

INTRODUCTION

The www.acp-cotton.org website was developed within the framework of European Union – Africa Partnership on cotton, under the guidance of the Joint ACP-EU Cotton Steering Committee (CSC-Cotton). The Committee is in charge with the coordination and the monitoring of the implementation of the partnership's Cotton Action Plan.

This website is dedicated to the dissemination of information that is continually updated and originates from various institutional and private actors involved in African cotton. Accordingly, its main objective is to be a Platform (HUB) aiming to initiate, through its “E-forum” and for various panels identified among the actors, an interface for exchange and proposals on key issues related to the African cotton sectors (e.g. national and regional strategies, competitiveness, research, etc.).

WEBSITE CONTENT AND USE

The website includes seven headings that are seen on the green vertical band located top-left of the screen. From top to bottom, the headings read as follows:

NB. Clicking on the English flag (top-right of the screen) will give access to English headings and sub-headings.

1. **“News”**: Cotton news from African, international and institutional press, referring mainly to African cotton and its related sectors, selected on the basis of the themes of the Cotton Action Plan, namely : (1) International trade; (2) National and regional cotton strategies; (3) Policies and institutions; (4) Technological innovation (e.g. GM cotton); (5) Risk management and finance; (6) Value Chain integration; and; (7) Coordination and support to cotton sector.

NB. By default, the four or five latest news items are classified in the **“news”** window in reverse chronological order. To access more news, click on **“news”** window title or on **“read all the news”**, bottom-right of the window. Two windows open on the screen: the window **“the 3 latest news”** open on top, followed by the **“previous news”** window. Clicking on **“view archives”** window (bottom-right of the screen) will give a full access to the news archives.

From January 1, 2009, each news item has the following structure:-

- If the reference article(s) is (are) in French: title in French, followed by English title. **“read more”** gives access to an outline of the article contents (both French and English). Right of the outline, the **“additional information”** window leads to the original article(s).

- If the reference article(s) is (are) in English: same as above, with English title and outline presented prior to French.

2. **“Documents”**: Documents are classified in several sub-headings, each one showing a distinct structure. From the top of the screen, the headings are :- (1) Programs and projects of specific support to cotton; (2) National and regional strategies; (3) National and regional policies; (4) Workshops (communications made during workshops and regional and international conferences on cotton); (5) Specific studies on cotton; and; (6) Other documents (e.g. standards, rules, etc.).

NB. Clicking on the Internet link accompanying the title of the requested document will open the download window.

3. **“Calendar”**: Major national, regional and international cotton-related events scheduled for the coming months (conferences, workshops, etc.).

NB. By default, the last three events are chronologically classified in the **“calendar”** window. To access more events, click on **“read all events”**. A column- shaped calendar is displayed, the left-hand column corresponding to the week running during the consultation of www.cotton-acp.org website. To seek former and future events, click on **“previous weeks”** and **“next weeks”**, respectively. Clicking on any selected event and on the links of the **“additional information”** window (on the right) will give additional details.

Access to information is facilitated with the **advanced search engine**, selecting one (or several) of the following criteria: (1) Keywords; (2) News, documents and/or events; (3) Themes of the Cotton Action Plan (choosing among seven themes); (4) Country (select in the drop-down list); and; (5) Period (use “cal” to specify beginning and end dates). Finally, validate before displaying the results.

4. **“EU-ACP Partnership”**: Three types of information are found under this heading, each one showing a distinct structure. From the top to the bottom of the screen :- (1) Minutes of CSC-Cotton meetings from its creation and conceptual notes; (2) Reference documents of the Paris Forum on cotton (July 2004); and; (3) The partnership’s Cotton Action Plan and various updates on EU-ACP Partnership on cotton. Click on the selected title to download the required information.

5. **“CSC-Cotton”**: List of the CSC-Cotton current members.

6. **“Actors”**: From the top of the screen, this heading lists the main actors of the African cotton sectors, classified according to the following categories :- (1) Regional Producers Associations; (2) National and Regional Cotton Research Centres; (3) European Commission's Delegations; (4) Federations of processing cotton Industries; (5) Regional Federations of processing cotton Industries; (6) Inter-branch cotton-producing Organisations; (7) Relevant National Ministries; (8) Promotion, regulatory and/or monitoring bodies; (9) Producers; (10) Programmes/Projects; and; (11) Private cotton Companies and processing Industries.

7. **“Links”**: From the top of the screen, this heading lists the international partners’ links, classified according to the following categories :- (1) Cotton Companies (and Associations); (2) International trade; (3) Bilateral Cooperation; (4) Financial institutions; (5) NGOs; (6) International Organizations; (7) ACP Regional Organizations; and; (8) Research.

PRIVILEGED LINKS

In addition, the website homepage shows two privileged links :- (1) a link with an outstanding cotton event in which the CSC-Cotton is directly involved (currently, one may read details about the seminar on GM cotton which took place in Burkina Faso in September 2008; the various communications can be read when clicking on this link); and; (2) a link with “all ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme” website which includes an important component of support to African cotton and to CSC-Cotton’s activities. Clicking on the link at the bottom of the screen will open the website homepage.

NEXT STEPS

The website is being developed gradually. Various evolutions are foreseen such as the formalization of Internet partnerships, a better operation of the E-forum, and the optimisation of classification procedures and information retrieval., We therefore welcome your suggestions and contributions to further improve the level and quality of information provided. Kindly send them to PBerthelot@emergingmarketsgroup.com. They will be treated as soon as possible and according to resources available.

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