

## 1. Introduction

- <sup>1</sup> The kick-off workshop of the ISSCRI2 Project took place from January 31st to Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 at CIRAD in Montpellier. The partners have agreed upon the workshop period by mid-december 2006. The diffusion of the information on the workshop period and tentative program was completed by mid-January, notably towards various organizations potentially interested by the issues addressed by the ISSCRI2 Project. A specific meeting took place in November 30, 2006 to present ISSCRI2 to French organization (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Développement des Agro-industries du Sud (DAGRIS, formerly-CFDT) and to invite them to the kick-off workshop. The Project coordinator got also the opportunity to attend the January meeting of the Cotton Club (composed of representatives of various organizations concerned by the European cotton policy and the cotton dossier at the WTO level). Two officers at the European Commission involved in the COSCOTON Group are also members of the Cotton Club. This participation provided the opportunity to present the ISSCRI2 Project and to inform about the kick-off meeting.
- <sup>2</sup> In spite of the actions undergone to attract more people to attend the kick-off workshop, only the project partners actually participated. In addition to the scientists directly involved in the implementation of the Project, several CIRAD staff-members providing administrative and technical assistance to the Project coordinator also participated to some sessions of the workshop. Here follows the name list of the workshop participants:

France	CIRAD	Dr Michel FOK, Project Coordinator Ms Cindy Van Hifte, Contract Monitoring Service Ms Catherine Remondat, Contract Monitoring Service Mr Benoît Cervello, Administrative and Financial Service Mr Hervé Gace, Administrative and Financial Service Mr Michel Giner, Computer Scientist, data base expert Ms Marie-Christine Lambert, Documentation Service
Greece	AUTH	Prof. Konstadinos Mattas Ms Anna Botanaki
Spain	IFAPA	Dr Manuel Arriaza
USA	ICAC	Mr John Mulligan, Information Technology

- <sup>3</sup> All Project partners came with documents they prepared to make interaction easier in a limited duration, according to a pre-agreed workshop program (Annex 1). These documents are attached in Annex 2.
- <sup>4</sup> This report only emphasizes the collective decisions pertaining to each point discussed during the workshop.

## 2. Main outcomes of discussion and collective decision

### 2.1. Financial and administrative issues

- <sup>5</sup> CIRAD has received the first payment from the European Commission (EC) and has implemented money transfer to the Greek and Spanish partners on January 21<sup>st</sup>. These partners have got the needed information to check if the money transfer reaches their respective institutions.
- <sup>6</sup> The presentation by the Financial & Administrative Committee, internal to CIRAD, mainly emphasizes the joint responsibility of all of the Project partners in complying with the commitments of the contract. The Committee members stressed on the presentation of audit certificates and on the record of the time allocated by each partner to the implementation of the Project. Model of Excel Table for time recording is yet available and will be emailed to each partner.

<sup>7</sup> The issue of audit certificate has been raised, in particular owing to its cost when it's provided by external and private auditing service. Since the Project budget for each partner is rather small, the audit cost, which could reach €4000 per certificate, will be relatively high and disproportionate, in particular if two certificates are to be produced during the Project.

<sup>8</sup> Since the partnering institutions are public bodies for which audit by a public entity is accepted, it is requested to the Greek and Spanish partners to provide to the Financial and Administrative Committee the name and quality of the people from public entities that may provide the audit certificate at lower cost. The Committee will then check along the EC officer whether this process will be acceptable.

## **2.2. Project presentation and clarification**

<sup>9</sup> This presentation did not rise up any discussion. The presentation enabled to show how financial resources are allocated to each task. The distributed documents can help to know in detail what are the resources allocated to each individual task and how they are distributed to each partner.

## **2.3. Publicity on the Project**

<sup>10</sup> All partners have yet started giving publicity on the ISSCRI2 Project. In Greece and in Spain, the main cotton stakeholders have yet been contacted. Globally, it comes out that the Project is welcome as people understand that it could help them to be heard at the EC level.

<sup>11</sup> The Project coordinator reminds that one should not only focus on the players directly involved in the cotton sectors. In case they exist, organisations from the civil society should not be overlooked if they pay attention to the EU Agricultural policy in general, or to the cotton policy in particular.

## **2.4. Project leaflets or flyers**

<sup>12</sup> It is retained to have Project flyers in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Greek. Although Greek and Spanish versions might not be necessarily required as most cotton sector stakeholders in Greece and Spain can command English, it was decided that the production of Greek and Spanish versions could be a positive sign of the participative and bottom-up approach that ISSCRI2 is favouring.

<sup>13</sup> The draft of the contents of the Project flyers (conceived by using Powerpoint) has been discussed and amended. Before Feb. 7, the coordinator will send to each partner the Powerpoint and pdf files of the amended version of the flyers so as to enable translation into national languages. It was decided to have a Project logo. The Project coordinator will submit a logo proposal by Feb. 7. He will also proceed to achieve an attractive design for the Project flyers.

<sup>14</sup> Finalization of the flyers contents is scheduled at Feb. 21. Edition of the flyers is targeted at mid-March. So far, it is contemplated to edit Fifty copies of the Spanish version, one hundred copies in Greek. Figures are not yet decided for the French and English versions. Anyway, many more copies in English are desirable as ICAC yet proposes to intermediate in distributing the flyers at the various meetings it will organize and attend.

## **2.5. Project website**

<sup>15</sup> The Project partners have decided that the Project website will only bilingual, English and French, administered by the Project coordinator. It will be mentioned that some documents will nevertheless be available in original languages.

<sup>16</sup> Owing to the assistance from the CIRAD information service, the website is expected to be operational by mid-March, before the venue of the forthcoming Annual meeting of the African Cotton Association.

<sup>17</sup> As a consequence of the contacts established by the Project partners in Greece and Spain, the Project has yet in hand a substantial list of websites or portals to which the ISSCRI website could be linked.

<sup>18</sup> The project partners agree on the website map which has been submitted. The Project

coordinator will finalize the texts associated to the website by Feb. 16 to send them for amendments by the Project partners. These texts will be short ones hence preventing visitors to have to scroll down.

- <sup>19</sup> The Project partners almost agree with the proposed design for the banner of the website. It could be improved by including 1-2 photos more. The project partners will interact during the week 6 to cross-propose alternative photos so that the banner design will be finalized at the end of the week 6.
- <sup>20</sup> The Project partners agree that shorter is the URL of the Project website, better it will be. Hence, it could make sense to register for a specific domain without excessive cost, enabling in the same time to benefit from a specific email address. They regret that the Project name ("ISSCRI2") is not so much appealing, but there is little room to amend it without diverging from the Project official document. They finally propose to simply the Project title to "ISSCRI" after observing that the domain name of "isscri.org" is still available ("ISSCRI" would be better but the domain "ISSCRI.org" is already allocated).
- <sup>21</sup> The Project coordinator implicitly has contemplated to host the ISSCRI website at CIRAD's server. The ICAC proposes to host this website to make the Project better visible by cotton people. In this case, ICAC could even take charge of the domain registration fees. This proposition is a clear sign of the positive mind ICAC is showing towards the Project.
- <sup>22</sup> The Project coordinator however has to check whether these ideas (specific Internet domain and ICAC hosting) are compatible with the rules of the CIRAD Information Service which is providing its assistance in finalizing the website. The Project coordinator will inform his partners, by the end of the week 6, the decision taken in these areas. Meanwhile, John Mulligan of ICAC will provide the needed information to eventually proceed to domain registration.
- <sup>23</sup> The Project partners have also started identifying the list of keywords to characterize their website, in several languages, so that it could be found easily by browsers activated by potential visitors from various cotton countries.

## **2.6. Individual interviews of cotton sector stakeholders**

- <sup>24</sup> The Project partners agree with adjusting the ambition of these interviews with the allocated means which are limited. Statistical representativity cannot be targeted at. Instead, it is retained to concentrate the interviews in the most important production region, notably in Greece where production is distributed in several regions.
- <sup>25</sup> The interviews will be implemented by following guidelines which has to be finalized. Interviews should not exceed 30 minutes to prevent interviewees to get bored.
- <sup>26</sup> The Project partners, in particular in Greece and Spain, will interact to finalize these guidelines which should encompass a hardcore of questions common to every category of stakeholders and a few additional questions which are specific to each category. This interaction should end up by Feb. 17 enabling then to start implementing interviews right after.
- <sup>27</sup> It is retained not to only focus on the players directly involved in the Greek and Spanish cotton sectors. Organizations of the civil society could be interviewed as well if there are any which actually pay attention to the CAP and the EU cotton policy. Besides, environmental and societal aspects should not be overlooked during the interviews.

## **2.7. National cotton seminars**

- <sup>28</sup> These seminars will follow the completion of the individual interviews of various categories of players concerned by the EU cotton policy. They also must be organized before the summer holidays to ensure sufficient participation.
- <sup>29</sup> The Project partners so far retain to organize one-day seminar in a week day. Tentative dates are May 18 in Greece and May 25 in Spain.
- <sup>30</sup> The seminars will firstly permit the ISSCRI Project to report on the interviews it conducted before having the cotton stakeholders to interact on particular issues whose importance have emerged during the interview stage.

<sup>31</sup> The cross-country participation of the project partners will take place, enabling then all the project partners to meet in both national seminars in Greece and in Spain. ICAC representative is also invited to participate. As national seminars will be conducted in national languages, each national partner will arrange whisper-translation to the foreign participants.

<sup>32</sup> The Project partners believe that the participation of EC cotton officers surely will be well appreciated by the cotton sector stakeholders. The Project hence will duly inform the relevant persons to attract their actual participation.

## **2.8. New Network of scientists**

<sup>33</sup> The Project partners decide to start setting up informally a network of cotton socio-economists, before deciding moving towards more formalisation. At the first informal stage, it is hence not yet accurate to talk about the network status before deciding upon its nature (association? Club? Forum?..)

<sup>34</sup> The Project partners retained to adopt the tentative name of NECSO for the new network, for "Network of Cotton Socio-Economists". Membership will not be restrictive to people with academic background in socio-economics but open to scientists addressing socio-economic aspects of cotton production and supply.

<sup>35</sup> As leader of the WP3, Prof. Mattas will provide a draft text on the objectives of the network. It is expected to have this text be finalized by mid-March. The dynamism and the impact of the targeted network will depend on the real participation of members. So, membership could be conditional to the contribution of each member to feed the literature reference data base which could be regarded both as the origin and the effect of the targeted network.

## **2.9. Literature reference data base**

<sup>36</sup> The pre-prototype of the data base to record literature references is almost finalized under the Access software. This contracted deliverable has been demonstrated in particular to show the originality of the hierarchic thesaurus of key societal issues related to cotton production. Its practical function to assist in characterizing research documents has been well captured by all partners.

<sup>37</sup> The tentative name of this data base is "COLIRE", its meaning in French sounds quite relevant to its purpose.

<sup>38</sup> The Project partners have decided to amend the proposed hierarchic thesaurus by using it to test characterizing existing research documents. Each partner will implement this test for 5-10 documents till the end of February. The originality of the resulting output gives room to contemplate intellectual protection.

<sup>39</sup> The Project partners also have decided to try to move towards the conversion of the Access data base into an Internet tool which will be far better adapted to the targeted specification of decentralized and shared feeding of the data base. Although this will be going beyond the contractual commitment of the ISSCRI Project, the conversion seems to be valuable enough to deserve a quick try.

<sup>40</sup> The documentation service of CIRAD thinks that it should be possible to achieve this conversion by adapting existing software carried out for library management purpose. The PMB software ([http://www.sigb.net/index\\_logiciel.php](http://www.sigb.net/index_logiciel.php)) encompasses the function of hierarchic thesaurus and enables multilingual usage. This open-source software appears to be adjusted to our purpose. One colleague of the CIRAD documentation service will check the desired adaptation till mid-march. The final decision of achieving an Internet tool will hence be taken by the end of March 2007.

## **2.10. International cotton conference**

<sup>41</sup> The calibre of the foreseen conference depends on funding. The financial resource currently available within the Project will not allow envisaging a too much ambitious calibre. The Project coordinator reports his feeling about the fact that the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is changing its mind in co-organizing the conference, as opposed to what was felt at the conception of the Project. This change is reducing the prospects of getting

additional fund.

- <sup>42</sup> The Project partners have decided to set up a deadline in trying to obtain official and secure additional funding. This deadline is fixed at the end of June 2007. If no prospect of additional funding appears at this deadline, the Project partners will format the international conference according to the financial means they have.
- <sup>43</sup> The Project partners favour the idea of organizing a conference by and for socio-economists dealing with cotton production. In the opposite of the former events under the auspices of the Europe-Africa cotton initiative, the ISSCRI conference will mainly give the floor to scientists, although open to the attendance by various cotton stakeholders. The conference theme could turn around the sharing of experiences about the evolution of the cotton support policies in various countries which have been providing such a support. Countries of potential interest are: India, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Francophone African countries, China, Syria, USA, Mexico and Paraguay.
- <sup>44</sup> The conference communications will be a combination of invited papers on historic overviews of cotton policies in the above mentioned countries and of selected papers proposed by participating scientists. The presentation of the ISSCRI analysis of the New EU Cotton policy, as well as the first outcomes of the ICAC-monitored Panel on the Social, Economic and Environmental Performances of cotton production, will be part of the invited papers.
- <sup>45</sup> The Project coordinator will propose a first draft of the Conference objectives by mid-March.
- <sup>46</sup> Owing to its limited financial resources, the Project will consider taking only charge of the accommodation fees of the invited speakers. Besides, it is retaining to ask for registration fees at reasonable level (US\$ 250-300, about half of what is now requested by most international conference).
- <sup>47</sup> Electronic proceedings of the conference papers will be ensured. The Project partners consider that the edition of a book could make the conference more attractive to potential contributors and participants. This book could assemble all the invited papers and the most relevant among the selected papers from participants. The challenge will be to find a publisher, of institutional renown, to edit the targeted book. The Project coordinator will interact with the members of the Cotton Club to explore whether their respective institutions could consider ensuring the publisher role.
- <sup>48</sup> ICAC has yet declared its support to co-organize the conference. It has taken notice of the Project's request for some financial support to share the cost of some invited speakers.
- <sup>49</sup> The Project will also try to contact the European Association of Agricultural Economists and the International Association of Agricultural Economists to explore their sponsoring of the targeted conference.
- <sup>50</sup> Montpellier could be a convenient venue for the Conference at reasonable cost. The Project partners are nevertheless open to another conference spot, for instance in Brussels, notably in case of appropriation of the conference by European organizations which provide additional funding. Dr Arriaza will explore the possibility of having the conference be hosted in Spain. The decision on the conference venue will be taken in May 2007 at the latest.
- <sup>51</sup> The Conference will be held in English. If organized in France, simultaneous translation in French will be sought as much as possible, under the reservation of complementary funding by institutions in France. The Project coordinator can only start looking for this complementary funding after the decision on the conference venue.