

It is interesting that cotton production practices are so vastly different across countries. For example, plant population varies from 11,000 per hectare in India to 330,000 per hectare in China. Yields range from 184 kg/ha in Kenya to 2107 kg/ha in Australia. Water usage ranges from zero to 12.228 million litres per hectare. Similarly, these differences extend to fertilisers, insecticides, herbicides, crop duration, number of varieties, number of farms, size of land holdings, number of farmers, extent of mechanization etc. Apparently, in many countries these practices and systems evolved over the years in conjunction with the general agricultural practices, mechanisation and modernisation. The extent of variability and diversity of the production systems across the globe is indeed fascinating. The first article on 'Cotton Production Practices –Snippets from global data 2017' attempts to capture the diversity. When I drafted notes for the 'Cotton Production Practices -2017', it had occurred to me that the information provided a bird's eye view of global production systems and could be very useful for researchers to compare notes. I modified the text and changed the format to present them as snippets.

The second article describes the 13th ICAC-Network Meeting on Cotton for Mediterranean and Middle East Regions, which was held at Luxor, Egypt on 2-6 February 2018. 125 participants from 15 countries attended, presented papers and interacted. His Excellency, Mohamed Badr, Governor of Luxor inaugurated the conference. The nine technical sessions included almost all aspects of cotton production and processing. There were excellent presentations on country reports, traceability, new

varieties, fibre quality, biotechnology, molecular breeding, nanotechnology, novel production practices and climate change. I tried to capture the essence of all presentations in the proceedings to ensure a panoramic brief that covered all the sessions. The country reports presented here with graphs and images will enable the reader to gain an insight into the status of cotton sector in each of the major cotton producing countries in the Mediterranean region. Dr. Negm and his team deserve to be congratulated for the excellent arrangements and great organizational skills. In addition to the very useful technical sessions, the visits to Temple of Luxor, Felucca lunch cruise on the river Nile, the Temple of Hatshepsut, Colossi of Memnon, the sound and light show at the Karnak temple and valley of kings will undoubtedly be unforgettable. Luxor is a great place like no other; it will remain deeply entrenched in the memories of visitors because of the grandeur and scale of its history and culture.

The regional networks are aimed to foster bonds amongst researchers so that they exchange experiences and try to replicate success stories. Dr. Muhammad Tehseen Azhar from University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Pakistan informed me that he met Prof. Dr Youlo Yuan from the Institute of Cotton Research, Chinese Academy of Agriculture Sciences at the Luxor meeting, which instantaneously resulted in a collaborative project in which Dr Azhar's students will be placed in Prof. Yuan's lab for Masters studies funded by China Scholarship Council. The ICAC commends Dr. Azhar and Prof Yuan for their camaraderie and wishes them success in their collaborative research work.