

GCP releases the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code championing progress throughout the sector

The Global Coffee Platform (GCP) has published its newly-revised **Coffee Sustainability Reference Code**, offering a common language for the sector to collectively advance farmers' prosperity, social well-being, and the conservation of nature.

BONN, GERMANY (19 October 2021). Following completion of a broad international public consultation, the Global Coffee Platform has published the **Coffee Sustainability Reference Code**, which provides a foundation to support the primary principles of sustainable coffee production. This reference code offers a common language to enable farmers, producer organizations and their business partners, as well as donors, NGOs, financial institutions and governments to advance their coffee sustainability efforts, collaboratively and effectively.

The Coffee Sustainability Reference Code provides sustainability stakeholders with a simplified and fit-for-purpose framework to foster better understanding of principles that support baseline sustainable coffee production. It addresses ongoing challenges in the coffee sustainability landscape as well as key emerging concerns such as climate change, or diversity, equity and inclusion.

According to Annette Pensel, GCP Executive Director, the revised code is "from the coffee community for the coffee community" and ultimately seeks to advance farmers' economic prosperity, social well-being, and the conservation of nature.

"The Coffee Sustainability Reference Code helps to enhance and align work underway so that more coffee farmers can be reached, and to encourage all coffee production to be sustainable."

For Gelkha Buitrago, GCP Director Programs and Corporate Partnerships, we can collectively undertake strong concerted action to support a more sustainable and resilient future for farmers and the sector overall, but "to do so, we need a shared understanding of baseline sustainability upon which other innovations at farm level and beyond can be built".

Decoding Sustainability

Centered on the three dimensions of economic prosperity, social well-being, and environmental stewardship, the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code outlines 12 principles, broken down into practices and expected results that describe baseline sustainability for coffee production and primary processing.

The code also defines five critical practices: elimination of the worst forms of child labour, elimination of forced labour, no deforestation, no use of prohibited pesticides, and the newest addition, continuous improvement.

"While the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code addresses the beginning of the supply chain, with farmers on the ground, downstream actors are expected to share the responsibility for sustainability," says Pensel. "This includes supporting and incentivising the efforts of coffee farmers to introduce, maintain, and go beyond these baseline principles across all dimensions, as well as promoting equitable trading and sourcing practices."

As custodian of the code, GCP believes the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code will serve the coffee sector to better align activities, inspire continuous improvement, and accelerate individual and collective action.

"Coffee sustainability is a shared responsibility and as a common language, together we can use this reference code and advance towards a thriving, sustainable coffee sector for generations to come."

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- [Read the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code](#)
- [Join GCP for an exclusive webinar exploring the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code on 4 November 2021](#)

Notes:

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Images:

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Additional Quotes:

“The Coffee Sustainability Reference Code is a tool to enhance, align and accelerate the align and accelerate the work underway so that all more coffee farmers can be reached, for sustainability efforts to be scaled, and for all actors in the coffee value chain to work collectively and to act concretely. This is an opportunity and invitation to the sector to work together and to eventually make all coffee production sustainable.” - Annette Pensel, GCP Executive Director

“This code reflects GCP and its Members' vision for a thriving and sustainable coffee world; it will enhance the foundations for more sustainable and profitable coffee production, farmers' prosperity and well-being, and conservation of nature, but only if we all use it.” - Annette Pensel, GCP Executive Director

“An important part of the revision process has been hearing from coffee stakeholders to improve the Coffee Sustainability Reference Code – to ensure it is a strengthened and modernized sector wide reference on the foundations of sustainability in the economic, social and environmental dimensions for coffee production and primary processing worldwide.” - Gelkha Buitrago, GCP Director Programs and Corporate Partnerships

“It was encouraging to see the diverse and passionate participation during this process. We are confident that the revised Coffee Sustainability Reference Code will be a fit-for-purpose, sector-wide reference for baseline coffee sustainability while responding to the increasing impacts of a changing climate, farmer profitability, and the global pandemic.” - Gelkha Buitrago, GCP Director Programs and Corporate Partnerships

“I was impressed by the responses we got from around the world. The willingness to participate and the positive responses gave very good idea of how this code would be well received and desired and needed.” - Carlos Brando, Chairman of the GCP Board

“If we – as a platform – believe this code is necessary, it's our duty – each and every one of us to help promote the uptake of the code. It's obvious we should be working together in this; what we need the most nowadays – especially for sustainability is living by the words ‘Shared Responsibility. Shared Benefits.’” – Carlos Brando, Chairman of the GCP Board

More information about the public consultation:

<https://www.globalcoffeeplatform.org/our-work/coffee-sustainable-reference-code/>

<https://www.globalcoffeeplatform.org/latest/2021/800-voices-for-coffee-sustainability/>

<https://www.globalcoffeeplatform.org/latest/2021/collectively-shape-the-foundations-of-coffee-sustainability/>

<https://www.globalcoffeeplatform.org/latest/2021/what-are-the-foundations-to-advance-sustainability-in-the-coffee-sector/>