

Cooperatives, Commerce, and Climate Change: The Future of Small-Scale Coffee Production in Peru

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Is there a sustainable future for small-scale coffee production within an increasingly competitive global market and rapidly changing social and environmental climate? Only second to crude oil in international trade, coffee drives agricultural-commodity economies and supplements subsistence-livings in countries worldwide. As the demand for coffee surges in competitive and distant markets, small-scale coffee production is threatened by a host of economic, social, and environmental challenges. Through an *in-situ* study of family-owned and indigenous coffee cooperatives in central Peru, this paper examines the future sustainability of small-scale specialty coffee cultivation (Fair Trade, shade grown, and organic). The research addresses present challenges and future possibilities for continued production within each of the three “pillars” of sustainability: economic, environmental, and social. Issues such as the role of certifications, market access and exclusion, quality of life for producers, and environmental services (such as agrobiodiversity) all contribute to a holistic view of, and recommendations for, sustained coffee cultivation. I argue that multi-use land management practices, such as growing coffee alongside other complementary crops, shade grown coffee, and coffee crop diversity, as well as participation in local cooperatives are all integral for future coffee production and the sustainable livelihoods of small-scale or subsistence-living coffee farmers.

Keywords:

Coffee; Sustainability; Fair Trade; Agrobiodiversity; Small-scale; Cooperatives; Peru; Indigenous peoples