INTERNATIONAL COFFEE ORGANIZATION

MR – 37/26

Mission report

Subject	Specialty Coffee Association Leadership Convening
Place and dates	Modena, Italy – 23 to 24 September 2026
ICO staff member	• Vanúsia Nogueira, Executive Director
Purpose of travel	• To attend the SCA Leadership Convening and Working Session
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:** • I.B.7 Monitoring and assessing new regulations, standards and other stress factors affecting the coffee sector, engaging with regulators and coffee producers • III.A.5 Providing advisory services and cooperation with IGOs, private sector, civil society/academia

OVERVIEW

1. The Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) welcomed the International Coffee Organization (ICO) and industry leaders to the SCA Leadership Convening, held at Casa Maria Luigia, Modena, Italy, from 23 to 24 September 2026.

2. The event focused on a foundational question, "Will coffee's next era of value emerge from the industry or from a new generation of consumers who simply won't wait?", and set the stage for a broader dialogue about the future of the specialty coffee category. Participants were invited to reconsider the place coffee occupies in people's lives and to discuss its potential for value creation, as well as boundaries and challenges, and how its future will be shaped.

3. The dialogue sought to challenge established assumptions and bring in new ideas and perspectives, including atypical ones as key drivers of value. Participants were encouraged to elevate their strategic thinking and embrace alternative angles on specialty coffee, an industry in which all invitees were key stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS/MAIN OUTCOMES

1. Praised for her continued insights and perspectives on the sector, which together with SCA's own research helped frame the strategic concepts and ideas steering the discussions, the Executive Director provided fact-based insights on how a successful healthy and productive coffee sector is defined by its ability to generate sustainable economic value, quality harvest and continuous innovation, while maintaining financial stability and fairness for all actors.

2. The material presented was also used to prepare a report entitled "Coffee's consumer futures" which the Chief Executive Officer of the SCA, Mr Yannis Apostolopoulos, presented during the 142nd Session of the International Coffee Council, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 28 to 30 September 2026. For further details, please see paragraph 106 of document ICC-142-14 (*Decisions and Resolutions adopted at the 142nd Session of the International Coffee Council*).

AOB

N/A