



Connecting for a more sustainable coffee industry

- **WORLD OF COFFEE 2024**
- **COPENHAGEN, 27-29 JUNE 2024**

CHALLENGES IN THE COFFEE SECTOR

The coffee industry is experiencing significant challenges, from the impacts of climate change to a lack of transparency in the value chain. These issues not only affect the quality of coffee but also threatens the livelihoods of farmers around the world. Thus, there is a critical need for knowledge-sharing, innovation, and improved collaboration among all players in the coffee sector to foster a more sustainable industry.

At the end of June, more than 12,600 international coffee professionals met at World of Coffee 2024 to experience the latest coffee trends, promote innovative solutions, and discuss sustainability in the coffee sector. The event, which saw the highest attendance in its European history, took place in Bella Center Copenhagen and was organised by **the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA)** with support from **SCA Denmark**.

ENGAGING LOCAL COFFEE PROFESSIONALS

The Specialty Coffee Association has recently established the Green Coffee Connect initiative to inspire and educate

industry actors and match them directly with small coffee producers from all around the world. By facilitating informal business meetings over a cup of coffee, the aim was to:

- Foster knowledge sharing across the value chain
- Create new trading relationships

Before the congress, SCA teamed up with **Copenhagen Legacy Lab** to identify Danish coffee professionals (e.g., hotels and venues) and invite them to Green Coffee Connect. To do this, the lab joined forces with **Ethical Trade Denmark's**

“As an association, we can create space where coffee buyers can meet green coffee producers and reward them for their efforts in creating differentiated products of a higher quality.”

Kim Elena Ionescu, Chief Sustainability and Knowledge Officer at SCA



Photo: Specialty Coffee Association

Photo: Specialty Coffee Association

Coffee Alliance and **Meetingplace Wonderful Copenhagen**. As a result, 50 Danish coffee actors signed up to take part in the initiative.

FORGING NEW CONNECTIONS

By engaging local coffee professionals in Green Coffee Connect, SCA and Copenhagen Legacy Lab aimed to leave a positive mark on Denmark's and Copenhagen's coffee scene. From the local attendants' perspective, being part of Green Coffee Connect was a unique chance to gain knowledge and meet small producers from various continents. At the same time, the producers were given an excellent platform to meet Danish coffee buyers and receive valuable market feedback.

After World of Coffee 2024, the Specialty Coffee Association has expressed great satisfaction with the local involvement in Green Coffee Connect. Feedback from the local attendants suggests that they have formed new and valuable connections due to their participation. SCA plans to continue Green Coffee Connect in the future and develop the initiative by including learnings from Copenhagen.

“Participating in World of Coffee Copenhagen was an enriching experience, with its unique ability to unite the entire coffee value chain under one roof. I reconnected with industry colleagues and forged new, valuable partnerships, particularly with farmer representatives from Kenya, Nicaragua, and Brazil.”

Christina Singh, COO of GrowGrounds

“It was a good networking opportunity for me to meet other coffee producers to see and learn from them and how they work with coffee in other countries and markets.”

Gakii Mugendi, CEO & founder of Iburu Coffee

LEGACY PROCESS



Strategic goals and societal needs

The legacy process aimed to strengthen the coffee industry in Denmark and contribute to making the global coffee sectors more sustainable. This was done by addressing critical challenges highlighted by **the Specialty Coffee Association's** purpose:

- Purpose of SCA: To make the specialty coffee industry thriving, equitable, and sustainable across the entire value chain.

The purpose of SCA is well aligned with Denmark's and Copenhagen's priorities in terms of sustainability. As an example, **the strategy** of Meetingplace Wonderful Copenhagen has "creating broader sustainable impact" as one of their three focus areas.



Outputs (immediately after the activity)

More than 50 local coffee professionals signed up for the activity to connect with international coffee producers. A Danish coffee professional and an international coffee producer shared their thoughts on their participation in Green Coffee Connect:

"And from here, I have seen lots of opportunities to change the way we work with coffee."

Mads Krogh, Head of Food & Beverage at Arthur Hotels

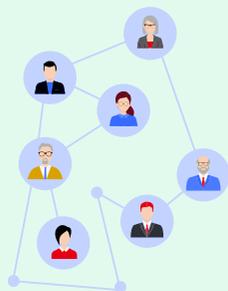
"It has been a great experience to be here because as producers this is a great way to get exposure (...) not only from the roasters that are here but also to the final consumer."

Benjamin Paz, Coffee Producer from Honduras



Objective

The objective was to contribute to a more sustainable coffee industry globally and in Copenhagen.



Stakeholder involvement

The Specialty Coffee Association organised the networking event and offered free entrance to the congress for local coffee professionals.

Copenhagen Legacy Lab managed the legacy process and ensured a high number of attendants from the local coffee industry. The lab was able to do this by extending invitations from SCA to more than 100 local coffee professionals.

Meetingplace Wonderful Copenhagen provided access to their extensive network of hotels, restaurants, and venues in Copenhagen.

Ethical Trade Denmark's Coffee Alliance provided contacts from their **Coffee Alliance** (e.g., supermarkets, coffee businesses).



Outcomes (+6-12 months - changed behaviour)

Since the congress in Copenhagen, SCA has hired a dedicated person to further develop the Green Coffee Connect concept and ensure its integration into future World of Coffee events.

In Denmark the activity led to new business connections, leading to collaborations. For example:

"I just returned from a project development trip to Nicaragua, where I met a lot of the connections established at the congress."

Christina Singh, COO of GrowGrounds



Impact (+1 year – societal value)

By 2026, **Green Coffee Connect** has expanded beyond connecting buyers and sellers. It now operates as a dynamic platform for broader networking among diverse stakeholder groups, including service providers, NGOs, and financial institutions.



Activity

A networking activity was organised as part of Green Coffee Connect enabling local coffee professionals to connect with international coffee producers.



Potential legacy (+1-3 years and beyond)

While the project's impact is difficult to measure, the Green Coffee Connect initiative has been continued, ensuring the advancement of an important agenda that World of Coffee remains committed to.