



## MINUTES

### Sixth Open Session

**World café: ‘Technological Innovations for Global Collaborations’  
MONDAY, 4 DECEMBER, 14:00 TO 16:00**

**RESULTS DELIVERED ON TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER, 10:00-10:30**

Chair: Ms Roop Rashi, Textile Commissioner, Chairperson of the Organizing Committee, ICAC

Session Coordinator: Mr Mike McCue, Director of Communications, ICAC

The session began at 14:00.

Mr Roop Rashi opened the session by saying that there was a very diverse audience at the Plenary Meeting, and to maximise the effectiveness of the session, participants were asked to derive outcomes from their discussions — practical steps that could be taken to improve the global cotton and textiles industry.

ICAC Communications Director Mike McCue then explained to the audience that the first-ever World Café was held in 2012 and every year since, but that this year would be different. Rather than all participants discussing the same set of questions, 11 tables were set up, with each discussing a different topic of international significance to cotton and textiles. After one hour of discussion, the attendees would reconvene as, one by one, a representative of each table took the stage for 3-5 minutes to provide an overview of their discussions and their outcomes.

Approximately one hour later, representatives from the 11 tables began taking the stage to deliver their summaries. The topics they addressed were: 1) Battling the Pink Bollworm: Cutting edge Eradication Technologies; 2) Revolutionizing Cotton Farming: Global High Density Planting Best Practices; 3) Cutting Edge Technology in Farming: Robotics and Machineries for Small Holder Cotton Farms; 4) Sustainability through Carbon Sequestration; 5) Empowering Smallholder Farmers: The Digital Revolution in Education and Support; 6) Fostering Entrepreneurship Support Services and Opportunities; 7) Setting Standards and Assurance: Traceability Technologies and Certifications; 8)

Diversifying Cotton Economies: Innovations in By Products; 9) Greening the Textile Industry: Promoting Eco-friendly Factories; 10) Cotton and Sustainability Driven by Fashion Design and Communication; and 11) Cotton Prospects in Technical Textiles.

Although an open question-and-answer session was planned for the final 20 minutes of the World Café, time ran out. As a result, Ms Rashi closed the session by explaining to the audience that there would be a follow-up session of 30 minutes planned for the following day that would allow anyone in the audience to ask questions or make comments.

The session closed at 16:00.

On Wednesday, 5 December at 10:25 am, Ms Rashi opened the session by reminding everyone of the 11 topics that had been discussed at the tables and then took questions from the audience.

An attendee said that the industry needs unified rules and standards, and that if unified rules and standards can be achieved in cricket and volleyball and sports, it should be achievable for cotton and textiles. He requested the ICAC work to establish them for the global industry.

Ms Rashi agreed, adding that she viewed the ICAC as 'the United Nations of cotton' and requested that the organisation create a task force to establish a unified definition and standards for what sustainability entails. She also offered the assistance of her office to assist with definitions, standards, and certifications.

ICAC Executive Director Mr Eric Trachtenberg said the Head of Textiles, Mr Kanwar Usman, made a similar suggestion to him several months earlier. He added that although such an initiative would need to be approved by the ICAC Standing Committee, that he intended to be a strong advocate for that approach.

A participant noted that cotton would benefit from more global promotion and that the ICAC was well positioned to lead that effort. Mr Trachtenberg said that the ICAC agreed with that position and that Mr McCue would be leading that effort in the coming months and years.

Another participant queried about marketing cotton directly to consumers; Mr Trachtenberg replied, saying that would also be considered under the ICAC's developing global promotion efforts.

The session closed at 16:00.

### **Summary Paragraph**

A new format for the World Café debuted at the 81<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting. After 11 years of having all attendees answer the same set of questions, 11 different topics of international

significance to cotton and textiles were selected; participants were invited to join in whichever discussion they found most interesting. Participants were asked not to have a purely academic discussion, but rather, to finish their discussions by listing specific outcomes — actionable steps that could be taken to benefit the global cotton and textile industry. Written summaries of those outcomes were delivered to the Secretariat; it was announced that a detailed report summarising their findings would be produced by the ICAC in January 2024 to ensure that the steps that can be acted upon immediately would be, and that discussions would continue on those topics that needed further evaluation.