



Aide Memoire

To: Delegates to the Standing Committee, Coordinating Agencies and Members of the PSAP

From: Executive Director

Subject: Preliminary Agenda for the Plenary Meeting

Date: February 15, 2013

Revised Preliminary Agenda for the 72nd Plenary Meeting

The 72nd Plenary Meeting will be held in Cartagena, Colombia, during September 29 to October 4, 2013. The process of developing an agenda that reflects a balance of interests of Colombia, the world cotton industry and the Standing Committee is underway. Extensive comments were received from India at the 522nd Standing Committee Meeting, and other comments have also been sent to the Secretariat. This Revised Preliminary Agenda is being circulated for additional comment.

The preliminary agenda includes non-traditional topics for a cotton industry meeting, such as encouraging younger entrepreneurs, giving visibility to women and the impacts of land ownership patterns on investments in irrigation, soil conservation and other infrastructure.

Building upon the successful experiment with the World Café at the Plenary Meeting in Switzerland, all participants will have an opportunity to the Statement of the Meeting via discussions during a World Café on Tuesday morning, followed by a consensus-building World Café session on Wednesday.

The preliminary agenda also includes time for regional caucuses on Friday morning. This will be a new component of the ICAC agenda and will allow time for delegates from the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe to confer on joint implementation of strategies discussed during the plenary meeting.

Plenary and Open Sessions

Country statements have not always been well appreciated by all members, and the time devoted to such statements during plenary meetings has been reduced by more than half since the 1990s. When the delegate of India called for a renewed emphasis on country statements in the agenda of the 72nd Plenary Meeting, the executive director was very skeptical. However, the suggestion by India may represent a cyclical change in the interests of delegates. Consistent with long run efforts to make plenary meetings more participatory, and thus more reflective of the views of delegates attending the meetings, country statements have been scheduled on the first day of the 72nd Plenary Meeting. This will give countries an opportunity to provide their views on the major challenges facing the world cotton industry.

Along with presentations from the Secretariat on world cotton supply and use, and the Task Force on the Challenges from Competing Fibers during the **First Open** Session, participants can then consider the information provided during country statements during the World Café.

In many countries, including in Colombia, more than half of the land used to grow cotton is rented, with implications for investments in irrigation, soil conservation practices, and other infrastructure. The **Second Open** Session on Land Tenure and Implications for Agricultural Productivity will include specialists with knowledge of land tenure and investments. The purpose of the session is to explore how governments can facilitate investments in land productivity when land operators are not landowners.

The average age of cotton farmers in Colombia has climbed to 57, and this pattern is observed worldwide as young people see greater economic opportunities in urban professions. It is self evident that if cotton is to remain a sustainable and economically viable industry, remunerative employment opportunities and exciting career challenges must be offered in the cotton value chain. The **Third Open** Session will look at the demographic characteristics of cotton producers, ginners, merchants and engineers in the textile industry and provide opportunities to discuss how these career opportunities can be enhanced.

While men are the heads of households in the majority of situations, women provide most of the manual labor used in smallholder cotton production, including planting, controlling weeds and harvesting. However, women often lack access to inputs, credit, extension services and markets. The **Fourth Open** Session will complement the session on young entrepreneurs and will provide an opportunity to discuss the role of women in cotton, how their welfare can be improved and how cotton production could be increased if women were given greater resources with which to operate farms.

In round numbers, the world cotton yield rose from 400 kilograms of lint per hectare in the 1980s to 600 kilograms in the 1990s, and to nearly 800 kilograms by 2007/08. However, the world yield had trended lower since 2007/08 and is estimated at only 760 kilograms per hectare in 2012/13. Agriculture, including cotton, seem to be an era of technology consolidation during which, new breakthrough technologies are being developed but have not yet reached the stage of commercial application. The **Fifth Open** Session, a technical seminar, will be on the topic of Overcoming Stagnation in Cotton Yields.

Breakout Sessions

Every plenary meeting agenda involves tradeoffs in time management, and it is physically necessary to schedule many sessions concurrently. Each delegation is encouraged to include subject matter specialists to send as representatives to the breakout sessions.

The **First Breakout** Session will include a report from the Private Sector Advisory Panel on Making Cotton Trade More Efficient. Ideas, such as harmonized phytosanitary certificates, electronic bills of lading, ensuring that cotton samples are not categorized as hazardous cargo by delivery companies, and standardizing the format, in which data are sent from gins to instrument labs are some of the ideas to be explored.

There are strong views about changing meteorological events and their impacts on agricultural industries. Some analysts believe that weather extremes will play an increasingly important role in commodity markets, contributing to increased volatility in prices in response to impacts on production. Pragmatic policies to adapt to extremes of temperatures, drought and rainfall can provide an excellent basis for discussion during the **Second Breakout** Session. This session will include a presentation from a meteorologist defining "extreme" weather and providing objective measures of their occurrences in cotton producing areas around the world.

One of the outcomes of the 71st Plenary Meeting in Switzerland was the formation of a Task Force on Cotton Identity Programs, reflecting a desire by government officials to experience more transparency in the operations of initiatives aimed at increasing the sustainability of cotton production. The Government of Colombia is financing a carefully designed study of the applicability of organic, Fair Trade, and BCI in the Colombian cotton sector, and the results of the study will be available at the plenary meeting during the **Third Breakout** Session.

The International Forum for Cotton Promotion (IFCP) serves as a clearinghouse for proven, low-cost, strategies and programs to boost consumer awareness of cotton and natural fibers. The **Fourth Breakout** Session will be conducted by the IFCP to raise awareness of demand enhancement strategies.

The ICAC has strongly supported a successful completion of the Doha Development Agenda in the statements of each plenary meeting beginning in 2002. However, the DDA is not yet near completion, and attention is shifting toward regional and bi-lateral trade agreements. The **Fifth Breakout** Session will explore the implication of regional trade agreements for the cotton and cotton textile sectors.

The ICAC is more than just about agriculture, and the challenges facing the textile component of the cotton value chain will be the focus of the **Six Breakout** Session.

Drafting and Steering Committee Meetings

The Advisory Committee may be asked to consider changes to the Rules and Regulations associated with the potential membership of the EU in the ICAC, and there may be matters associated with the hiring of a new executive director to be considered. Therefore, ample time has been budgeted on Thursday for administrative matters during the meeting of the Steering Committee.

Preliminary Theme, Topics and Schedule of the 72nd Plenary Meeting

Emergent Challenges Facing the Cotton Value Chain

Saturday, September 28, 2013

17:00 Orientation Meeting: Secretariat and the Organizing Committee
18:30 CSITC Steering Committee

Sunday, September 29, 2013

9:00 Registration
10:00 Meeting of the Task Force on Identity Cottons
13:00 Meeting of the Expert Panel on SEEP
13:30 Meeting of the Private Sector Advisory Panel (PSAP)
14:00 Meeting of the Task Force on Competitive Challenges
14:30 Meeting of the Round Table for Biotechnology in Cotton

19:00 Reception at the Hilton Hotel

Monday, September 30, 2013

8:00 Registration
9:00 Inaugural Session
Welcome to Colombia by the Chair of the Organizing Committee
Inaugural Remarks by the Government of Colombia
Welcoming Remarks on behalf of all delegates by Argentina, host of the 70th Plenary Meeting
Invitation to the 73rd Plenary Meeting
Report of the Chair of the Standing Committee, François Schmidt, Embassy of Switzerland
Washington, DC
Recognition of the ICAC Researcher of the Year
Report of the Executive Director, Terry Townsend
Approval of the Agenda of the 72nd Plenary Meeting

11:00 First Open Session: Interfiber Competition: Meeting the Challenge of Polyester
Presentation by the Secretariat on cotton supply and use
Report from the Task Force on Challenges from Competing Fibers
13:45 First Plenary Session: Statements
Report of the Chair of the PSAP
Statements by Member Countries
Statements by International Organizations
14:00 First Breakout Session: Making Cotton Trade More Efficient
PSAP Subcommittee on Efficiencies in Cotton Trading
16:15 First Plenary Session: Statements (Continued)

Evening Dinner for all Participants

Tuesday, October 1, 2013

- 9:00 Second Open Session: Land Tenure and Implications for Agricultural Productivity
 11:00 World Café: Challenges Facing Cotton
 12:30 Business Meeting of the International Forum for Cotton Promotion (IFCP)
 13:45 Third Open Session: Cultivating a New Crop of Entrepreneurs
 14:00 Second Breakout Session: Extreme Weather: Facts and Policies
 15:45 Fourth Open Session: Making Women Visible: Gender Issues in Cotton
 16:00 Third Breakout Session: Producing and Marketing Identity Cottons
 A Case Study From Colombia
 Report from the Task Force on Identity Cottons

Evening Open

Wednesday, October 2, 2013

- 9:00 World Café: Results and Discussion
 11:00 Fifth Open Session (Technical Seminar): Overcoming Stagnation in Cotton Yields
 Report of the Chair of the Round Table for Biotechnology in Cotton, Keith Menchey, National
 Cotton Council, USA
 11:15 Meeting of the Task Force on CSITC
 14:00 Continuation of the Fifth Open Session (Technical Seminar)

Evening Open

Thursday, October 3, 2013

- 7:30 Breakfast meeting of plenary meeting host committees (by invitation)
 9:00 Meeting of the Drafting Group
 9:15 Fourth Breakout Session: International Forum for Cotton Promotion
 11:00 Fifth Breakout Session: Regional Trade Agreements and Implications for Cotton
 13:45 Meeting of the Steering Committee
 14:00 Sixth Breakout Session: Textile Industry Challenges

 19:00 Gala Dinner Showcasing the Contributions of Younger Entrepreneurs

Friday, October 4, 2013

- 9:00 Regional Caucus Meetings
 11:00 Closing Plenary Session
 Reading of the Final Statement of the 72nd Plenary Meeting
 Closing comments by Switzerland, host of the 71st Plenary Meeting
 Closing comments by other countries
 Closing comments by Colombia
 Adjourn

14:00 Travel and Technical Tour

Saturday, October 5, 2013

Technical Tour

Sunday, October 6, 2013

Travel