



MINUTES

SIXTH BREAKOUT SESSION

International Organisations, Initiatives and Projects Concerning Cotton WEDNESDAY, 5 DECEMBER, 11:00 TO 13:00

Chair: Dr PK Agarwal, Advisor, Sustainability, The Cotton Corporation of India Ltd
Co-Chair: Dr K Selvaraju, Secretary General, The Southern India Mills Association

The meeting began at 11:00.

Ms Marieme Fall, World Trade Organization, said cotton has a special standing at the WTO, and that it is the only commodity with that unique emphasis, dating back to a proposal by the C4 — Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali — at the Cancun Ministerial Conference in 2003. She said it is critical to create a fair and undistorted international cotton trade market, which would revive prices to a level where the cotton-dependent countries could restore the much-needed earnings from the sector. The Director-General’s Consultative Framework Mechanism on Cotton (DGCFMC), is the only existing global forum to discuss developing countries’ needs and priorities for cotton sector developments. To monitor cotton development assistance, WTO uses The Evolving Table, a dynamic monitoring tool for statistical and time series analysis of cotton trade and development support data. Special cotton-related initiatives at the WTO include celebrating World Cotton Day; a joint engagement with FIFA to support cotton value addition activities in the C-4 and their partner countries; and maintaining the WTO Cotton Portal. Responding to a question from the co-Chair, she said that the solutions and decisions derived from their projects must be agreed upon by the members themselves, not the WTO.

Mr Dafulin Kaonga, Zambia National Consultant, said the International Trade Centre helps small businesses in developing countries go global through trade by building inclusive, sustainable and prosperous economies. He spoke about an ITC project in Zambia intended to increase value addition, productivity and competitiveness for small farmers and processors. It has three components: a new seed cotton marketing system (starting with central buying points); fibre value addition through handloom operations

for women in rural areas (more than 1,500 women have been trained in weaving, spinning, and business knowledge); and in collaboration with the CDT and ICAC, working to increase yields for 50,000 farmers. The results from the yields project have been particularly impressive. Yields for traditional cotton farmers in the southern, central, and eastern provinces average 170, 240, and 280 kg of lint per ha, respectively, while the farmers on the project's demo plots achieved yields of 410, 433, and 589 kg of lint per ha.

GIZ's Dr Rossitza Krueger talked about the organisation's global programme, 'Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains'. For cotton, the goal is increasing sustainable production and strengthening of domestic supply chains for processing sustainable cotton, particularly for small and marginal farmers. She also highlighted the many GIZ projects underway in India, including Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat. She also referred to a Project under the BMZ Partnership for Sustainable Textiles, anchored by the Organic Cotton Accelerator (OCA). GIZ signed an MOU with eight German textile brands and two standards (FairTrade and Global Organic Textile Standard) that involves 11,500 cotton farmers; it aims to create the right conditions for organic cotton supply to grow; facilitate the access to organic cotton and cotton in-conversion for members of the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles at the farm level and ensure there is sufficient demand; and to increase the amount of available organic cotton on the world market. She provided highlights of the global AgriChains project in collaboration with the ICAC; it takes advantage of the ICAC's Virtual Reality Cotton Training and the Cotton Expert app for semi-literate and illiterate farmers.

CIRAD's Dr Marc Giband said the organisation is a historic player in cotton research whose activities cover everything from plot to initial industrial processing. Recently, CIRAD defined its Roadmap for Cotton Research, which defines the institution's cotton research strategy for the next 10 years. The roadmap is articulated around Four Ambitions: 1) Adapt cropping practices to climate change and reduce their environmental impact; 2) Make African cotton more profitable and competitive; 3) Build capacity among players in African cotton chains; and 4) Position African cotton chains better on a territory scale. He then presented four projects that CIRAD is undertaking in collaboration with a large array of partners. These projects are representative of CIRAD's roadmap, and touch on areas such as training and capacity building, agroforestry and adaptation to climate change, agroecological transition, and innovations for resilience to climate change. The project are representative of CIRAD's commitment to contributing to the development of sustainable cotton growing.

Mr Ronald Quispe, Food and Agriculture Organization, talked about the +Cotton Project, a trilateral South-South initiative launched in 2012 that promotes sustainable and inclusive production systems from an integral view of the cotton value chain to

encourage rural development by promoting value addition, fair trade, and boosting the agro-textile system. With more than \$20 million in funding, the +Cotton Project partners with seven countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Paraguay, and Peru) and has more than 100 Latin American public and private sector institutions committed to making the cotton value chain more competitive, positioning cotton as a key item to promote better living conditions for farming families (more than 80% of the farmers in the project are family farmers). The project is now in its fourth phase, scheduled from 2023-2027, which is focussed on consolidating the results and has five strategic themes: machinery, seeds, markets, scalability, and public policies.

The session ended at 13:00.