

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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The authors consistently state the key takeaways from the International Coffee Convention 2024, celebrated last year in Mannheim, Germany. They provide a very good summary of the key issues discussed, which are also up to date in the coffee industry. The International Coffee Convention 2024 (ICC2024) continued the discussions initiated at ICC2023, focusing on coffee's transition and the industry's challenges.

The paper/report demonstrates clarity in both structure and prose, offering a logically coherent narrative that guides the reader seamlessly through its core arguments. Its accessible style ensures ideas are communicated with precision, making the work equally valuable to specialists and interdisciplinary audiences.

However, some aspects might require clarification, and the authors' analysis would benefit from adopting a more critical lens to evaluate the convention's discussions in relation to recent literature, such as the 2023 Coffee Barometer and other sector-specific studies:

The authors state: "Dr. Nogueira's participation underscores the ICO's commitment to fostering international dialogue and collaboration in addressing key issues such as sustainability, market transparency, and economic development within the coffee industry." However, the topics concerning market transparency and economic development seem to be less discussed (if at all) in the big discussions. Could the authors provide more information about this with specific presentations (e.g., Maggioni, Martínez-Castaño, Mhlanga, Salinas Velandia were the closest to the producers)?

“The EU Deforestation Regulation represents a disruptive shift in compliance requirements, fundamentally changing how coffee origins must be documented and traced.” Nevertheless, to what extent are downstream financial metrics—such as profit margins and value addition—documented and traced among key actors in importing countries (e.g., importers, buyers, roasters)? Why does this critical dimension of transparency receive less attention compared to the technological advances?

“This industry-wide transformation requires not just technological innovation but a fundamental rethinking of how coffee is produced, processed, prepared, and served.” Equally critical is the need to examine trading practices, value distribution, and appropriation across the supply chain—a gap that appears underexplored in the convention’s discourse. The absence of producer perspectives in sessions further raises questions about inclusivity and diversity. Were contributions from farmers or cooperatives included in the program? If so, could the authors provide references to specific sessions or materials to contextualize their insights in case I missed them?

In general, from the convention results and the discussion by the authors, I do not see how disruptive this convention is in providing a clear pathway for smallholders to truly make disruptions to provide solid and long-term economic sustainability. It seems that the discourse now is mostly about achieving environmental sustainability (e.g., EU regulations) and other important areas (e.g., health, sensorial developments, technological advances, etc.); nonetheless, true sustainability cannot be achieved without addressing structural inequities in global supply chains. Key barriers, such as opaque pricing mechanisms, inequitable benefit-sharing models, and a lack of transparency in disclosing market information (particularly by dominant actors in importing countries), must be formally addressed. These issues demand collaborative, cross-sectoral efforts to redefine trade practices, ensuring accountability and fairness are embedded at every stage. Without such foundational reforms, efforts toward environmental sustainability risk perpetuating existing imbalances rather than fostering holistic, inclusive progress.

Minor:

The authors write: “(.. Canada, China, Columbia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, ..)”. The country name is Colombia. Columbia is a state in the United States.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.