

JOHANNA ISMAN

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Website: <https://johannajoyobst.isman.fr/> ◊ Citizenship: German ◊ Birth name: Obst

RESEARCH FIELDS

PRIMARY: Environmental and resource economics, industrial organisation

SECONDARY: Development economics, applied microeconomics

REFERENCES

Emmanuelle Auriol — Toulouse School of Economics — emmanuelle.auriol@tse-fr.eu (main advisor)

Mathias Reynaert — Toulouse School of Economics — mathias.reynaert@tse-fr.eu

Stéphane Straub — World Bank — sstraub@worldbank.org

Eduardo Souza-Rodrigues — University of Toronto — e.souzarodrigues@utoronto.ca

EDUCATION

Toulouse School of Economics

Ph.D. in Economics 2019 - 2024 (expected)

M.Sc. in Economic Theory and Econometrics 2017 - 2019

Technische Universität Dresden

B.A. International Relations 2013 - 2017

TEACHING & WORK EXPERIENCE

Toulouse School of Economics 2020 - 2022

Teaching Assistant, Econometrics, graduate level, 1 semester

Teaching Assistant, Econometrics, undergraduate level, 2 semesters

Teaching Assistant, R programming, graduate level, 2 semesters

French Development Agency AFD / Toulouse School of Economics, 2019

Research assistant for Prof. Emmanuelle Auriol, Addis Ababa, 1 month

- Data assembly at the Ethiopian Development Research Institute

Toulouse School of Economics 2018

Research Assistant for Prof. Emmanuelle Auriol, 3 months

- Reviewed the literature & drafted briefings on quality assurance

Scaled Impact (South African not-for-profit company) 2017

Business Development Intern, Dresden, 3 months

- Economic & legal analyses to connect small-scale farmers with EU markets

Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development 2016 - 2017

Intern in the Middle East Unit, 3 months

- Drafted briefings & speeches for the minister

- Organized fora with diverse stakeholders

Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations 2016

Intern in the Political Department, 3 months

- Analyses of UN negotiations on Human Rights in Business & the Middle East

Hoffnung International e.V. 2012 - 2013

Volunteer, maternity hospital, Mokong / Cameroon, 7 months

ACADEMIC VISITS & SUMMER SCHOOLS

University of Toronto (4 months, Department of Economics) Sponsor: Pr. Eduardo Souza-Rodrigues	2023
Econometric Society, MIT (1 week, "Dynamic Structural Econometrics: Market Design")	2022
Columbia Alliance, Paris (1 week, "Innovations in Sustainable Development")	2022
University of Jordan (4 months, undergrad)	2016
Birzeit University (3 months, undergrad)	2015

WORKING PAPERS

Auditor leniency and participation in voluntary forest certification

(Job Market Paper. Previously circulated under the title "Firms' willingness to pay for certification leniency: Evidence from the global wood industry")

Abstract: Millions of firms seek voluntary certification to signal unobserved quality. This paper investigates how stricter enforcement of certification rules affects firms' participation and quality. I build an empirical model of voluntary certification in which firms choose between competing certifiers. Those certifiers audit quality for the same label with varying levels of rigor. Label owners enforce their rules by excluding excessively lenient certifiers. I estimate the model with novel web-scraped and survey data on the Forest Stewardship Council's (FSC) standard for sustainable wood production. I find considerable differences in certifiers' levels of rigor and show that forest managers are willing to pay substantially more for relatively lenient certifiers. Counterfactuals reveal that increasing certifiers' minimum level of rigor raises quality in certified forests but reduces participation. That leads to an Inverted "U-shaped" relationship between minimum rigor and aggregate quality in certified and uncertified forests. The results highlight a general limitation of voluntary certification. However, they also show FSC's scope to incentivize more compliance with its standard and, thus, more preservation of biodiversity and the carbon stock.

Presentations: Berlin School of Economics*; Universität Innsbruck*; BSE Workshop on Machine Learning and Energy Economics in Barcelona; EAERE 2023 in Limassol; University of Toronto; University of Mannheim; LSE Environment Week 2022; Environment for Development Annual Meeting 2022 (virtual); ENTER Jamboree 2022 in Barcelona; Assurance Services International; TSE workshops

*scheduled

The effect of accreditation regulation on the credibility of credence standards

Abstract: Voluntary certification can mitigate market inefficiencies due to asymmetric information if certifiers are credible. Many countries establish accreditation bodies to monitor and license them. This paper theoretically analyses how the establishment and regulation of accreditation bodies affect certifiers' incentives for fraud and welfare. I provide motivating evidence based on increased certification after the international recognition of the Uruguayan accreditation body. I then analyze public-perfect equilibria in an infinitely repeated game of a mass of buyers, a monopolist supplier, a monopolist auditing company, and one or more accreditation bodies. I show that a necessary condition for a welfare-improving effect of accreditation bodies' existence is that buyers are sufficiently sophisticated or that accreditation is compulsory. The model highlights that accreditation bodies should not be profit-maximizing companies whenever buyers are naive. It shows that developing and small economies should establish their own national accreditation body only if they cannot find a foreign accreditation body of sufficiently high quality and sufficiently low transportation cost. These results are broadly in line with international practice. However, the model also suggests that developing economies likely need even higher quality accreditation bodies than advanced economies.

WORK IN PROGRESS

What are the limits to private certification? Evidence from an attempt to protect intact forests (*joint with Kenneth Hounghbedji, Maria Plakhtieva and Liam Wren-Lewis*)

Abstract: Voluntary certification schemes encourage companies to adopt production technologies that benefit society positively. However, whether these schemes can motivate companies to reduce negative externalities by restricting production volume is uncertain. This paper studies the impact of modifications made to the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standard in 2014 that attempted that. Specifically, we analyse the effects of the requirement to preserve a minimum of 20% of forested areas in their natural state (called intact forest landscape or IFL) within certified forests. We study the effects on certification decisions and the conservation of IFL. To examine those, we link geographic information on forest concessions with remote sensing of the forest area, details about FSC certification, and audits in countries characterised by substantial areas of IFL. We use a difference-in-differences framework. Our findings reveal that in Russia, after the modification in the FSC standard, concessions with IFL were less inclined to get or remain FSC-certified compared to those lacking IFL. Additionally, we find indications that the change contributed to the conservation of IFL. However, the drivers behind these improvements remain elusive, as our study does not uncover reductions in tree cover loss within the IFL.

Presentations: FAERE 2023 in Montpellier; TSE workshop

Export taxes for development? Evidence from the Ethiopian leather industry (*joint with Berihu Assefa, Emmanuelle Auriol, Gaele Balineau, Nicolas Bonneton, Mulu Gebreeyesus and Kidanemariam Hailu*)

PRE-DOCTORAL PUBLICATION

Wirtschaftswachstum aufgeben? - Eine Analyse wachstumskritischer Argumente [A critical analysis of arguments of the degrowth movement], with Funke, Gressman, Mathé, Oberhaus, Roesti and Weishaar. *MCC Working Paper 1/2016. Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change.*

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Ph.D. student certification "EUR BioEco", Université Fédérale Toulouse Midi-Pyrénées	2021 - present
Ph.D. scholarship, TSE	2019 - present
German Academic Scholarship Foundation (Studienstiftung)	2013 - 2019
Konrad Adenauer Foundation	2013 - 2017

PROFESSIONAL & VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Mentoring and Organization, Women in Economics at TSE	2022 - 2023
Ph.D. student representative in the Pedagogical Council	2019 - 2021
Transparency International Germany	2019 - 2020

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Proficient: R (incl. web scraping and regex), Stata, RMarkdown, LaTeX, Git(hub), MS Office, Zotero
Basics: Python, QGIS, Julia, Matlab, SAS

LANGUAGES

German (*native*); English (*fluent*); French (*fluent*); Modern Standard and Levantine Arabic (*basic*)