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Memorandum of Understanding between the International Coffee Organization and the Inter-African Coffee Organisation, African Union Specialized Agency for Coffee

Background

1. This document contains a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the International Coffee Organization (ICO) and the Inter-African Coffee Organisation, African Union Specialized Agency for Coffee (IACO-AU).

2. By way of this MoU, the ICO and IACO-AU aim to establish a strategic partnership and strengthen the African coffee value chain by enhancing data systems, ensuring regulatory compliance, building climate resilience, and developing institutional capacity through joint research, knowledge sharing, and coordinated advocacy.

3. The draft MoU was originally circulated as WP-Council 356/26 and approved by the Council during its 141st Session, held on 25 and 26 March 2026.

Memorandum of Understanding

between

The International Coffee Organization (ICO)

and

The Inter-African Coffee Organisation, African Union Specialized Agency for Coffee (IACO-AU)

WHEREAS The International Coffee Organization (hereinafter referred to as the "ICO") is the main intergovernmental organization for coffee, established in London in 1963 under the auspices of the United Nations, bringing together exporting and importing governments at the global level to tackle the challenges facing the world coffee sector through international cooperation.

WHEREAS the ICO's mission is to strengthen the global coffee sector and promote its sustainable expansion in a market-based environment for the betterment of all participants in the coffee sector, given the great economic importance of coffee.

WHEREAS the ICO provides a unique forum for dialogue among governments, the private sector, development partners, civil society and all coffee stakeholders to address challenges and foster opportunities for the world coffee sector, and has set up the Coffee Public-Private Task Force (CPPTF), a partnership model where leading private sector companies, organizations and ICO Member governments work together to build consensus on priority issues and take joint actions.

WHEREAS the ICO collects and compiles independent official statistics on coffee production, trade and consumption, supports the development and funding of technical cooperation projects and public-private partnerships, and promotes sustainability and coffee consumption.

WHEREAS the Inter-African Coffee Organisation, African Union Specialized Agency for Coffee (hereinafter referred to as "IACO-AU"), created in 1960, with headquarters in Abidjan, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, is an intergovernmental organization responsible for coffee policy and development in Africa.

WHEREAS ICO and IACO-AU (hereinafter referred to individually as a "Party" and collectively as the "Parties") have a history of collaboration and wish to establish a structured framework to enhance their partnership for greater impact.

NOW, THEREFORE, the ICO and IACO-AU declare their intention to cooperate as follows:

Article 1
PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as “MoU”) is to establish a strategic partnership between the ICO and IACO-AU. This collaboration aims to strengthen the African coffee value chain by enhancing data systems, ensuring regulatory compliance, building climate resilience, and developing institutional capacity through joint research, knowledge sharing, and coordinated advocacy.

Article 2
AREAS OF COOPERATION

Subject to the availability of funds, the Parties’ respective strategic frameworks and priorities, and without prejudice to the necessary approvals required pursuant to the Parties’ internal regulations and rules in effect at the time of the planned implementation, the Parties agree to collaborate in the following areas to strengthen the coffee sector in Africa:

1. **Data collection and analysis**

   The Parties shall collaborate to strengthen data collection, management, and analysis in the African coffee sector. This may include, but is not limited to:

   a) Organizing joint activities and workshops to enhance the capacity of African ICO Members regarding data collection, analysis, and the use of statistics for informed decision-making.

   b) Jointly promoting and monitoring the timely and accurate submission of data by African ICO Members, in compliance with the ICO’s Rules and Regulations on Statistics and other relevant ICO documents.

   c) Developing platforms dedicated specifically to African coffee data to improve the accessibility, visibility, and harmonization of information.

   d) Enabling IACO to access African coffee data in a relevant and timely manner, while maintaining the ICO’s role in aggregating and balancing global statistics and ensuring the integrity of mirrored datasets.

2. **Compliance with the global coffee regulatory framework, with a specific focus on the European Union Regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR)**

   The Parties shall work together to disseminate information and provide guidance on the EUDR and other regulations affecting African coffee-producing countries through the implementation of the following activities, among others:

   a) Collaborating with the Team Europe Initiative (TEI) and the Team Africa Coffee Initiative (TACI-IACO) on the implementation of EUDR.

b) Developing practical ICO-IACO guidelines for voluntary adoption by Members to support compliance with the EUDR, as well as collaborating on the joint monitoring of EUDR implementation.

3. Research on the resilience of coffee production, including genetics

The Parties agree to collaborate under the research pillar of the Advancing Climate-resilience and Transformation in African Coffee (ACT) Programme to strengthen evidence-based, climate-resilient practices, and knowledge sharing by:

a) Jointly supporting the development of harmonized data systems, co-branded knowledge products, and policy-relevant research, ensuring alignment with international standards while reinforcing African ownership and institutional capacity.

b) Mobilizing funds to support research in ICO and IACO member states.

c) Supporting circular economy initiatives.

4. Capacity building and skills development

The Parties will work together to support capacity building and promote quality improvement in coffee production through educational programmes by:

a) Mobilizing stakeholders for and providing assistance with the planning and implementation of programmes across the African coffee value chain.

b) Facilitating access to finance for training and capacity-building initiatives.

c) Supporting the exchange of learnings, models, and best practices for improving coffee quality across African countries.

d) Collaborating in any training programmes in IACO-AU member states (e.g: CQI, SCA.)

5. Institutional cooperation

The Parties will collaborate to strengthen their respective institutional roles at the global (ICO) and regional African (IACO-AU) levels by:

a) Enhancing the exchange of experiences and best practices in governance, strategic planning, and organizational development, in a manner that reflects the ICO's global mandate and the IACO-AU's regional coordination role within Africa.

b) Leveraging the complementary recognition and relationships of both Parties with global and regional organizations and institutions such as the European Union, the African Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the African Development Bank to jointly strengthen their visibility and influence, integrate African priorities within global discussions, bring regional perspectives into global processes, and support initiatives that benefit from coordinated regional and international engagement.

c) Promoting knowledge sharing and cross-regional learning through facilitating the exchange of lessons from experiences in regional and global policies and finance to support evidence-based policymaking and sector development.

Article 3
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOU

1. The Parties shall make the necessary arrangements to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the MoU.

2. The Parties shall develop an annual action plan for each of the cooperation areas identified in Article 2, specifying the expected results, in alignment with their own strategic plans and capacities.

3. The Parties agree to communicate on a regular basis to exchange views and report on accomplishments regarding this MoU. To support the implementation of the MoU and to strengthen the partnership, communications may include, but are not limited to, annual strategic dialogues to review progress on the partnership and offer a space to share learnings, trends, and strategic thinking.

4. The Parties shall regularly monitor and review their activities under this MoU, and evaluate the results of programmes implemented in order to ascertain whether the objectives have been met. This will enable them to formulate recommendations with a view to improving future cooperation and activities. Work plans, performance indicators and outputs will be agreed specifically for each project.

Article 4
USE OF NAME AND LOGO

The Parties agree not to use the other Party's name or logo in any press release, memo, report, or other published disclosure related to this MoU without the prior written consent of the Party concerned.

Article 5
CONFIDENTIALITY

1. It is acknowledged that each Party may possess confidential information, including personal data, which is proprietary to it or to third parties collaborating with it. Any information provided by one Party (the "Disclosing Party") to the other Party (the "Receiving Party") in the context of this MoU shall be treated by the Receiving Party as confidential and shall only be used by the Receiving Party for the purpose for which it was provided.

2. The Receiving Party shall take all reasonable measures to keep the information referred to in paragraph 1 above confidential and shall only use the information for the purpose for which it was provided. The Receiving Party shall ensure that any persons having access to said information shall be made aware of and be bound by the obligations of the Receiving Party hereunder.

3. Notwithstanding the foregoing, there shall be no obligation of confidentiality or restriction on use where: (i) the information is publicly available, or becomes publicly available otherwise than by action of the Receiving Party; or (ii) the information was already known to the Receiving Party (as evidenced by its written records) prior to its receipt; or (iii) the information was received from a third party not in breach of an obligation of confidentiality owed to the Disclosing Party; or (iv) the Disclosing Party has given its written consent to disclosure to the Receiving Party.

Article 6
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Intellectual property rights, in particular copyright, in material such as information, software and designs, made available by either of the Parties to be used to carry out activities under this MoU shall remain with the originating Party. Appropriate authorizations for use of such materials by the other Party will be provided in writing by the other Party.

Article 7
DURATION AND TERMINATION

1. This MoU shall enter into force on the date of its signature and shall remain in effect for a period of two (2) years. It may be renewed for additional periods of two (2) years, upon mutual agreement of the Parties six (6) months prior to the expiry of this MoU.

2. This MoU may be terminated, in whole or in part, by written notification from either Party. Termination shall take effect sixty (60) days after the date of such notification.

3. This MoU may be amended by mutual written consent of the duly authorized representatives of the Parties.

ARTICLE 8
FINAL PROVISIONS

In witness whereof, the undersigned, being duly authorized to this effect, have signed this MoU in two (2) originals in English.

For and on behalf of the International Coffee Organization (ICO): **Dr Vanúsia Nogueira** **Executive Director, ICO** Place: ________________ Date:________________	For and on behalf of the Inter-African Coffee Organisation, African Union Specialized Agency for Coffee (IACO-AU): **H.E. Amb. Solomon S. RUTEGA** **Secretary General, IACO-AU** Place: ________________ Date: ________________