europe Soya Contract System



F = Farmer, AC = Agricultural Collector, T = Trader, PP = Primary Processor, CFP = Compound Feed Producer, FP = Food Processor, M = Marketer, LU = Logo User

Please note: exemplary flow of Europe Soya value chain