

PRESS RELEASE

**Coffee Development Report unveils
income opportunities in coffee's circular
economy revolution**

8 November 2024, London, United Kingdom - The International Coffee Organization (ICO) has released its latest Coffee Development Report, [“Beyond Coffee: Towards a Circular Coffee Economy”](#), an in-depth exploration of the circular economy's potential within the coffee sector.

Co-created in partnership with International Trade Centre (ITC), Center for Circular Economy in Coffee (C4CEC), Lavazza Foundation, and Politecnico di Torino, with contributions from University College London, this flagship report combines new data, case studies, and policy recommendations aimed at integrating circular economy practices across the coffee value chain. This unique participatory process incorporates the perspectives of the members of the global multi-stakeholder working group of the ITC Coffee Guide Network: 62 experts in 36 countries throughout the global coffee sector, including small enterprises and institutions from coffee-growing regions.

The report reveals that coffee processing generates over 40 million tonnes of waste, creating challenges for sustainable management within the coffee value chain. However, this renewable biological material – including pulp, parchment, husk, and spent grounds – contains valuable compounds with cross-industry applications in health, packaging, and renewable energy. With 72% of by-products produced in coffee-growing regions, significant opportunities arise to transform this waste into value-added products for local use, regenerative agriculture, or export. Promising uses include cosmetics, mushroom cultivation, biochar, and nutrient-rich food products.

A circular economy is built on three main principles: eliminating waste and pollution, circulating products and materials at their highest value, and regenerating nature. By integrating these principles, the coffee industry can boost resource efficiency, improve incomes, and support climate action alongside healthier ecosystems.

The report provides policy recommendations for all coffee sector stakeholders, including engaging in pre-competitive research, collaborating with adjacent industries, standardizing regulations, fostering markets for innovative circular products, and driving investment, especially for MSMEs in coffee-growing countries. Small businesses can obtain new income and reduce waste by introducing circular economy practices at all stages in the global coffee industry.

The C4CEC, a pre-competitive platform promoting circular economy innovations, is committed to implementing these recommendations. As a global hub for best practices, practical information, and research, the C4CEC invites coffee sector organizations to join and further these solutions with

the support of strategic partners such as the ICO, other development partners and coffee stakeholders.

Join the upcoming launch webinar, [“Sector Recommendations for Circular Economy in Coffee: Insights from the Coffee Development Report 2022-23”](#), on Friday, 8 November, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. GMT, to explore actionable recommendations from coffee sector leaders.

ICO Executive Director Vanúzia Nogueira said: “We aim to challenge the outdated perception that coffee producers gain value solely from the coffee bean itself. I firmly believe that everyone in the coffee sector – coffee farmers, workers, industry stakeholders, and consumers – can play a crucial role in driving the shift toward a more sustainable and resilient industry. By repurposing “waste” into new products and alternative energy sources, we can unlock significant income possibilities and job opportunities while simultaneously lowering production costs. The International Coffee Organization is proud to be a founding member of the C4CEC. We encourage all coffee stakeholders to join this platform and work towards a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable coffee sector.”

ITC Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton said: “Small businesses in coffee-producing countries have the most to benefit from the circular economy model as it promotes bottom-up innovation and knowledge sharing, as well as sustainable and inclusive value chains, market access, and responsible business. We invite all coffee stakeholders to join this platform to advance circular economy.”

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Note to Editors

About the [International Coffee Organization](#) - The International Coffee Organization (ICO) is the only intergovernmental organization dedicated to enhancing the sustainability of the coffee sector for both exporting and importing countries. It serves as a high-level platform for public and private stakeholders, offering official statistics on coffee production, trade, and consumption. Additionally, the ICO facilitates the development and funding of technical cooperation projects and public-private partnerships, fostering collaboration to drive meaningful progress in the coffee industry. The ICO flagship publication, the Coffee Development Report (CDR), focuses periodically on specific themes of key relevance to the coffee sector.

About [Fondazione Giuseppe e Pericle Lavazza Onlus](#) – The Lavazza Group set up the non-profit Fondazione Giuseppe e Pericle Lavazza Onlus in 2004 to co-ordinate and implement social, environmental and economic sustainability projects in coffee-producing communities around the world. The foundation supports the autonomy of local communities by emphasizing the value of female workers, involving younger generations, encouraging good agricultural practices to improve crop yields and coffee quality, and promoting the use of technological tools to counter the effects of climate change. Since its inception, the non-profit has organized more than 50 projects across more than 20 countries and three continents in partnership with more than 60 public and private partners.

About [Politecnico di Torino](#) – The university was founded in 1906 and is internationally recognized as one of Europe’s leading universities for engineering and architecture studies. The university is a centre of excellence for education and research in engineering, architecture, design, and planning, working closely with the socio-economic system. As a comprehensive research university, Politecnico integrates education and research to create synergies that address the needs of the economy, the local community, and its students. Sys - Systemic Design Lab, part of Politecnico di Torino’s Department of Architecture and Design, develops methods and tools of Systemic Design aimed at environmental, social, and economic sustainability. By collaborating with public and private stakeholders both locally and internationally, the lab applies the systemic approach in three main areas: sustainable products, industrial innovation, and territorial enhancement.

About the International Trade Centre - The International Trade Centre is the joint agency of the [World Trade Organization](#) and the [United Nations](#). ITC assists small and medium-sized enterprises in developing and transition economies to become more competitive in global markets, thereby contributing to sustainable economic development within the frameworks of the Aid-for-Trade agenda and the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

About the [Center for Circular Economy in Coffee](#) (C4CEC) - The C4CEC is a precompetitive initiative established to accelerate the transition from linear to circular practices in the coffee sector. Established in Turin, Italy, as a non-profit organization, the Center was officially launched in September 2023 during the ICO 5th World Coffee Conference in Bangalore, India, and is supported by a global network of members. The Center serves as a platform to put circular economy into practice by piloting innovations, advancing research, and sharing best practices. Its web platform offers case studies, research, and practical information on applying circular economy principles across the coffee value chain, from farming to consumption and disposal.

For more information, visit www.intracen.org

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Media contacts

Angélica Salazar

Junior Communications Officer
International Coffee Organization

E: salazar@ico.org
press@ico.org

T: +44 20 7612 0621

Giulia Macola

International Trade Centre,
Alliances for Action

E: alliances@intracen.org
T: + 41 22 730 0626

Susanna Pak

Senior Strategic Communications
Officer

International Trade Centre
E: pak@intracen.org