



**From the Secretariat**

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### **"World Cafe" Gives Every Attendee a Voice on Sustainability**

What sustainability means in the cotton value chain can't be determined by any individual, sector or nation. Rather, it should be defined by finding the common ground that exists among all of the stakeholders.

That was the guiding concept behind the Fourth Open Session of the ICAC's 71st Plenary Meeting, held Oct. 9 in Interlaken, Switzerland. The most interactive of the sessions, it was designed to get to the very heart of the meeting's theme, Shaping Sustainability in the Cotton Value Chain.

The World Cafe consisted of 300+ attendees divided among 27 tables, each with a moderator fluent in one of five languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic). The idea was to gather 10-12 people per table -- each with different backgrounds and perspectives on what sustainability means -- and allow them to share their ideas and find common ground, according to Riff Fullan, team leader of knowledge and learning for Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation.

"We chose a participatory methodology that encouraged interaction because we wanted people to feel free to exchange their ideas openly," said Fullan, who served as director of the session. "You can't put 300 people in a room and expect honest and open dialogue. But if you break them down into smaller groups, they will communicate and share more openly -- which is the whole point."

The team of moderators will spend the next two days compiling and consolidating the input they got from attendees and will present an executive summary of the results during the Sixth Breakout Session, which will be held on Thursday, Oct. 11.

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The Secretariat of the Committee publishes information related to world cotton production, supply, demand and prices, and provides technical information on cotton production technology. Detailed statistics are found bimonthly in *COTTON: Review of the World Situation*, \$190 per year via email, \$230 per year in hard copy. A monthly outlook is available by email for \$300 per year. Access to the latest weekly estimates of world cotton supply and use by the Secretariat is available on the Internet for \$460 per year. Access Secretariat reports at <http://icac.org>.