

Mission report

Subject	World Trade Organization (WTO) World Trade & Tech Day
Place and dates	Geneva, Switzerland, on 14 September 2026.
ICO staff member	Vanúsia Nogueira, Executive Director
Purpose of travel	To participate in the roundtable: “From Farm to Cup: IP and Frontier Technologies Powering the Coffee Value Chain”
Five-Year Action Plan/Programme of Activities relevance	Five-Year Action Plan: Strategic Goal III: Facilitating the development of projects and promotion programmes through public-private partnerships Results and Deliverables from the PoA: - III.A.3 Advocacy for the promotion of cooperation with bilateral, regional & multilateral development agencies and donors with a focus on regulatory framework and sustainability and resilience of the coffee sector

OVERVIEW

- The World Trade and Tech Day was held at the WTO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, on 13 September 2026. It assembled industries leaders, policymakers, and experts under the theme “AI and Trade: Turning Potential into Progress”.
- Featuring a full day of panel-led insights and collaborative learning, the event promoted discussions on how AI and cutting-edge innovations are reshaping economies, industries and daily life. Participants explored how these developing tools drive efficiencies in international trade and mobilize both governments and the private sector to turn AI’s potential into measurable economic value and shared prosperity.
- The discussions focused on how technological innovation can strengthen the future of coffee production. As one of the world’s most traded commodities, coffee illustrates how origin, branding, intellectual property (IP), and emerging technologies create value across global supply chains. Advances such as climate-resilient coffee varieties, AI-enabled quality control and roasting, digital traceability, and data-driven assessment are improving productivity, transparency, resilience, and consumer trust.
- The Executive Director joined the panel of experts to deliver an authoritative, fact-based assessment in the roundtable “From Farm to Cup: IP and Frontier Technologies Powering the

Coffee Value Chain”. Moderated by Ms Tanuja Garde, Director of the Intellectual Property, Government Procurement and Competition Division of the WTO Secretariat, the panel also featured interventions from Ms María Alejandra Olano, Senior Coffee Trader, Colombian Coffee Growers' Federation; Mr Alan Lai, CEO, ProfilePrint; and Mr Andrew Tolley, President, Specialty Coffee Association.

CONCLUSIONS/MAIN OUTCOME

1. The Executive Director highlighted the increasing challenges facing coffee farmers, including rising costs and climate risks, and emphasized the role of intellectual property (IP) and technology in managing risk, protecting value, and building resilience. She noted that specialty coffee creates value through quality, origin, and producer identity, with IP helping to protect and market these attributes, but stressed that farmers must share in the ownership, governance, and premiums generated.
2. She underscored how IP tools, such as patents, plant variety protection, and licensing, can expand access to climate-resilient crops and digital services, provided they are affordable, locally adapted, and supported by training and education. She also highlighted AI's potential to strengthen traceability, quality assurance, and farm decision-making, while stressing the need for strong data governance, farmer control over data, and human oversight of automated decisions.
3. Finally, the Executive Director emphasized the importance of education and shared responsibility across the sector. She reaffirmed the ICO's role in promoting fair licensing, equitable access to technology, and benefit sharing, and reiterated that success should be measured by improved farmer resilience, incomes, market access, and bargaining power, with IP helping producers to create, protect, and retain value at origin.

AOB

N/A