

Coca Cola and Coca Leaves

A Case Study on the use of FPIC

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ABSTRACT

This article considers how system knowledge from a production point of view can interact with international law in such ways as to uphold the international principle of free, prior informed consent (FPIC).

Although some categories, such as designers, are used to thinking through production systems when they create goods, the question of how the people inside and outside these systems are affected is often overlooked. That is the point when international human rights research can come to support a field that otherwise can seem quite large in scope.

Specifically, the case study presented here analyzes how the production of the Coca Cola beverage interacts with indigenous peoples¹ through the lens of the internationally recognized principle of FPIC.

The analysis indicates that the FPIC framework can be the starting point to evaluate touch points between current production systems and society at large and provide practical ways for people from different disciplines and backgrounds to create a discourse around it. Ultimately, this would benefit indigenous peoples and human rights defenders to understand whom to engage with at the negotiation table while also exploring ways to strengthen the communication from an activist and a public opinion point of view.

Keywords: Free, Prior and Informed Consent, Coca Cola, production line, coca leaf

It is widely understood that states' governments lack current legislative to implement the internationally required process of FPIC but we build on the work of the Center for World Indigenous Studies theorizing how to implement a new international regulatory mechanism referred to as ALDMEM (Ancestral

Land Decolonization Monitoring Mechanism). The current article seeks to advance the international dialogue about FPIC by applying

¹ The word "people" or "peoples" is used throughout this article meaning a nation, a linguistic or cultural group with traditional or historical ties as distinct from racial or political ties as associated with a population of a state.

relational thought diagrams to see how this can be used.² Working through a thought process similar to a design exercise professionals will go through a trial and error process. This article reflects the author's efforts to apply "thought diagramming" as a way to bring us closer to the understanding how to create such a framework.

While the process of FPIC has applied to relations between indigenous nations and states since 1989³ predicated in international law^{4 5 6} and adopted by indigenous nations and states' governments thought UN member states have not implemented the process in their legislation. Sovereignty is at the core of this matter: indigenous nations and state governments are competing over it, claiming access and land use. However, the land is one, and the matter gets even more complicated when companies require indigenous land and knowledge to produce goods that can benefit the State. It is at this crossover that this article exists.

The following case study argues that although this methodological inspection of the use of FPIC can first and foremost benefit indigenous people, it can also be a tool for communication between indigenous nations and the states. The process of FPIC can also benefit communications between climate activists of different regions and business people who are actively taking a stand to change "business as usual" practices towards an active eradication of human and environmental rights abuse of companies' operational systems. We explore how the efforts to implement such an FPIC framework needs to move away from being solely discussed in political and diplomatic circles and urges for them to be incorporated into systematic thinking. This is why activists, designers, and business people can be good target groups to enlarge these conversations. The wish is that FPIC will become a widespread topic, spoken about in indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peoples' circles alike.

² You can find more information about ALDMEM and ways to implement FPIC in Dr. Rýser's recent article "Green Energy Mining and Indigenous Peoples' Troubles: Negotiating the Shift from the Carbon Economy to Green Energy with FPIC" *Fourth World Journal V22 N2*(2022).

³ International Labour Organization (ILO), *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, C169*, 27 June 1989, C169. Article 6 Para 2 "The consultations carried out in application of this Convention shall be undertaken, in good faith and in a form appropriate to the circumstances, with the objective of achieving agreement or consent to the proposed measures." Article 16 Para 2. "Where the relocation of these peoples is considered necessary as an exceptional measure, such relocation shall take place only with their free and informed consent."

⁴ International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations. July 28, 1994. Geneva, Switzerland. Initiated by The Crimean Tartar, Numba People of Sudan, Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, Opethesht First Nation and West Papua Peoples Front/OPM and subsequently ratified by 60 indigenous nations in Africa, and West Asia. Part I Para 9, Part II Para 9, Para11. Part V Para 18. Part VI Para 25, Para 28. Part IX Para 43.

⁵ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) Article 10 "Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories ... without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned..." Article 2 Para 2. "States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, ... with respect to their cultural intellectual, religious, and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs." Article 19, "States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative³ measures that may affect them." Article 28 "Indigenous peoples have the right to redress ... for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent." Article 29 Para 2. "States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent." Article 30 Para 2. "States shall undertake effective consultations with the indigenous peoples concerned ... prior to using their lands or territories for military activities." Article 32 Para 2. "States shall ... obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any projects affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources."

⁶ Alta Outcome Document, 10-12 June 2013. Global Indigenous Preparatory Conference. Alta, Sami Land. Theme 1 Para 3, Para 5, Para 6, Para 8. Theme 2 Para 9. Theme 3 Para 4, Para 13. Theme 4 Para 3.

The Coca Cola Company was taken as a case study for such a task for two main reasons: its worldwide fame and the number of resources on which the company relies. In this sense, this analysis builds strongly on the work of *Citizen Coke: An Environmental and Political History of the Coca-Cola Company* (Elmore, 2013) which already framed the company as an extractive industry, an argument supported by the company membership in the UN Global Compact.⁷ After studying the topic of the extractive industry for over a year, it was, in fact, the membership of Coca Cola in such a partnership that inspired the starting question of this essay.

The research group at the Center for World Indigenous Studies started from the idea that a first way to identify companies that may be approachable by human rights activists could be by looking into this UN Global Compact. The Oxfam International press release that pointed out Coca Cola willingness to “adhere to the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent across its operations” (2013) and its suppliers added a new insight: because of its fame, Coca Cola seemed more responsive to change than other companies in such a transnational corporation group (which includes companies like Shell Oil, Lukoil, British Petroleum). Finally, a company like Coca Cola is more accessible to track than a traditional mineral or oil extractive company, where things quickly get smoky when researchers start to follow the money path. Banks,

inventors, beneficiaries start to multiply rapidly and, although not impossible, it is more difficult to find a pattern and clearly communicate it.

Because of these reasons, early into the process, the question that inspired this article shifted focus from “does Coca Cola uphold free, prior informed consent?” to “can Coca Cola uphold free, prior informed consent?”

How Does Coca Cola Work?

The first necessary step in the process was to understand how the production of the Coca Cola beverage works.

Coca Cola follows a franchise model, with the main company operating in Atlanta and regional franchises worldwide. In Atlanta, the ingredients that the company purchases from its partners are put together to create the famous secret recipe, which gets distributed to the regional companies under the form of nine “merchandisers” which then get mixed with sweeteners, flavors and water depending on the version of the beverage that is being produced. Subsequently, the beverage is bottled and distributed (Elmore, 2013). The relationships between franchisers and the main company can be visualized as shown in Figure 1.

⁷ The Global Compact is the United Nations registry of more than 15,000 businesses and corporations committed to align their strategies and operations with international human rights laws and declarations, and internationally established environment, labour, and anti-corruption policies and laws. (See: <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc>)

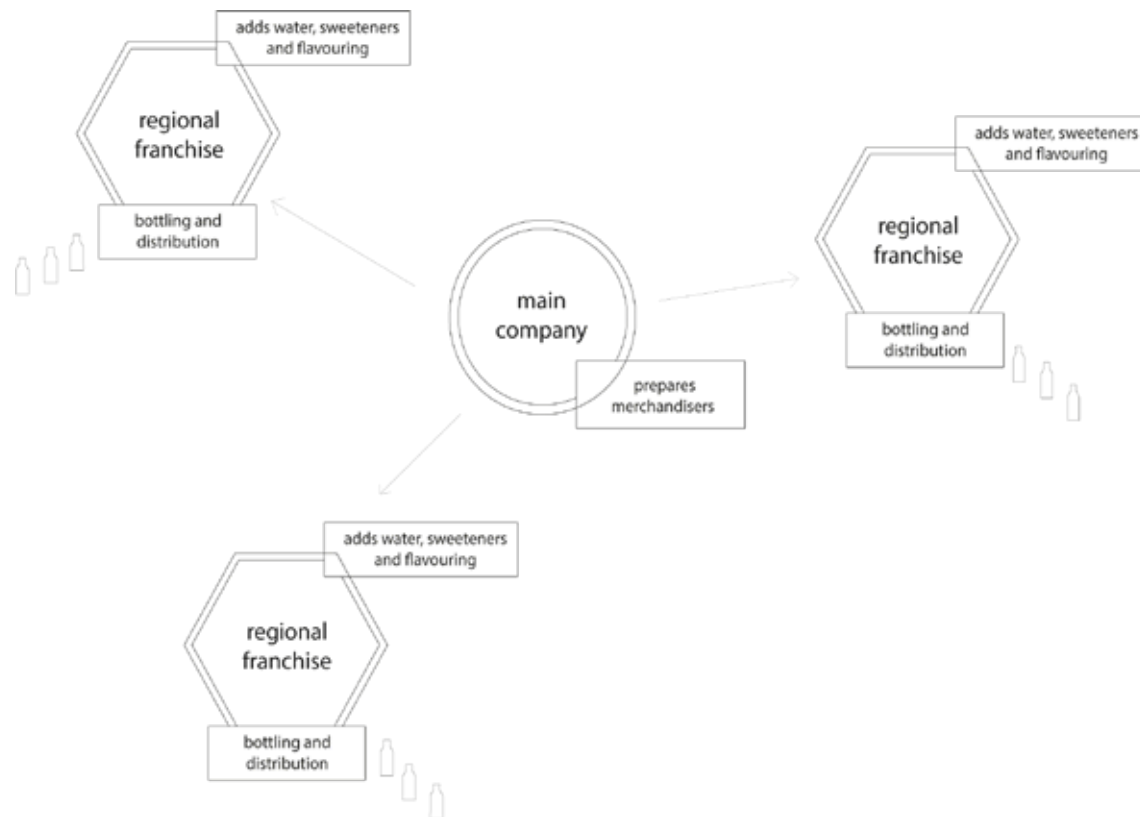


Figure 1. Coca Cola and its Franchises

The Historical Meaning of “Franchise”

Franchising globally has a fundamental importance both from a historical and a practical point of view. Given the weight and volume of water, by transporting mainly dry substances (even to U.S.-based franchises), Coca Cola saves a considerable amount of money. Secondly, and most importantly, by bottling in regional industries, Coca Cola can make use of the local water resources present in the area rather than having to transport it to a centralized processing plant.

Suppose we follow the way the company has expanded itself through the years. In that case, we see that this is a model Coca Cola used from

the beginning, with the company deciding to expand in areas where big water infrastructure projects were taking place. In this sense, Coca Cola was advantaged by history, given that its expansion occurred at the time that big cities like New York were initiating major public water projects (Elmore, 2013, p12). We could argue that Coca Cola developed with capitalism giving the company a great advantage from its competitors. Through its attentive reading of social development, Coca Cola prevented itself from having to *produce water* but instead became a (public) *consumer of water*. This approach implied good rates and the avoidance of both construction and maintenance costs.

Coca Cola followed the same pattern of organization worldwide. Nowadays, this is reflected in the company being part of “development” projects in collaboration with the US government. The latest case is represented by WADA (Water and Development Alliance), a program aiming at showcasing the strength of the alliance between the public and private sectors made up of USAID and Coca Cola (Elmore, 2013), which is aimed at giving support to communities in need of hydrological development. Rather often, though, these projects take place in areas where Coca Cola has a bottling franchise, such as the case of Erbin, in Iraq (H.M.H Group, 2022), and “many of these projects, USAID admits, have helped to improve production facilities of Coca-Cola” (Elmore, 2013, p.77).

A Public Solution to a Private Problem

The intertwining between public and private is particularly important because it reveals a pattern that the company tends to use often: finding a public solution to an internal problem (Elmore, 2013). It is the same reason why, although the company is one of the top plastics polluters in the world (McVeigh, 2020), Coca Cola has always been lobbying for recycling centers. From the 1960s, together with other soft drink producers, the company fought hard in the US to make recycling the legislative norm as a solution to the increasing amount of waste that these companies were responsible for. “In the end, industry lobbyists were victorious, pushing through legislation at the federal, state, and municipal levels that established recycling programs as the cure-all for the nation’s solid waste problems”: rather than imposing restrictions on the

production of one-way containers or giving the responsibility back to the polluters (Elmore, 2013, p.211). The repercussions of this lobbying and alliances are now being paid worldwide.

Nevertheless, as an added value from a marketing and strategic point of view, by framing itself as a supporter of recycling facilities Coca Cola managed to come through to the public as a positive actor in the social sphere. Is this wind changing now? It could be, but just as long as the public is given the possibility to deeply understand the systematic issues at the base of current climate-related issues, a responsibility that lies to communicators. Failure to do so will give such companies another opportunity to reframe themselves as positive social actors, and efforts will have been in vain.

A difference between current climate related discourse and past human rights advocacy is that some of the issues highlighted here are starting to be sensitive in the global north as well. Although this is an unfortunate circumstance because the legitimacy of the global south and minority voices should not be validated by how they relate to the north but simply by what they stand for, changemakers can use this dynamic to their advantage. By collaborating across borders, greater mediatic resonance can be created while still being able to act at numerous very local levels with coordinated actions.

Episodes like the recent droughts in the north of Italy, a summer event that is bound to repeat itself due to the climate crisis, have brought people to question Coca Cola’s access to water in Nogara, near the city of Verona. While

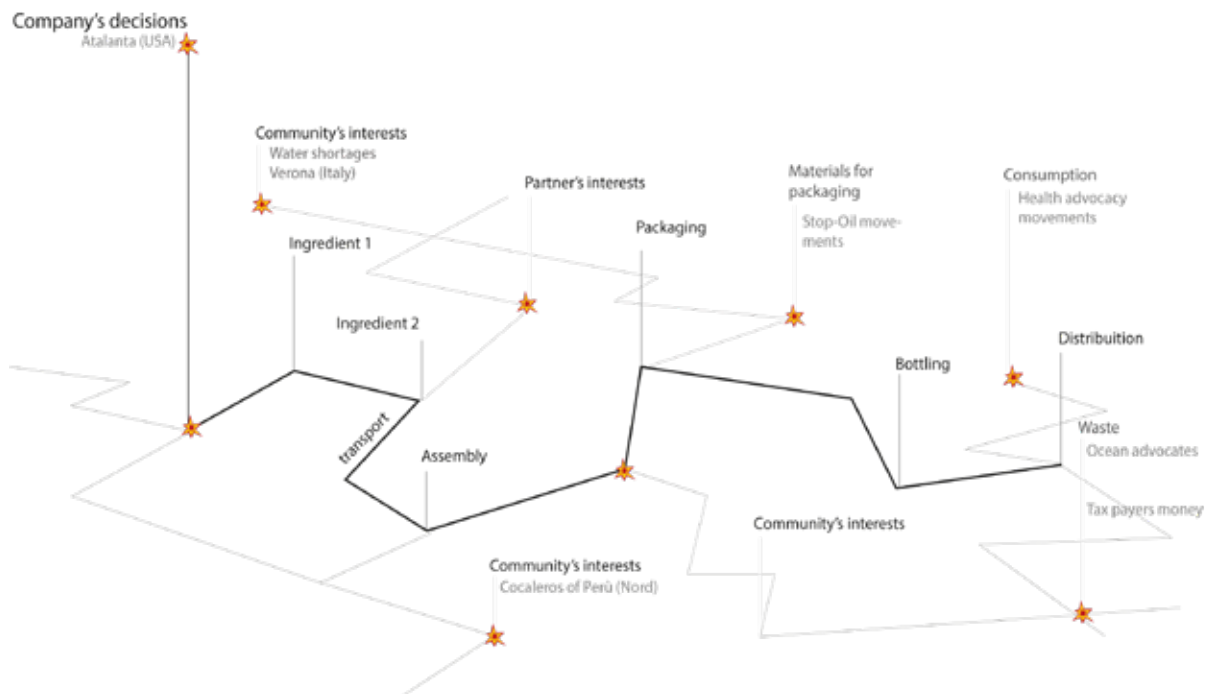


Figure 2. Communities and Causes connections Over a Production Process

residents were imposed restrictions on water use, the biggest Coca Cola bottling center in Italy had full access to water. This is made worse by the economic side of the problem: the company pays just a symbolic amount for such water use, although it creates enormous profit from it (Bauducco, 2022)

Although the discourse around water is fundamental to understanding the potential of the production chain approach, the focus is now to be shifted to another ingredient that holds special importance to the company and one which has not yet entered the public discourse as much: the coca leaf.

Coca Leaf

Historically for the Coca Cola company, cocaine was used in the original recipe of the commercially sold beverage. The practice

followed the late 19th century trend when it was fashionable for including cocaine in soft drinks in the Global North. Using cocaine in commercial products was possible due to German chemist Albert Nieman's isolation of the alkaloid. Niemann's success made it possible to commercially promote the positive effects of cocaine on the human body. The positive wave was, nevertheless, short-lived. The substance was purposely removed from commercial products in 1903 because of the growing controversies linked to its consumption.

To preserve the story of the secret recipe, though, the then head of the company Coca Cola, A. Calder, was careful not to remove the coca leaf completely by keeping it as a natural flavoring mixed with caffeine (Elmore, 2013). The worry was that Coca Cola would have compromised its public credibility without the ingredient, and the

myth of the secret recipe would have disappeared. This proved to be a sensible worry. In 1985 Coca Cola released the “new coke” (a coca-free version of the beloved beverage), sales dropped. Coca leaf was re-introduced, and to this day it remains an essential ingredient in the drink (Elmore, 2013, p.167).

The restored ingredient is of crucial importance for two reasons. The first is that, according to historian P. Gootenberg, this was a reason for the company “to become involved in a largely hidden transnational trade in coca leaves” throughout the 20th century (Elmore, 2013, p.133). The second reason is the advertising leverage that this offers: if keeping coca in its recipe is so important, can this soft point be used by indigenous people and change makers in their favor using the process of free, prior and informed consent?

Finding a Space in Trade for Coca Leaves

But how did this happen? With restrictions and fears of addiction-related problems, Coca Cola had to find a solution to its need for coca leaf while moving away from being associated with cocaine from a public perspective. Once more, Coca Cola slowly started to look for a public solution to an internal problem, and once again, the company would reinforce its position as a *consumer*. *This approach* proved key to the successful.

The company decided to reinforce its connection with the pharmaceutical company Maywood Chemical Company (today called Stepan), who would have provided a better reason

to justify the import of the leaf in the face of a legislative ban by government. For Maywood, it was the perfect opportunity to turn waste, the leftover decocainized coca leaves of their pharmaceutical production, into profit and it hence support the public posture of the company. The trade was already in place, the Maywood Company and Coca Cola focused on strengthening their commercial relationship with growers from La Libertad’s Sacamanca and Otuzco districts, who specialized in the Trujillo quality, the only one which flavor was considered appropriate for the beverage. According to Gootenberg’s research these districts were mainly organized by regional merchants’ clans such as the Goicochea’s and Pinillos (2001). Although officially not involved directly, the protection of this trade network between Maywood and Peruvian suppliers would remain a top priority for Coca Cola executives (Elmore, 2013, p.133).

Coca Cola operated behind the curtains by lobbying government policy and by ensuring that Maywood would give them exclusive access to their excess leaves. In fact, this worked so well that by the 1920s, when prohibition in the US had been established, “only two New Jersey firms (nationalized Merck and Coca-Cola partner to Maywood Chemical Works) dealt with coca and cocaine, and the business assumed a monopoly character” (P. Gootenberg, 2001, p.7), a monopoly Coca Cola keeps to this day.

Criminalization

Although Coca Cola retained its business, the US prohibition, and the criminalization of coca in Europe and North America had disastrous repercussions for small coca growers in Perú—

mainly indigenous people engaged in coca leaf growing. But to understand this fully, it's worth contextualizing the long history of the coca plant compared to its brief interaction with the soda pop company.

The coca plant has been used for millennia by Indigenous Andean peoples who found its anti-fatigue properties effective for working at high altitudes. Regulation of coca leaf use was in place among the Quechua-speaking peoples during the time of the Inca empire. In the early 1500s, because of internal problems in the Inca empire and due to the interventions of the Spaniards, chewing coca leaves became more common. Although "in 1618, a manuscript by Don Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala describes coca leaf chewing as an unauthorized social activity engaged in by the Indians when they were expected to be working" (Allen, 1987, p.8). Its use was legalized because "other explorers reported that chewing coca leaves increased the endurance of the Indians" (Allen, 1987, p.8). As terrible as the motivation was, this contributed to the coca as a tradition to survive through a time of cultural oppression introduced by the Spaniards.

Although these hallucinogenic properties were recognized and small quantities of leaves were taken to Europe, it wasn't until the 19th century that European interest began to develop in the public. This was probably because, unlike tobacco, coca leaves deteriorate quickly, and by the time they arrived in Europe, they weren't good enough to be used (Allen, 1987, p.8).

When in 1859, Albert Niemann isolated the alkaloid--which he called cocaine--things

changed. Suddenly the leaves could be used, and public and commercial interest increased dramatically.

Perú wagered on a growing international cocaine trade, starting to create a national industry based on the coca leaf. The way coca was consumed would leave Perú divided in two markets: the mainly dry leaves were marketed in North America and "crude cocaine" (a jungle cocaine sulfate cake) was sent to Europe for processing by pharmaceutical companies serving the German market. (Gootenberg, 2001).

The Effects on the Peruvian Economy

Unfortunately for Peru the crude cake cocaine economy generated by this second trade was based on the willingness of European powers to use cocaine, not coca leaves. When the substance started to be targeted because of its addictive and adverse health issues, the traditional use and beneficial effects of the consumption of the coca leaf were ignored even by the North American market as well as their European partners.

The ignorance and self-centrism of colonial powers had once more proved short sighted and oppressive for the Andean peoples. A lot of the cocaleros⁸ in Peru who had invested in

⁸ This is the term used to designate the coca leaf growers in Peru and Bolivia. The coca leaf has been cultivated for 8,000 years by the indigenous peoples in the Andes. The cocaleros farm the coca leaf for medicinal and religious purposes. The leaf provides a stimulant. It is helpful in overcoming altitude sickness in the high Andes and can be chewed and made into tea. Other medicinal uses include pain relief, staunching blood flow, combating malaria, ulcers, asthma and improving digestion. It is also configured in many religious ceremonies as offerings to Apus, Inti, and the Pachamama and as a method of divination by many of the indigenous peoples of the Andes.

the emerging industry were left with no work, and the increasing international pressure was putting Perú in a position of having to ban the traditional use of coca leaves domestically as well. Even on the US market, the bans that were put in place were not advocating the interruption of the cocaine trade, but stopping the coca leave production (Gootenberg, 2001).

ENACO

The US support for imported coca leaves by Maywood Chemical Works and Merk remained the only lifeline for the now reduced Peruvian market. To moderate the pressure coming from legislation and to respond to an increased opposition to drugs in 1949, Perú established ENACO (López, 2022, p.9) the *Empresa Nacional de Coca*. ENACO became the only enterprise in Perú legally authorized to sell cocaine abroad, obliging all the small growers to sell to it directly rather than *cocaleros* making deals with each possible customer themselves. According to Gootenberg, as of 2001, most of the sales of coca leaves from ENACO were going to Stepan,⁹ the company that now heads Maywood Chemical--the provider of coca leaves to Coca Cola.

The problem with a nationalized coca industry was, and still is, the pressure that such a company is under from an international perspective.

Gootenberg proceeds to write that “in the latter half of the twentieth century, many *cocaleros* wanted to revive the international trade in coca and hoped to sell leaves to legal buyers for inclusion in a variety of commercial products, such as tea and flour, but the illicit trade was controlled by the state-sponsored monopoly ENACO” which had the freedom to set prices at its own discretion. As a result, *cocaleros* were not able to make much money. (Elmore, 2013)

Contemporary Issues

From an online review of the contemporary issues around coca growers in Perú, problems between ENACO and *cocaleros* continue unabated. More on-site research needs to be conducted to understand the dynamics fully. On the blog of CONPACCP¹⁰ (the official representative of Peruvian *cocaleros*) it seems that ENACO is not issuing enough permission to grow coca to farmers, who in turn require it loudly, both through protesting and legal ways.

As of April 2022, an article from *Gestión* reported an official *cocalero* request to call on the Peruvian government to not elect Sr. Jesús Oswaldo Quispe Arone, the deputy minister of governance of the office of the President of Ministers to the position of Chairman of the board of directors of ENACO. The motivation

⁹ Stepan (<https://www.stepan.com/>) is an industrial chemicals company located in Northbrook, Illinois. It makes end products for numerous industries including agriculture, beverages, construction, flavors, food, household, nutrition, and household cleansing among others. The company is the only commercial entity in the United States authorized by the US government's Food and Drug Administration to import coca leaves primarily from Peru. The “cocaine-free” extract produced from coca leaves by Stepan is sold to The Coca Cola Company for use in soft drinks, and the cocaine produced by Stepan is sold to Mallinckrot (<https://www.mallinckrodt.com/>), a pharmaceutical company with headquarters in Dublin, Ireland.

¹⁰ Prominent *cocaleros* from the Upper Huallaga, Aguaytía and Apurímac Valleys, led by Nelson Palomino, decided to establish a national union of coca cultivators. Some 1,200 delegates founded the National Association of Peruvian Coca Producers (CONPACCP) in January 2003. The delegates chose Palomino, who is from the Apurímac Valley, as the organization's Secretary General, and Nancy Obregón as Vice Secretary. Here is a report on developments involving *cocaleros* in Peru: <https://nacla.org/article/peru%E2%80%99s-cocaleros-march>

for the opposition was due to his inability to deal with the current coca crisis. And, it was reasoned, this decision will favor illegal trade rather than protecting and supporting the historical traditional use of coca in Perú. The document claims that recent governmental policies mixed with international pressure have favored illegal coca production rather than making ENACO a profitable way through which *cocaleros* can sustain themselves.

These fears are backed by the repetitive episodes in which the Peruvian government backed US-led initiatives for eradicating the plant. Although the United States economy is the primary beneficiary of the coca trade through ENACO, it also has a strong position on the war on drugs and cooperates with the Peruvian government in efforts of eradication. These policies create instability for the *cocaleros* who have not been given permission to grow coca legally and reports say they feel like they have been abandoned. Sometimes these people find coca a more reliable crop, given recent problems related to the cacao and coffee trade (Andean Information Network, 2020).

In a 2011 blog post on the CONPACCP blog¹¹, someone was complaining that a significant amount of the permits to grow coca were given to parents or grandparents of current growers, people who are currently not able to work or are dead now

A few questions can arise as we consider this dynamic: 1. If many growers complain of a lack of permits and stability, how does ENACO still get enough leaves for export? How does it ensure the legality of coca production under its own laws?

And most importantly for or analysis: how does Coca Cola ensure that its coca leaves production comes from legal sources?

Connection with FPIC

According to research so far, the issues highlighted in this article that are related to the implementation of the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) are connected to the process in two main ways:

1. to advance constructive relations between companies and
2. the indigenous coca leaf farms—the *cocaleros*.

The first is the question of the illegality of some farmers that used to hold a license or that practice it consciously but did not get a permit from ENACO because of the bureaucratic or expensive procedures. Could we argue that the consent of the *cocaleros* is violated because they are not given the right to fully experience their traditional or preferred way of living?

The second question is linked to the problem of the illegal coca leaf trade, which may also be related to the making of cocaine. We know that the illegal production of cocaine is linked to deforestation (Romo, 2019) and human rights abuse, both of which can fall under the subject of FPIC. If the border between legal and illegal growing is blurred even under a bureaucratic point of view, how does ENACO ensure that the coca leaves it buys are not compromised by such behaviors?

¹¹ <https://conpacpp.blogspot.com/>

Under these blurred circumstances, and by not being the actual producers of its ingredients: *can the Coca Cola Company uphold its claims to support FPIC* while it does not directly interact with the *cocaleros*? Or is it claiming compliance with human rights standards even though its

partners who directly deal with *cocaleros* and obtain coca leaves fail to obtain *cocalero* consent under FPIC? The Coca Cola company appears to be engaged in subterfuge portraying itself to the public as a human rights defender? Arguably, as one of the main beneficiaries of Peru's ENACO

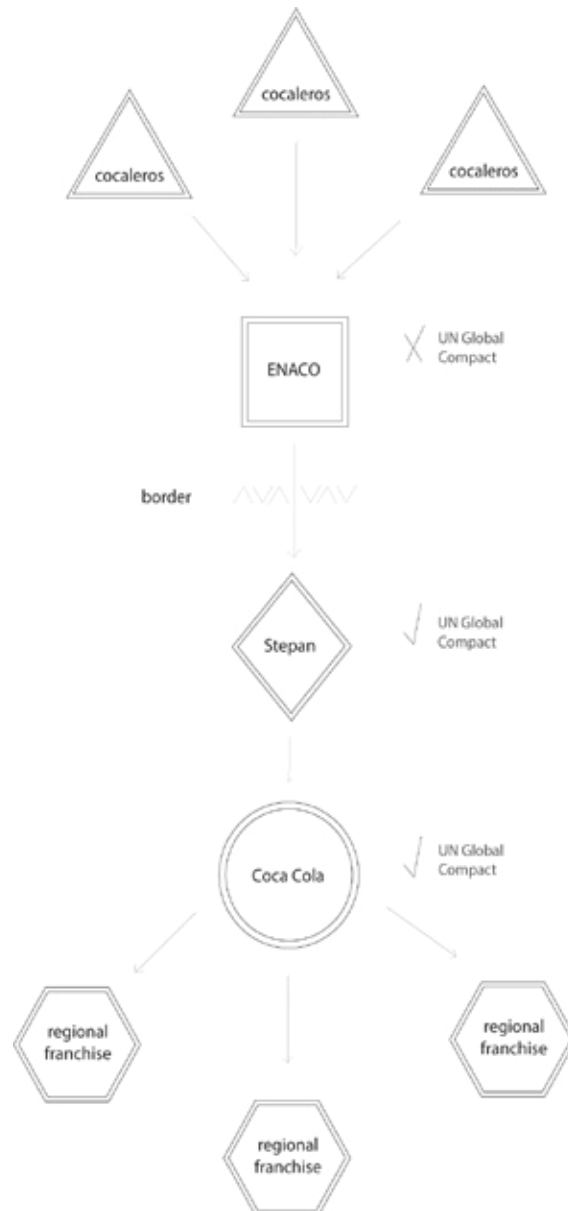


Figure 3. Coca Cola and ENACO Obtaining the FPIC of *Cocaleros*

and as one of the main beneficiaries of the legal coca trade in the world, the company holds a lot of power on the matter. It would be interesting to hear what their strategy is, given that on their Business & ESG Report,¹² they claim a willingness to lobby for climate solutions and admit to having the “influence to drive meaningful policy changes in partnership with peer companies” (Coca Cola, 2021, p.20). Unfortunately, though, when analyzing the report, most of these efforts revolve around recycling plastic, and there is no mention of obtaining free, prior and informed consent of the *cocaleros*.

There is a process to mediate relations between the Coca Cola Company and the *cocaleros* by way of the Stepan and ENACO. Coca Cola and Stepan are pledged under the UN Global Compact to implement human rights policies and FPIC. It would appear that Coca Cola may feel shielded from this obligation since ENACO is not registered with the UN Global Compact. It would be faulty reasoning to conclude that Coca Cola is not obligated to impress on ENACO the importance of negotiating consent with the *cocaleros*. As the primary beneficiary of the raw materials produced by the ENACO enterprise, Coca Cola would have no alternative but to implement its obligations given the corporate connections illustrated in Figure 3. From here on, more research needs to be done in order not to speculate, but from here on the research already in place can be used to ask CC clarification on their coca leaves trade.

Making Alliances Across the Production Lines

To conclude, the reader may be reminded that at the beginning of this article, we considered the claim that FPIC can evolve into a methodology for designers, business owners, activists, and indigenous people to work together.

The history of the Coca Cola Company is intertwined with the long and rich history of coca and the indigenous peoples of the Andes. Advocates for biodiversity, indigenous peoples rights and other practitioners of the global north may consider that there can be a way to understand possible approaches they can support and cooperate with indigenous activists in advocating for climate justice by tackling big polluters and, ultimately, the system that legitimizes them. FPIC as a method can be a good way for people to ask the right questions to unify those who are trying to tackle the same issues but at different ends of the production lines.

Research shows how people worldwide are often struggling against the same company, but for different reasons. In this case, the similarities highlighted relate to the right of people, indigenous or not, to choose how to use their own natural resources, may it be water or coca, at a time of a changing climate where we need new laws and urgent, responsive action.

The question readers may now consider: Can we create activism that aims at companies' production lines, that sees coordination among

¹² Business and Environmental, Social and Governance Report issued in April 2022: <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/reports/business-environmental-social-governance-report-2021>

communities in different localities for a shared aim? On top of the ingredients here highlighted, additional touching points between the social sphere and the Coca Cola production line could be with the communities that suffer or are active against plastic pollution and those who are impacted by oil production: two faces of the one-way bottling system of the beverage.

Although FPIC and self-determination are extremely important tools that indigenous people can and need to use in their fight for justice, their use needs to be understood by non-indigenous actors if we want appropriate solutions and legislation to be implemented.

For young business people who want to create an economy that does not reflect the horrors of the past, it is important to know the existence of

these issues and tools to scrutinize the production they are creating and make sure it does not embody such issues. And if it does? Negotiation is the key element of free, prior informed consent. Dialogue, clear contracts, and especially acceptance of boundaries are all tools that all parties can benefit from. Although legislative issues remain, FPIC can be implemented between parties before state law requires it, and there are sources available to help navigate this issue. For this, it may be useful to refer to Dr. Ryser's Fourth World Journal article about ALDMEM and the upcoming international platform on FPIC, which is being planned by the Centre for World Indigenous Studies.

Ultimately FPIC needs to become popular, and there needs to be a public discussion, one which is focused on the historical responsibilities of states

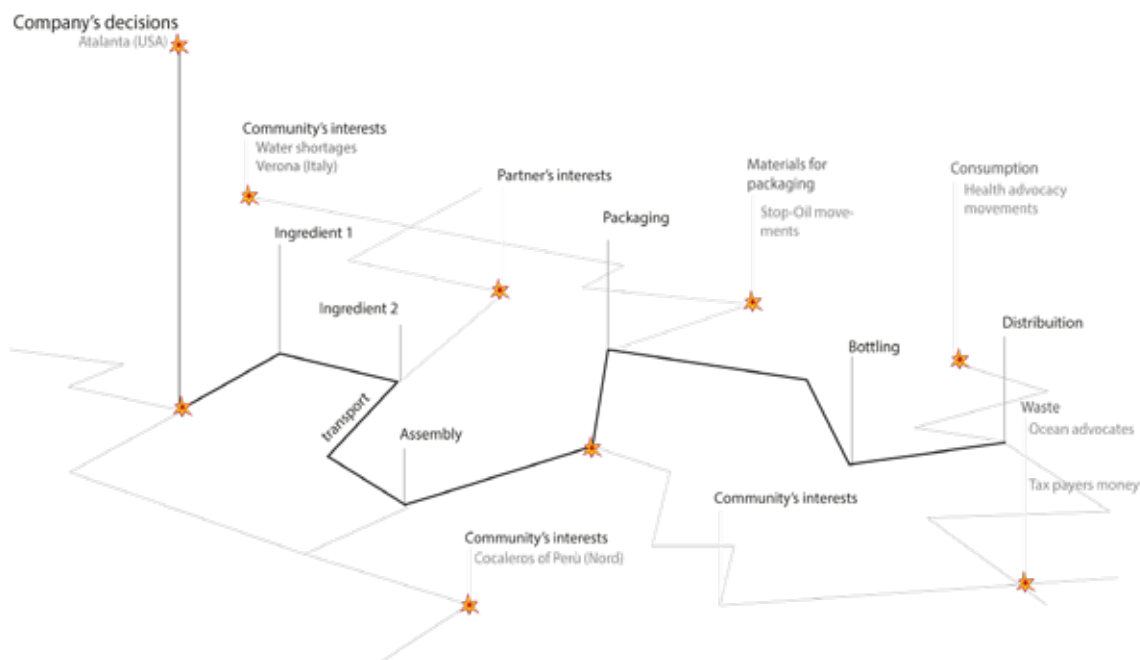


Figure 4 . Production lines connection

and companies in creating the destruction that we see all around us.

Compared to other human rights laws, the [process of free, prior, and informed consent] has the advantage of being a concept easily understood. Making it mandatory to ask people for permission to use the land and the resources they depend on would seem entirely reasonable. As a designer of the global north, we recognize that the state, the companies, and the people who hold the most privileges in the world now benefit

by not implementing FPIC, but the planet is changing, and so the new generation of thinkers needs to change with it.

Analyzing the world around through the eyes of FPIC can offer a shift of paradigm that in the long run can prove to be revolutionary. Apart from the imperative of keeping governments accountable for their own actions, a good place to operate is by looking at how different worlds are connected by the same production lines and act upon it.

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