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**Report on the 11th meeting of the Working
Group for the Entry into Force of the
International Coffee Agreement 2022**

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REPORT ON THE 11TH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COFFEE AGREEMENT 2022

1. The Working Group for the Entry into Force of the International Coffee Agreement 2022 (WGEF) met for the eleventh time on 19 February 2026. The Chair of the Group, Mr Tom Fabozzi of EU-Ireland, welcomed all participants and thanked delegates for their presence.

2. Representatives of the following Members were present online using the Zoom software: Angola, Brazil, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, European Union (including EU-Sweden), Honduras, India, Indonesia, Japan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and Togo.

Item 1: Draft agenda

3. The Chair introduced the draft Agenda, contained in document [WGEF-30/26](#).

4. The delegate of Brazil congratulated the Chair on the new role, expressing confidence in his leadership, and assuring the Brazilian delegation's full cooperation and support for the WGEF. He reiterated concerns previously raised to the Secretariat, stressing that delegations should be informed in advance about documents to be considered and that those should be circulated well before meetings. He noted that circulating agendas without the accompanying documents created unnecessary difficulties for both the Organization and delegations preparing for meetings and emphasized the need for greater transparency and preparedness through the timely provision of documents and proposals to Members. He regretted that, despite the period between the issuance of the agenda on 2 February and the meeting on 19 February, the documents for agenda item three had still not been circulated.

5. The Chair thanked the delegate of Brazil for his remarks, noting the Secretariat would take into account concerns on document distribution.

6. The agenda contained in document [WGEF-30/26](#) was adopted with no changes.

Item 2: Reports of the 8th, 9th, and 10th meetings of the Working Group

7. The Chair introduced the reports of the 8th, 9th, and 10th meetings of the WGEF, contained in documents [WGEF-25/24 Rev. 1](#), [WGEF-27/26](#), and [WGEF-29/26](#), respectively.

8. The delegate of Brazil recalled that document [ED-2468/24](#), circulated in August 2024 to Members, outlined Brazil's comprehensive position on possible formats for the ICA 2022 and the Board of Affiliate Members (BAM), including views on the number of participants and composition criteria. In particular, the document emphasized the importance of preserving the International Coffee Organization's key characteristic as an intergovernmental body bringing together

producing and importing countries. He recommended that document [ED-2468/24](#) be considered in the upcoming discussions on the ICA 2022.

9. The Chair thanked the delegate of Brazil, ensuring the document shared would be taken into account when the matter of the BAM was revisited.

10. The WGEF took note of the reports.

Item 3: List of documents to be drafted

11. After reminding Members that the WGEF's mandate was to draft all documents necessary for the entry into force of the ICA 2022 and its implementation, the Chair noted that, despite some progress, several documents still required review. He recalled that discussions on the Terms of Reference for the BAM had reached an impasse and suggested that the Secretariat provide context on the remaining documents to help the Group move forward. He further emphasized that, as Members continued to ratify the ICA 2022 and ratification was expected to be completed soon, those documents would need to be addressed promptly to ensure timely implementation.

12. The delegate of the European Union thanked the Chair for taking over the WGEF and noted that the European Council was expected to adopt the decision to sign the ICA 2022 soon. Following the signature, the EU would process the conclusion of the Agreement – equivalent to the ratification. He added that the ratification was expected to be finalized by the end of the year, and expressed hope that would give new impetus to the work of the WGEF. In response to the delegate of Brazil, he emphasized that the ICO's intergovernmental nature was being preserved and that the BAM did not represent an issue, as all decision-making authority remained with the Council.

13. The Chair thanked the delegate of the European Union for the updates on the membership process and invited the Chief Economist to present.

14. The Chief Economist introduced the document on conversion factors, noting that they were coefficients used to convert different coffee forms into their green coffee equivalent. He emphasized their technical nature, clarifying that they were not price or quality indicators, and highlighted their foundational role in the ICO's statistical and administrative framework to ensure comparability, consistency, and transparency of coffee data across Members. He recalled that the ICA 2022 introduced, for the first time, a conversion factor for premixed coffee, which required detailed market information and a clear statistical approach to convert it consistently given its widely varying content. He outlined a proposed methodology involving a targeted questionnaire to Members, consultation with the private sector, and bilateral consultations as needed, noting that the same approach had been applied in previous reviews. The Chief Economist concluded that the objective of the revision exercise was to review existing conversion factors for roasted, decaffeinated, liquid, and soluble coffee, review reporting practices, and develop a new factor

for premixed coffee, stressing that understanding product composition and coffee content was critical to ensuring the new factor's robustness and implementability.

15. The delegate of Brazil requested further information on the proposed review, including its purpose and the reasons for revising the statistical reference for all products. He also asked about the possible impact of the review on Members' financial contributions, particularly for coffee producing countries. Additionally, he expressed concern that no prior information had been provided and requested that the Secretariat circulate a detailed proposal outlining how the review would be conducted.

16. The Chair read out a comment sent by the delegate of El Salvador, who supported the concerns raised by the delegate of Brazil and requested clarification on where the research would be conducted and what its scope would be, noting that different coffee species and varieties had different yields and should therefore be considered in the analysis. He also emphasized that the work of national technical research institutes should be taken into account and that the review should reflect the true cost of coffee production, noting that the same conversion rate could not be applied between Arabicas and Robustas, or indeed even between different varieties.

17. In response to the delegate of Brazil, the Chief Economist explained that the review of coffee conversion factors was conducted periodically to reflect technological and market changes and ensure the accurate conversion of different coffee forms into green coffee equivalents. He noted that the review was recommended every three years and required under the ICA 2022. He added that the impact of the review on Members' financial contributions was likely to be limited and noted that the last actual change to conversion factors had occurred in 2011 for decaffeinated coffee, while the 2016 and 2019 reviews had maintained the existing factors.

18. The delegate of Papua New Guinea echoed the Chief Economist on the impact of the review on Members' financial contributions and emphasized that the issue of coffee conversion ratios was complex. He also noted that a conversion ratio for premixed coffee was needed due to varying coffee proportions in different brands, and that the current soluble coffee ratio, which had been used since the 1970s, might be outdated because of technological improvements. He stressed the importance of consulting widely with the coffee sector to ensure accurate and well-informed measures. Finally, he recommended that the Secretariat conduct a thorough, in-depth review of all conversion measures, recognizing that factors for roasted, decaffeinated, and liquid coffee were unlikely to change, but soluble and premixed coffee might require updated conversion ratios.

19. The delegate of Brazil asked the Chief Economist to outline which countries would be most affected by changes to coffee conversion ratios, noting that major exporters of soluble coffee— Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Indonesia, Thailand and Viet Nam, —would likely bear the greatest impact, while importing countries would be affected to a lesser extent. He also emphasized that changes to contributions were complex for Brazil, as they involved multiple government

ministries and had to be justified in the text of the international agreements themselves. He stressed that any discussion of adjusting contributions to an international organization should be approached with great care, given the involvement of public funds and the complexity of the process.

20. The delegate of the European Union requested that the Secretariat share relevant documentation, including any questionnaires, as soon as possible so consultations with the private sector and governments could begin promptly. He noted that the matter would be particularly important for the EU due to its 27 Member States and emphasized that the process would require time.

21. The Chair took note of Members' request and invited the Head of Finance and Administration to present.

22. The Head of Finance and Administration introduced the latest version of the ICO's Financial Rules and Financial Regulations, approved in 2011, noting that the Secretariat would begin a review process to reflect changes in the new International Coffee Agreement 2022—including project management and third-party funds—update outdated legal references, and incorporate any changes or suggestions from Members within the WGEF. She noted that benchmarking processes with other international organizations were ongoing and that, once finalized, the draft revision of the document would be submitted to the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) for recommendation to the Council.

23. Regarding ICO's Staff Rules and Regulations, the Head of Finance and Administration explained that the latest version had been approved in 2017 and informed Members that Secretariat could begin reviewing the existing rules and regulations, with input from Members within the WGEF. She noted that benchmarking processes with other international organizations were also ongoing and that the draft document would be submitted to the FAC for recommendation to the Council, and any proposed changes relating to staff entitlements would be communicated to the ICO Staff Committee prior to submission to the Council.

24. The Chair thanked the Head of Finance and Administration for her presentation, noting that discussions on some topics, such as staff rules, were also taking place within other commodity boards, and highlighted the complexity of these issues.

25. The delegate of the European Union noted that the Secretariat would submit drafts for the WGEF to review and propose amendments. He then highlighted the need to address potential gaps in the Staff Rules regarding conflict management and harassment, so that such cases would not automatically be escalated to the Council, and could be managed within the Organization where possible, using mediation, external consultants, or specialized agencies. He emphasized that this should be carefully considered in drafting the new Staff Rules and Regulations.

26. The delegate of Brazil asked the Head of Finance and Administration which resolutions or approved mandates had authorized the review of the Financial Rules and Regulations, and whether Members had agreed on the key updates identified for the ICA 2022. He highlighted that, given ongoing UN-wide reforms under the UN 80 programme—reducing expenses, staff, and mandates—clarification was needed on the purpose of the review and whether it aligned with efficient management and decision-making. He explained that the FAC currently had a space to deal with the 2026 administrative budget and emphasized that, in line with UN 80 reforms, the Organization should prepare to reduce expenses and workforce. Citing the example of the sister organization for sugar, which had cut its budget and eliminated staff positions, he stated that a similar approach was expected for the ICO. While the Secretariat was proposing updates to salary scales, countries were not prepared for an increase in contributions, and the delegate concluded that, without a mandate, the WGEF could not start discussions on these matters.

27. In response to the delegate of Brazil, the Secretariat shared on the screen document [ICC-135-4](#), which indicated that the International Coffee Council, taking into account the approval of the ICA 2022, had decided to establish a working group mandated to draft and review any applicable documents required for the entry into force of the above mentioned agreement.

28. The delegate of Brazil stressed the use of the adjective “required,” asking whether the ICA 2022 would be prevented from entering into force without the revision of the ICO’s Financial Rules and Regulations or the Staff Rules and Regulations, and noted that Brazil did not believe this to be the case.

29. The delegate of the European Union noted that, given the changes introduced by the ICA 2022, the one at hand was a valuable opportunity to review the rules. He emphasized that while such a review might not be mandatory, it was healthy for the Organization to examine and adapt its rules and procedures to a changing environment, and that previous rules could still be relied upon until the new Agreement entered into force.

30. The Chair acknowledged some ambiguity on the issue and stated that he would first confer with the Secretariat before returning to the WGEF with a proposal or, if necessary, referring the matter to the Council.

31. In addition to the documents presented by the Chief Economist and the Head of Finance and Administration, the Secretariat and External Relations Officer provided background information on three additional documents. She explained that the methodology for calculating votes and contributions was technical and reflected Council-approved changes, while the proposal for Members with increased contributions concerned transitional arrangements for certain exporting and developing Members impacted by the new relevant system for calculation of votes and contributions. Regarding the Rules of the Organization, she emphasized that the document covered the structure of the Organization and the Secretariat, the roles of the Chair and Vice-Chairs, the Executive Director, and staff, among others. However, revisions could only begin once decisions on pending topics such as the BAM and the Coffee Public-Private Working

Party were made. The Secretariat and External Relations Officer noted that a contextual revision would ensure that the Rules accurately reflected all decisions made by Members, and that the draft texts would be circulated for Members' consideration and feedback on both content and wording before being submitted to the Council for approval.

Item 4: Date of next meeting

32. The Chair proposed holding the next meeting the second half of April 2026.

33. The delegate of Brazil suggested that once the documents were circulated in all four languages, a period of at least six weeks should be allowed before setting the date of the next meeting. He noted that would address the concerns of all delegations and prevent Members from being surprised by an agenda that had not been shared in advance. The delegate emphasized that adequate time for review was necessary for informed responses and an effective debate, and reiterated that the six-week period was particularly important to allow consultation throughout the coffee chain in his country.

34. The delegate of the European Union stated that, while he agreed that some documents could have been received earlier, it was clear that the meeting had been primarily informational rather than decision-making, aimed at giving new impetus to the WGEF's work. He thanked the Secretariat and the Chair for holding the meeting and noted that, while he supported translations and the six-week review period proposed by the delegate of Brazil, the Terms of Reference had designated English as the WGEF's working language. He highlighted that, with the potential entry into force of the new Agreement later that year or early next year, it was timely and useful to update the rules and regulations governing the functioning of the ICO.

Item 5: Other business

35. With no further topics to address, the Chair thanked Members for their participation.