Sustainability in multi-tier supply chains: Understanding double agency role & conflict mineral management

Abstract

In light of the growing complexity of globally dispersed, multi-tier supply chains, the involvement of first-tier suppliers has become instrumental in the quest for achieving sustainability compliance along the supply chain. We describe this new responsibility as the double agency role. We employ agency and institutional theory arguments to explore the conditions under which first-tier suppliers will act as agents who fulfill the lead firm's sustainability requirements (i.e., the primary agency role) and implement these requirements in their suppliers' operations (i.e., the secondary agency role). Based on this published work, the research talk will address the issue of conflict mineral management as a future research avenue, sharing preliminary findings of an ongoing case study.