



[Dialogue with the EESC Latin America Follow-Up Committee: Focus on The Gran Chaco](#)

24 February 2026, 14:30-18:00 (CET) EESC Conference room: JDE63

Context

The multi-actor platform [Redes Chaco](#) is currently implementing [Impacto Verde](#), an EU-supported initiative delivered through a consortium of six organisations from the Argentine chapter of the platform: Fundación Avina, Fundación Gran Chaco, Fundación ProYungas, Fundación Pronorte, Asociación Civil para el Desarrollo Integral (ACDI), and Asociación Franciscana Pata Pila.

The project aims to promote sustainable development in Argentina's Norte Grande region, with a particular focus on the Gran Chaco Americano. The project seeks to catalyse systemic change through three pillars: Innovation, Conservation, and Positioning. Under this last pillar, the project will roll out a series of visibility and outreach activities under the banner of The "Gran Chaco Week", to be presented in several European capitals starting in January 2026. In Brussels, the "Gran Chaco Week" will take place between 24 February and 3 March.

Dialogue with the EESC Latin America Follow-Up Committee

On 24 February 2026, Redes Chaco is collaborating with the EESC Latin America Follow-up Committee (Lafc) to host an afternoon of dialogue on key challenges and opportunities linking the Gran Chaco Americano with the EU-Latin America agenda, structured around three thematic discussions:

1. **The EU-Mercosur Agreement:** benefits for people and territories;
2. **Minerals for the green transition:** due diligence and responsible sourcing in the context of the Global Gateway Investment Strategy; and
3. **Climate-induced migration in the Gran Chaco:** preparedness and adaptation.

The aim is to position the Gran Chaco Americano within the EU-Latin America agenda through an EESC-hosted dialogue that connects policy priorities with concrete experiences from the territory.

The target audience includes policymakers, interest organisations and NGOs based in Brussels.

Thanks to the conference facilities and interpretation services (English, Spanish and Portuguese), we also expect virtual participation from across Latin America, particularly from the Redes Chaco platform in Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay.

1) The EU-Mercosur Agreement: benefits for people and territories

This discussion will examine how the EU-Mercosur Agreement can deliver tangible benefits for people and territories, boosting trade and investment for resilient local economies while supporting environmental protection and community well-being across EU-Latin America value chains.

Moderator: John Comer (*EESC Member; President of the LAFC*).

Speakers:

- **H.E. Fernando Iglesias** (*Ambassador of Argentina to the EU*)
- **Kristina Grutschreiber** (*Trade Affairs Officer - Coordinator of negotiations of the EU-Mercosur Association Agreement, TRADE.D.2 - Latin America and Caribbean*),
- **Josep Puxeu** (*EESC Member; Vice-Chair of the LAFC*),
- **Alejandro Brown** (*President and Executive Director, Fundación ProYungas*).

2) Minerals for the green transition: due diligence and responsible sourcing in the context of the Global Gateway Investment Agenda

With key EU sustainability requirements set to come into effect progressively over the coming years, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and the EU Batteries Regulation will increasingly shape critical mineral supply chains and are likely to have a tangible impact in Northern Argentina. They can set clearer, more consistent expectations, reduce compliance uncertainty and improve investment predictability, while strengthening due diligence on labour and stakeholder risks to support decent work and a long-term social licence to operate.

Moderator: *Josep Puxeu (EESC Member; Vice-Chair of the LAFC).*

Speakers:

- **Dumitru Fornea** (*EESC Member*)
- **Jim Stoopman** (*International Aid / Cooperation Officer, DG INTPA*)
- **Mariana Ahualli** (*Human Rights Officer, UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR)*)
- **Juan Gorriño** (*Principal Advisor, Operations in Latin America and Caribbean – Public Sector European Investment Bank*)
- **Alexandra Cardona** (*Executive Director, Argentine Chamber of Mining Companies*)

3) Climate-induced migration in the Gran Chaco Americano: preparedness and adaptation

This session will explore how climate and environmental impacts in the Gran Chaco Americano (droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, floods, ecosystem degradation) are influencing human mobility, and how preparedness and adaptation measures can help communities reduce risk and prevent displacement.

Moderator: Liliana Paniagua (*Executive Secretary, Redes Chaco*).

Speakers:

- **Milena Angelova** (*EESC Member*),
- **Susanne Melde, PhD** (*Global Thematic Specialist Climate Action, International Organization of Migration, Global Office in Brussels*)
- **Léa Monteillet** (*Project Manager, Latin America and the Caribbean Focal Point, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, ICMPD*)
- **Diego Bustamante** (*Founder, Asociación Franciscana Pata Pila*)

Side activities | EESC foyer, 6th floor

- **Photo Exposition – 23-26 February**
- **Immersive VR Experience – 24-25 February**

In addition to the debates, participants are invited to visit the **Photo Exposition** dedicated to the Gran Chaco region, on display throughout 23-26 February and experience the immersive “**Gran Chaco Americano 360°**” virtual exhibition, hosted at the EESC on 24-25 February. This interactive activity features VR headsets and engaging displays, offering a unique opportunity to explore the landscapes and cultures of the Gran Chaco in an innovative format.



VR HEADSET FORMAT

A single-user VR experience for Quest 2 & 3, inviting viewers to roam the monte (forest) and immerse themselves in its songs and legends.

File: .mp4 (H.265) / 8192x4096 / 30 fps, for installation on Oculus headsets

Audio: 3D binaural/ambisonic mix for true 360° spatial sound.

Interface: Intuitive, suitable for individual or guided use

