

Peer Review

# Review of: "Disruption, Diversity, and Due Diligence: Charting the Course for Coffee's Future—Key Takeaways from the International Coffee Convention 2024 (ICC2024)"

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I have found the paper quite intellectually stimulating for several reasons:

1. It is a nonconventional format, which I consider understandable and laudable given the data and information source (conference content and highlights).
2. The richness of issues covered in the paper, which also reflects the conference's scope and depth.
3. Depth and breadth of expertise: various issues relating to coffee are covered, from technical and practical to regulatory, environmental/conservation, production, consumption, species innovations, and business-model changes.
4. There is no doubt that the paper should serve as an almanac for coffee producers, consumers, researchers, C-suite file office cabinets, and regulators.

Specific comments on how to improve the paper's publishability potential as a review article in an international peer-reviewed journal:

As a report on conference highlights, the paper earns a 10 out of 10. However, if one were to assess it from the vantage point of an academic paper destined for a scholarly journal, it has several drawbacks, including:

– The paper, in its current form, essentially amounts to a presentation of review results, thus skipping conventional sections that are typical of research papers published in reputable international scientific journals: thesis statement, research objectives, methodology, and policy recommendations.

– The thesis statement is present but implicit, which one would not expect in an academic paper; it does not convey the urgency or rationale for writing the paper. While the paper presents highlights of a conference, a reader who is not an expert on coffee technicalities but who, out of curiosity, seeks knowledge on coffee developments—rising coffee prices could, for example, be the trigger—may find the presentation of scientific content extremely intimidating. Similarly, an academic exploring coffee as a new research area or a student wishing to write on coffee developments may be deterred. Thus, situating the conference—and the paper highlights—within the developments and dynamics affecting the coffee market, production, and innovation would provide an engaging thesis statement to position the paper within a conventional academic review format.

– Underpinning theoretical and empirical grounding: the paper should be underpinned by the most recent foundational theoretical and empirical literature that explains the key dynamics, relationships, and trajectories of the core themes or issues covered: Disruption, Diversity, and Due Diligence. This does not necessarily have to focus on coffee but can begin with general theories and empirical research on the three concepts and how these inform the current state of knowledge. Such groundwork provides a strong foundation on which the conference sections are built. Moreover, this approach allows the authors to identify the contribution of the paper highlights to extant knowledge on the theories, practices, and empirical research, which are largely based on paper presentations.

– Research objectives: paper objectives should also be delineated to guide the reader—explaining why the review paper on coffee was needed at the time it was written and translating that motivation into research questions that serve as guardrails for collecting materials (inclusion and exclusion criteria), methodology, etc.

– Methodology section: the paper should describe a research design that links the paper’s objectives to its results and conclusions. Since this is a synthesis of conference presentations, authors should inform readers how they moved from many presentations to highlights that, of course, do not present each paper

in detail but instead extract the main summarized points. It is also important for the paper to present the techniques employed that enabled creating a 15-page paper from so many conference presentations. The process obviously involved comparisons of outcomes, interpretation, collation, and summation. One alternative is to extract content that is less technical to create a new paper targeted at various audiences, not only coffee zealots, connoisseurs, businesspeople, and seasoned researchers. Such a task may be challenging since all the data and information are in the hands of the authors, who have either sought permission from respective presenters to use content or achieved the same via attribution.

– Policy Implications: based on the highlights presented, the paper should be a goldmine for readers searching for a way forward or what to expect in both the foreseeable and distant future with respect to the issues covered: regulation, coffee species, technological adoption, climate mitigation and adaptation, consumption trends and preferences, potential areas for future research to overcome current challenges, etc.

## **Declarations**

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.