



**Report on the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Working  
Group for the Entry into force of the  
International Coffee Agreement 2022**

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1. The Working Group for the Entry into Force of the International Coffee Agreement 2022 met for the fifth time on 8 April 2024. The Executive Director of the Organization and the Chair of the Group, Mr Mick Wheeler of Papua New Guinea, welcomed all participants and thanked delegates for their presence.

2. Representatives of the following Members were present online using the Zoom software: Brazil, El Salvador, European Union (including EU-Italy, EU-Ireland, and EU-Sweden), Japan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Togo and Zimbabwe.

**Item 1: Adoption of the agenda**

3. The agenda contained in document [WGEF-14/24](#) was adopted.

**Item 2: Report of the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Working Group held on 11 March 2024**

4. The Chair presented the report of the previous meeting, contained in document [WGEF-13/24](#).

5. The WGEF took note of the report.

**Item 3: Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the Economics Committee**

6. The Head of Operations presented document [WGEF-15/24](#), noting that a comparison summarizing the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the different compositions considered for the Economics Committee had been drafted by the Secretariat, as requested by Members at the previous meeting.

7. The delegate of Japan thanked the Secretariat for preparing the document, noting that all their queries had been addressed. He also reiterated his country's preference for the fixed option and informed those present that his delegation would submit further comments on the proposed wording at a later date.

8. The delegate of the European Union echoed Japan's intervention and supported the fixed system, while stressing the need to revise the number of members proposed to ensure greater balance between exporting and importing Members. He also noted that he would share his final position on the question at hand with the Working Group following consultations with EU Member States.

9. The delegate of Brazil queried whether, within the open system, all Members of the Organization would be automatically considered members of the Committee or if all Members wanting to be part of the Committee could become a member.

10. In response to a query from the Chair, the delegate of the European Union pointed out that the 15 + 3 configuration of the current Joint Committee, as approved by the Council at its

136<sup>th</sup> Session, was to be intended as a temporary one. In this sense, he also noted that the 15 seats made available for exporting Members had not been filled to date and that the European Union would favour an 8 + 3 configuration for the sake of balance.

11. The delegate of Brazil informed Members that his delegation would need more time to share a final decision in this regard, as internal consultations were still taking place. He also added that the Brazilian delegation had noticed some differences between the ToRs of the Economics Committee and those of the former technical committees (now merged to form the Joint Committee). In this sense, he stated that a written request for clarifications would be submitted to the Secretariat.

12. The Chair noted that while discussions remained open, there seemed to be an emerging preference for the fixed option. He suggested that the Working Group focus on how to constitute the fixed system and that it resume discussions on the topic at the following meeting, taking into account the number of seats for each group and the effective nominations received to date for the Joint Committee.

**Item 4: Participation of non-governmental stakeholders in the activities of the Organization**

13. The Head of Operations informed Members that, as requested at the previous WGEF meeting, the Secretariat had contacted the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to obtain further details on the participation of non-governmental stakeholders in their activities (paragraph 18, [WGEF 13/24](#)), but feedback from both organizations was still pending.

14. He then shared details about the eligibility criteria for participation of non-governmental organizations in the activities of the United Nations, as well the exclusionary criteria applicable to the admission of non-governmental organizations in the UN Global Compact.

15. The Chair invited Members to consider whether they wanted to limit the participation of non-governmental organizations in the Board of Affiliate Members (BAM) through the definition of eligibility criteria. He also encouraged Members to consider whether they wanted to foresee a balance:

- (a) Between entities from exporting and importing countries, to maintain geographical representation;
- (b) Between private sector entities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and
- (c) Among different private sector entities based on their size.

16. The delegate of Brazil informed Members that his delegation had held discussions with the delegate of India regarding the country's proposal, noting that the only point of concern was the submission of a project as one of the eligibility criteria to become an affiliate member. He

mentioned that several associations would struggle to comply given that their major focus was not the implementation of projects, thus resulting in their exclusion from the BAM despite their potential to contribute to discussions. He then noted that Brazil would submit their position on geographical representation as soon as consultations were complete.

17. In response to a query from Brazil, the delegate of the EU-Italy noted that it was his understanding that the BAM was intended to be more inclusive than the Private Sector Consultative Board. For this reason, he suggested that inclusive rules and procedures be adopted to incentivize broader participation in the activities of the Organization.

18. While in agreement with the need to encourage participation, the Chair noted that some eligibility criteria should be stricter so as to prevent the participation of entities with the sole intention of advancing their own agenda. He also suggested that the notion of inclusiveness be limited to the coffee industry.

19. The delegate of the Philippines stressed the importance of including micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) as they represented a key segment of the coffee sector, with several common challenges to address.

20. Addressing a question from the Chair, the Head of Operations noted that the BAM was conceived to give voice to every coffee stakeholder, taking into account that the private sector was already actively participating in the activities of the Coffee Public-Private Task Force (CPPTF) but that smaller entities such as MSMEs and farmers did not have a seat at the table.

21. With reference to the eligibility criteria contained in the proposal submitted by India ([WGFE-11/24](#)), the delegate of the European Union noted that further discussion was needed on how to determine whether applicants had at least a sound financial base. He also stressed that it could be contradictory for non-governmental organizations to require endorsement by an ICO Member government in order to become an affiliate member.

22. The Executive Director invited Members to consider whether independent auditors' reports could be accepted as a possible way to certify an entity's financial stability, rather than identifying set criteria to determine their strong or sound financial base.

23. The Chair welcomed the proposal by the Executive Director and took note of wording suggestions put forward by Brazil, El Salvador, the European Union, and the Philippines. He also noted that several Members agreed on the need to refer to a "declaration" or "statement" with details on the applicant's intention to promote one or more objectives of the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) 2022 rather than a "project".

24. With reference to the verification of compliance, the Chair encouraged Members to share their views on whether the Secretariat or a dedicated committee of ICO Members should be in charge of checking whether all eligibility criteria were met. In this sense, there was a common

understanding that the Secretariat could assist with the verification process, but that the final decision was to be made by the Council, as foreseen by the ICA 2022.

25. The Chair asked Members to consider and express their opinion, also in writing, on: (i) the modalities and frequency of the review of the affiliate member status; (ii) possible ways to assess possible conflicts of interest between the activities of an affiliate member and the objectives of the ICO; and (iii) criteria for the suspension of affiliate member status.

26. Concerning the assessment of potential conflicts of interest, the delegate of the EU-Italy noted that a legal act such as a sworn affidavit could serve as a formal commitment by the affiliate member to adhere and contribute to the objectives of the Organization.

27. On the same matter, the delegate of the European Union noted that, in the context of the activities of the BAM, it could be overzealous to add the presence of "conflicts of interest" among the exclusionary criteria.

28. With reference to the proposal from the delegate of the EU-Italy, the Head of Operations suggested that failure to comply with the affidavit signed by the affiliate member could result in its suspension.

29. The Chair, the Vice-Chair and the delegate of Brazil noted that the structure of the contributions system for the BAM was not a priority and agreed to postpone any such discussions in order to focus on the other elements of the proposal submitted by India.

30. Within the context of the relationship between the BAM and the Coffee Public-Private Working Party, the Head of Operations provided clarifications on the membership of the current CPPTF, as well as details on its system of contributions.

31. The Chair requested that the Secretariat consider the questions at hand and provide feedback at the next meeting of the Working Group. He also asked the Secretariat to prepare a draft text for the ToRs of the BAM based on the proposal by India and reflecting discussions held.

**Item 5: Date of next meeting**

32. The dates of future meetings were shared on screen for Members' reference, with the following meeting having been scheduled for 13 May 2024.

**Item 6: Other business**

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