

**PEASANT SYSTEMS AT THE AGRICULTURAL FRONTIER OF THE  
VELASCO PROVINCE, CHIQUITANIA, BOLIVIA****KLEINBÄUERLICHE SYSTEME AN DER AGRARFRONTIER DER  
VELASCO-PROVINZ, CHIQUITANIA, BOLIVIEN**

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**SUMMARY**

The Velasco Province, which lies at the transition between the Amazon, Cerrado, Pantanal and Chaco regions, is rapidly transforming since the 1980s as it is located between two rapidly advancing agricultural frontiers. To the West and South, forest is being cleared for soya monoculture; to the East, at the Brazilian border, pasture is replacing forests and savannahs. These drastic land-use changes are mainly driven by a complex actor constellation, expanding road infrastructure, and economic development strategies, which contradict forest protection efforts. The socio-ecological implications of these transformations, especially for indigenous and peasant systems, are well illustrated in the San Ignacio de Velasco Municipio. Since the 1980s uncontrolled deforestation has led to a rapid decrease in precious wood. Traditional swidden agriculture can contribute to maintaining the local biodiversity and improving food security and livelihoods through diversified agro-silvo-pastoral management. Nevertheless, this is compromised by the rising pressure towards market-oriented agriculture, cattle ranching, agricultural land scarcity and soil degradation.

**Keywords:** Agricultural frontier, Bolivia, economic integration, deforestation, peasant systems, land-use change

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

Die Velasco Provinz ist ein Übergangsraum zwischen Amazonien, Cerrado, Pantanal und Chaco und erlebt seit den 1980er Jahren rasante Transformationen, da sie zwischen zwei aufeinanderstoßenden Agrarfrontiers liegt. Im Westen und Süden verbreitet sich der Soja-Anbau; im Osten, an der brasilianischen Grenze, werden Savannen und Wälder durch Weideland ersetzt. Die komplexe Akteure-Konstellation, neue Straßeninfrastruktur und ökonomische Entwicklungsstrategien, die den Waldschutz widersprechen, treiben diese starke Landnutzungsänderung an. Im Municipio San Ignacio de Velasco werden die sozio-ökologischen