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**PALM OIL EXTRACTIVISM IN COLOMBIA AND WETLANDS ACCESS. A
STUDY CASE.**

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Colombia is the fourth country, and the first in Latin America, in palm oil production (*Elaeis guineensis*) (USDA, 2023). In this country, the municipality of Puerto Wilches had the largest area of oil palm plantations in 2022, with 46,907 ha (AGRONET, 2025), and five palm oil processing plants.

In 2018, Puerto Wilches had 31,698 inhabitants, distributed among 51.2% women and 48.8% men. Of these inhabitants 49,3% lived in rural areas and 50.7% in urbans. The percentage of rural people living in poverty was 37.4%, higher than the national rural poverty rate of 30.2% (DANE, 2018). In addition, the GINI coefficient for land ownership distribution was 0,74, in 2020 (SIPRA, 2025).

On the other hand, the river-floodplains cover between 60 and 70% of the surface area of Puerto Wilches, being the wetlands their main ecosystems, in those wetlands there are populations of Manatee (*Trichechus manatus manatus*), whose populations are classified as vulnerable in the international conservation category.

In order to link the expansion of palm oil extractivism with the access to water as a resource and living entity, in this study we ask for how small-scale fisheries and peasants deal with this expansion in the municipality of Puerto Wilches. We will use qualitative and quantitative tools such as documentary and bibliographic secondary sources, statistic and geoprocessing data, and will use primary sources obtained from semi-structured interviews to fishermen and peasants.

As preliminary conclusions, it is suggested that palm oil extractivism in that municipality has changed the livelihoods of fisheries and peasants by reducing the access to wetlands, and reducing the connectivity of those wetlands and the ecological process of flood pulse, basic for the productivity and interactions of biota in those river-floodplains.

Palavras-chave: extractivism; palm oil; livelihoods; wetlands; puerto wilches (colombia).