



INTERNATIONAL COTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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40th Meeting of the Expert Panel on Social, Environmental and Economic Performance (SEEP) of Cotton Production 02 November 2014 Thessaloniki - Greece

15:30 hs (Thessaloniki time) 73rd Plenary Meeting

Members Present: Allan Williams (Chair), Francesca Mancini (Vice-Chair), Elke Hortmeyer, Jens Soth, Denilson Galbero Guedes, Bill Norman, Kater Hake, Michael Fok, Alejandro Plastina (joined via conference call).

Jose Sette and Lorena Ruiz served as Secretariat from ICAC.

Observers: Jeffrey Silberman (IFCP), Hanna Demes (Textile Exchange), Allen Terhaar (CCI), Patrick Laine (BCI), Rossitza Krueger (Fairtrade), Ajay Kumar (India), Brent Crossland (e3 Bayer), Bruce Finney (Australia), Eduardo Roman (FAO), Rafiq Chaudhry (ICAC), Axel Drieling (Germany), Johhanes Fosle (Germany), Wolfgang Bertenbreiter (Germany).

Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda (Chair)
2. Finalizing the Indicators Report (Francesca)
3. Testing the indicators framework (Chair and Francesca)
4. International Forum for Cotton Promotion Survey (Jeff Silberman, members)
5. Discussion on the Standards for the German Sustainable Textile Alliance and the minimum criteria for cotton production currently developed (Representative from Germany, members)
6. Future role of the SEEP (Chair, members)
7. Key points for SEEP report to Plenary (Chair, members)
8. Other business

1. Approval of the Agenda

The proposed agenda was adopted. The Chair thanked the ICAC Secretariat for facilitating the communication among members and welcomed everyone.

2. Finalizing the Indicators Report

The vice chair, Francesca Mancini, pointed out that the indicators report was at its final stage, but two more steps were required to complete the report. The first step was to include Annex 2, which covers information on sustainable initiatives; this information was currently being updated. The second step was to do a final review of the whole document to ensure it doesn't have any major mistake (editing for language before publishing and printing).

SEEP members agreed to send their comments on the final report or the images used before the first of December. Additionally, there was consensus that the final report should be published and distributed by email and hard copy among member governments and other commodities bodies. It was also suggested to seek outside funding to translate the report into French and Spanish, and to pilot the framework. In the discussion was also mentioned that unifying translation would be indispensable to the interpretation of the report across countries.

3. Testing the indicators framework

The VICE CHAIR noted that a number of FAO projects are using the indicators developed by SEEP. In Peru and Paraguay, the framework has been used to strengthen the cotton sector through south-south cooperation to establish baselines; In Argentina, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru a regional study is analyzing the role of women throughout the cotton value chain; In Benin, Malawi, Cameroon and Zambia FAO projects are planning to test the indicators

The CHAIR mentioned that in Australia the indicators framework was used as one of the sources of information to develop a sustainability report for Australian cotton growing, in terms of establishing a national committee, and that 30¹ of the 69 indicators recommended by SEEP were used in the sustainability report. The Executive Summary is presently available on both CRDCs and Cotton Australia's website and the full report will be officially launched and publicly available in late November.

It was also advised that a series of workshops was being contemplated by CIRAD in francophone Africa to specifically discuss the framework.

Kater Hake mentioned that Cotton Incorporated is in the process of formulating a natural resource management survey to gather information on U.S. production practices and grower attitudes about the environment. The survey would be conducted in 2015.

4. International Forum for Cotton Promotion Survey

Jeff Silberman, Executive Director of the International Forum for Cotton Promotion (IFCP) noted that the thinking behind the project is that many outside of the cotton industry have opinions and facts about cotton that are not accurate and precise. So, at the Plenary Meeting held in Cartagena, members of IFCP decided to reorient the IFCP site to boil down some key issues, and make those facts available to the cotton industry. The project aims to develop a concise body of information and a set of facts to use if necessary, using science rather than information without scientific support.

The questionnaire has currently 26 questions, and includes water, fertilizer, insecticides, herbicides, defoliants, pesticides, and health issues.

5. Discussion on the Standards for the German Sustainable Textile Alliance and the minimum criteria for cotton production currently developed

A representative of the German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ), presented the objectives and approach of the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles initiative led by the German Development Minister. The initiative was designed to ensure that any label or marketing claims made about the sustainability of a product have been calculated using a common methodology, and are thus comparable. The objective is to 'improve the

¹Some of the indicators are focused on smallholder agriculture type and aren't relevant for the country.

availability of clear, reliable and comparable information on the environmental performance of products and organizations'. The Partnership for Sustainable Textiles aims to promote measurable and verifiable improvements in the entire supply chain through recognizing and cooperating with established standards and initiatives.

The ICAC Expert Panel on the Social Environmental and Economic Performance of Cotton Production (SEEP) was asked to join the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles.

6. Future role of the SEEP

In the ensuing discussions, there was a consensus that clear guidance should be asked to the Plenary Meeting about the role of SEEP as a clearinghouse of information to synthesize, analyze, and share the experiences of the countries implementing the indicators framework, and to help other countries to implement them. The implementation of a structured questionnaire or survey would be required in order to filter the learnings and support the sharing of those learnings more broadly, as well as providing the basis for sharing knowledge and developing practical guidance information.

7. Key points for SEEP report to Plenary

The chairman noted that the report will include a recap on how the indicators report was put together, will highlight the outcomes from Cartagena, the activities that are using or planning to use the framework, and plans / ideas for further implementation of the indicators report. Finally, the report will mention other sustainability initiatives that are interested in sustainability metrics, such as the Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules T-shirt pilot of the European Union, and the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles Initiative established by the German government.

8. Other business

No other business was discussed.