



**INTERNATIONAL
COFFEE
ORGANIZATION**

ICC 142-4

18 September 2026
Original: English

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International Coffee Council
142nd session
28-30 September 2026
Geneva, Switzerland

**Proposals for ICO initiatives for inclusion in
the Programme of Activities –
Recommendation from the Joint Committee**

Background

1. The Joint Committee has reviewed the proposals for ICO initiatives submitted by Members for possible inclusion in the Programme of Activities for coffee year 2026/27. A total of 21 proposals were received from Members, as presented in document [ED-2505/26](#).
2. At its 7th meeting, held on 5 August 2026, the Joint Committee agreed on a methodology for their evaluation, based on the following criteria:
 - (a) Strategic relevance and expected practical impact;
 - (b) Collective relevance and potential for replication; and
 - (c) ICO added value.
3. Following the meeting, Members were invited to assess the proposals using the agreed methodology. Nine Members submitted responses. The consolidated results of this process are presented in document [JC-34/26](#). As previously agreed by the Joint Committee, the results were intended to inform its deliberations. The ranking did not constitute an automatic basis for selection.
4. At its 8th meeting, held on 25 August 2026, the Joint Committee reviewed the results of the evaluation of proposals. This resulted in the following recommendations to the Council.

Outcome of the evaluation

5. The Joint Committee agreed to recommend that the Council approve the following five highest-ranked proposals for inclusion in the Programme of Activities:
 - (a) Validation of low-risk coffee farming for deforestation regulation frameworks;

- (b) Preservation of water resources for coffee growing: the example of the Brazilian 'WATER-PRODUCING COFFEE' programme for other producing countries;
- (c) Inventory of good practices in coffee storage and gains for coffee farmers;
- (d) Tariff and non-tariff barriers to coffee trade: new challenges; and
- (e) New by-products of coffee cultivation: additional ways to increase coffee farmers' incomes.

Financial considerations

6. An amount of £30,000 has been included in the proposed Programme of Activities for 2026/27 for the implementation of Member-led initiatives, which is still under discussion within the Finance and Administration Committee. The Joint Committee agreed that this amount could be allocated flexibly among the five selected initiatives.

7. The total cost of implementing the five initiatives may exceed the £30,000 available under the Programme of Activities. The Secretariat would therefore seek additional financial or in-kind support from appropriate partners, where necessary. The approach envisaged would not require additional contributions from Members or an increase in the ICO Administrative Budget for financial year 2026/27.

Implementation arrangements

8. The Joint Committee recognized that the five initiatives might not all be implemented simultaneously or completed within coffee year 2026/27. Their implementation might be phased and, where necessary, continue into subsequent coffee years, depending on their scope, the availability of technical and financial partners, and the Secretariat's capacity. Any activities and expenditure extending into subsequent coffee years would be reflected, as appropriate, in the relevant Programme of Activities and Administrative Budget.

9. In case of approval by the Council, the Secretariat would further develop the scope, resource requirements, potential partners and proposed timetable for each initiative. These elements would be presented to the Joint Committee for further consideration at a subsequent meeting, expected to take place in January 2027. The Joint Committee would subsequently monitor progress on the implementation of the initiatives, in accordance with the procedures for the submission and evaluation of proposals for ICO initiatives (document [JC-13/25 Rev. 2](#)).

10. The Joint Committee agreed that the Secretariat could draw on external technical expertise and establish partnerships, as required, to ensure that the resulting outputs are authoritative, relevant and of high quality.

11. The Committee emphasized the importance of involving Members, particularly those that submitted the selected proposals, as well as relevant institutions in producing countries, in any further design and/or implementation process. Such participation would contribute technical knowledge, reflect different national circumstances and strengthen Members' ownership of the final outputs.

Recommendation

12. The Joint Committee recommends that the Council:

- (a) Approve the five initiatives listed in paragraph 5 for inclusion in the Programme of Activities;
- (b) Authorize the Secretariat to develop and implement the initiatives with the operational flexibility described in paragraphs 6 to 10, including through external expertise, partnerships, co-financing and phased implementation; and
- (c) Request the Secretariat to prepare a detailed description and implementation plan for each approved initiative, and request the Joint Committee to convene to appraise, review and approve the plans submitted by the Secretariat, in accordance with the procedures for the submission and evaluation of proposals for ICO initiatives (document [JC-13/25 Rev. 2](#)).