



The ICAC's 80th Plenary Meeting

80th Plenary Meeting – Virtual

MINUTES

World Café The Evolving Global Textile Supply Chain

Schedule: 11:10 – 12:10 pm (GMT-5); Australia (Perth, AW): 00:00 am – 01:00 am (Fri December 2nd); Europe: 16:00 – 17:00 (GMT)

Chair/Moderator: Mike McCue, ICAC Communications Director

The meeting started at 11:47 am EST and was chaired by Mr Mike McCue, ICAC Communications Director.

Mr McCue explained that the World Café was created to encourage interaction between audience members and change the formula in which speakers talk and the audience listens. He added that there were five discussions held on the theme, 'The Evolving Global Textile Supply Chain', in different languages and regions to ensure diversity.

In the first video, from the discussion in Brazil, the speaker stated that SMEs are at increasing risk due to their lack of size, and many of the new technologies that will be implemented will be a challenge for them financially. He added that audit fatigue is a real problem and some farmers who belong to an organisation such as BCI are required to go through an audit twice. So, Brazil's ABRAPA have worked with BCI to align their requirements so farmers only need to be audited once.

The leader from the discussion held in the USA pointed out that greenwashing was a major problem, misleading and confusing consumers as companies take steps to ensure their business activities don't negatively affect their reputations. The speakers also warned that if certain technologies, such as traceability, become too expensive, SMEs will be the first to abandon them.

Feedback from the discussion in Argentina focussed on the challenges that such a long and complex supply chain put on smaller companies, who might not have the resources to acquire all of the technology and training they need to compete with bigger firms. 'Simplification' was a common theme, especially in the primary production phases, where the need to track seeds, origins and more are a significant challenge.

During the discussion in Pakistan, speakers highlighted that a human connection must not be lost as we search for technological solutions, and that the most efficient way to improve sustainability across the value chain would be through a partnership between buyers and suppliers. They added that the industry needs long-term buying commitments so manufacturers can invest in new green technologies and, importantly, that buyers should share the cost.

India, focussing on the question about what the ICAC could do better to serve the textile industry, cited the need for the organisation to produce more specialised reports, such as on fibre quality and overall productivity, so countries can benchmark and improve themselves. Reports and publications focussing on production have been crucial to improving cultivation practices throughout the ICAC's history and now that same attention should be put on textiles.

With time for the session already having been exceeded, the Chair thanked all the delegates for their participation and ended the meeting at 12:49 pm.