



REEXAMINING GLOBAL DRUG ERADICATION POLICIES: A SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS OF THEIR ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIETAL EFFECTS IN MEXICO, COLOMBIA, AND AFGHANISTAN

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Since 1961, the U.N. Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs has continued to be the overarching treaty that has been followed and enforced, as a prohibitionist international drug control model. By conducting a systematic review of primary and secondary sources, this paper demonstrates how U.N. established drug control treaties and U.S. led drug crop eradication campaigns have overlooked the core elements that continue to fuel the global drug trade. This research evaluates U.S. led drug crop eradication initiatives that have been executed in Mexico, Colombia, and Afghanistan.

Existing discussions on this topic largely fall in either one of two camps. Western policymakers have argued that drug crop eradication initiatives are necessary in order to reduce the supply of drugs from reaching the global drug market. This type of supply-reduction approach, in theory, is intended to prevent narcotics from falling into the hands of drug organizations and/or drug users by eliminating drug crops at their source. On the contrary, researchers have argued that international drug policies have continued to be ineffective at combating the global drug trade, due to the enormous drug demand emanating from Western nations, especially the United States. In addition, researchers believe Western counter-narcotic efforts have been unproductive because they have overlooked the vicious cycles produced as a result of these eradication tactics; these drug crop eradication methods have led to a vicious cycle of deforestation, a loss of biodiversity, and a never-ending war on impoverished populations cultivating these drug crops for their very own economic survival.

The ecosystems and populations that are being negatively affected by outdated and ineffective global drug eradication policies have been the motivation behind this research. Alternative solutions for international drug control are needed. In an attempt to reformulate international and U.S. drug policy-oriented approaches, I have proposed some alternatives gathered by my research that could serve as a more viable international drug control model.

