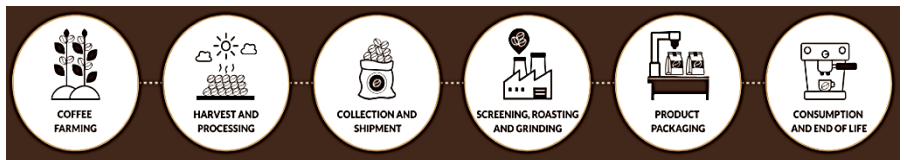


INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN COFFEE LAUNCHED IN ITALY

June 2026

[The Center for Circular Economy in Coffee](#) is a global pre-competitive platform designed to enhance and nurture circular economy principles and practices within the coffee sector.

The Center and its global pre-competitive platform were launched during the World Coffee Conference (WCC 2023), organized by the [International Coffee Organization \(ICO\)](#) and held in Bangalore, India, in September 2023. Held for the first time in Asia, WCC 2023 focused the debate on circularity and was entitled “*Sustainability through circular economy and regenerative agriculture*”.



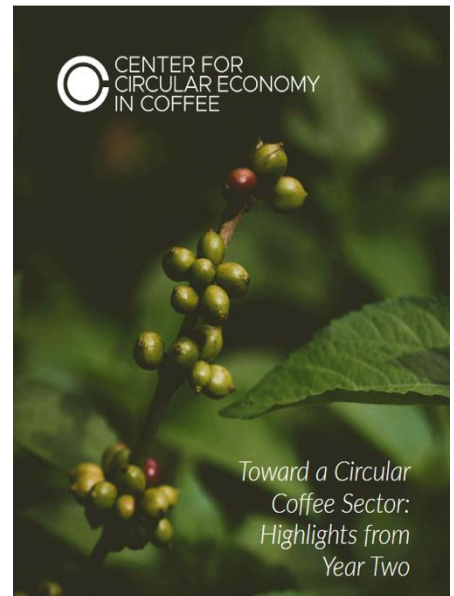
The Center was established in Turin (Italy) in 2023 by the [Lavazza Foundation](#), the [Politecnico di Torino](#), and the [University of Gastronomic Sciences \(Pollenzo\)](#), with the support of the [International Coffee Organization \(ICO\)](#), the [International Trade Centre \(ITC\)](#) and the [United Nations Industrial Development Organization \(UNIDO\)](#).

The Center's challenge is that only 1% to 5% of the original coffee cherry ends up in the consumer's cup. This leaves behind a massive amount of underutilized biomass and bioactive compounds during farming, processing, roasting, and consumption. This highlights a missed opportunity for both value creation and waste reduction.

[The website highlights that The global coffee industry generates more than 39 million tons of by-products from processing each year.](#) Coffee by-products have unique bioactive compounds with potential applications in multiple sectors, from health and wellness to regenerative agriculture and packaging. This presents an enormous opportunity to open new markets, regenerate soil health, and create added value at origin through sustainable innovations, using coffee by-products that otherwise go to waste. The website presents data that highlight the impact of the coffee industry worldwide:

- 12+ million farms operate on 10.6 million hectares worldwide;
- 10+ million tons/year of coffee are produced;
- 3+ billion cups of coffee per day are consumed: Europe 24%, the US 16%, Brazil 13%;
- 39 million tons/year of biomass are generated.

Starting in 2023, the Center for Circular Economy in Coffee C4CEC [has grown into a network of 77 members](#) and 3 strategic partners across 31



countries. Forty-four percent of members are from the Global South, with 41% based in Europe and 12% in North America. Sixty percent of the members are SMEs, with NGOs and public and academic institutions each comprising around 20%.

The Center for Circular Economy in Coffee (C4CEC) aims to serve as a key reference point in the transition towards a circular model in the coffee sector, where the concept of waste no longer exists, and new profitability models are created. The Center's mission is to provide a platform that accelerates the transition to a circular economy in the coffee sector by fostering collaboration, enabling knowledge sharing, and advocating for circular initiatives. The Center brings together local producer communities, roasters, associations, institutions, research centers, and academia to drive collective action.

The activities of the Center are focused on the following priorities:

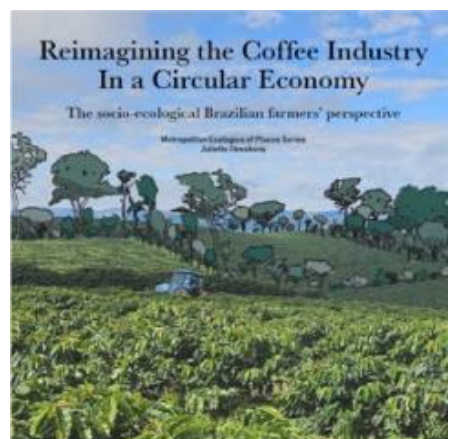
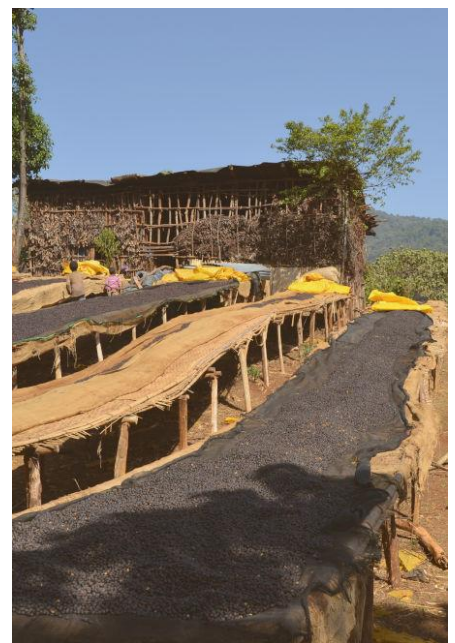
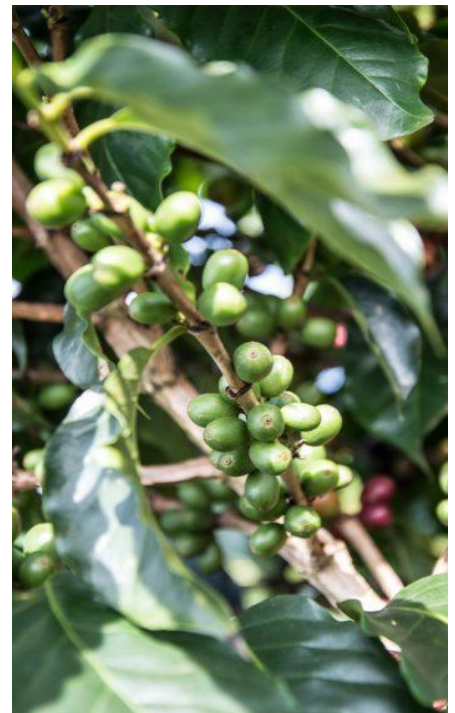
- Promote circular economy culture and knowledge. Develop courses, technical guides, trainings, and practical information on implementing circular economy throughout the coffee sector supported by research. Serve as a hub for current and valuable resources on circular economy in coffee.
- Collect and share good practices. Build a multi-stakeholder knowledge sharing network to develop and disseminate evidence-based good practices in the coffee sector. The featured practices will be approved by the Scientific Board.
- Pilot projects research. Support members in circular project or research concept development. Connect members to foster opportunities for collaboration, pilot projects, and funding.

The Center aims to make know-how related to circularity in the coffee sector accessible to a diverse group of stakeholders: companies, associations, universities, institutions, and small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as local communities and other coffee stakeholders. The Center is open to all players in the coffee sector:

- Coffee farmers and producer organizations, enabling them to learn, develop, and pilot circular innovations to build more resilient, sustainable, and profitable businesses.
- Coffee sector companies, enabling them to improve, implement, and share circular initiatives with support from a scientific network and connections with a global network of like-minded organizations.
- The public sector and academia, enabling them to collaborate, share knowledge, propose new initiatives, and conduct research with a global multi-stakeholder network.

The 2025 Summary Booklet, *The sustainable future of coffee: a year with the Center for Circular Economy in Coffee*, offers an in-depth look at the actions, achievements, and collaborations that have shaped the mission towards a more sustainable coffee supply chain. The Booklet also presents interesting data for circular economy in Coffee, for example on the harvesting and processing of coffee pulp, on coffee mucilage and coffee husk, as well as data on silver skin and data behind spent coffee grounds.

The Mapping Good Practices section of the website presents the coffee value chain with Circular Economy good practices, solutions, and case studies. This initiative has already mapped 30 existing best practices in the coffee supply chain and it is an ever-evolving resource designed to highlight and promote sustainable and circular approaches in the coffee sector. The page allows users to select the six principal outputs and tags



of interest and discover circular economy good practices in the coffee value chain. [The Good Practices presented in the Value Chain Area Consumption and end of life - From grounds to textiles: the fashion revolution](#) are an example of the good solutions promoted. It is an ever-evolving map, aimed at showcasing and encouraging sustainable and circular approaches from coffee farming to consumption and end of life. [The Center invites all interested actors to contribute to the Good Practices Mapping by sending their solutions that support circularity across the coffee value chain.](#)

Adopting circular practices is essential for agribusinesses seeking to minimize or eliminate waste, enhance resource efficiency, and create value-added opportunities. The scale of current food systems presents opportunities for new products and uses for current waste streams, further driving economic opportunity through environmentally sound practices. As territories, communities, and industries embrace these principles and the potential for positive environmental, cultural, educational, and economic outcomes expands exponentially.

[The website's Blog also presents stories showing](#) how coffee waste is being repurposed into new opportunities, from turning coffee husks into biodegradable materials to using coffee pulp in food and incorporating spent coffee grounds into cosmetics. By showcasing these innovations, the Center hopes to make circular economy solutions more accessible, practical, and impactful.

[The Center is open to all players in the coffee supply chain.](#) The C4CEC initiative is open to organizations and companies globally, while individuals can participate through ITC's Coffee Guide Network Circular Economy Working Group. The *Become a member* section invites all players to join the initiative to make their businesses more resilient by redefining waste and closing the sustainability loop.

To know more

[The Center for Circular Economy in Coffee C4CEC website](#)

[2025 Summary Booklet, *The sustainable future of coffee: a year with the Center for Circular Economy in Coffee*](#)

[C4CEC Good Practices from grounds to textiles the fashion revolution](#)

[C4CEC Circular Stories](#)

[C4CEC Publications and Reports](#)

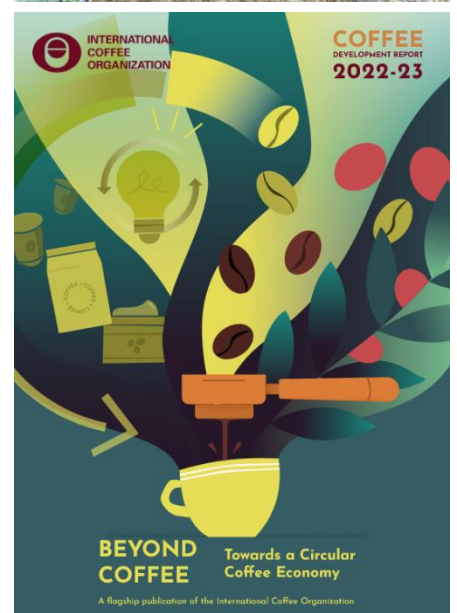
[Coffee Development Report 2022 – 2023. *Beyond Coffee: Towards a Circular Economy in Coffee* by ICO](#)

[Circular Economy in the Coffee Sector in intracen.org](#)

[C4CEC become a member](#)

[International Coffee Organization ICO](#)

[Article in unido.org](#)



[Article in renewablenmatter.eu](#)

[Article in baristamagazine.com](#)

[Article in coffeefrom.it](#)

[Article in intracen.org](#)

[Article in gcrmag.com](#)

[Article in icocoffee.org](#)

[International Trade Centre \(ITC\)](#)

