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SPRING

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EU & WWF-Pakistan launch "SPRING"

for sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan Ginning SMEs

Bahawalpur:

WWF-Pakistan formally launched their latest project, the Switch Asia Program, "Sustainable cotton production in Pakistan's cotton ginning SMEs" (SPRING) funded by the European Union (EU) at the Bahawalpur Chamber of Commerce & Industry complex on March 30, 2012. WWF-Pakistan will be implementing the project in partnership with WWF-UK & Pakistan Cotton Ginners' Association.

Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), Small Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA), Cleaner Production Institute (CPI), National Textile University (NTU) & All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) are among project stakeholders.

SPRING aims to specifically support cotton ginning SME's in Pakistan as a step to ensure sustainability

across the supply chain from the farm to final product. Research and capacity building activities planned under the new four year initiative which will foster knowledge / experience sharing, capacity building of ginning SME's and will develop linkages between EU cotton retailers/brands with the support of key stakeholders, such as Pakistan Cotton Ginners' Association (PCGA), SMEDA, Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute (PCSI), NTU and CPI.

At the launch, Mr. Ali Hasan Habib, Director General WWF-Pakistan welcomed the chief guest of the ceremony, the honourable EU ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Pierre Mayaudon for expressing his keen interest in the project. He also thanked the invitees from the cotton textile sector, government agencies, and partner organizations. He spoke about the long association between the EU and WWF-Pakistan in different conservation & developmental projects.

Dr. Ghulam Akbar, Senior Director WWF-Pakistan then spoke and analyzed the importance of this project in context of improving sustainable cotton supply chain development & enhancing the access of Pakistani cotton producers to the EU markets.



The launching ceremony of the project was chaired by EU ambassador to Pakistan His Excellency Pierre Mayaudon and he expressed the gratitude to WWF-Pakistan for its efforts regarding environment protection & nature conservation. Ms Roshan Ara Programme Manager EC was also accompanying the EU ambassador during this visit.

EU AMBASSADOR VISITS FARMING COMMUNITY



Honourable EU ambassador to Pakistan His Excellency Pierre Mayaudon during his visit to Bahawalpur to chair the launching ceremony of WWF-Pakistan SWITCH Asia SPRING project, visited the cotton farming community at a nearby village 24 B.C. Colourful spectacle of the beautifully decorated camel claded in EU & Pakistani flags fascinated the onlookers with its charm and graceful dance on the traditional music. The exhibition of embroidered dresses, bed sheets & items related to women and children displayed by home based worker women was also arranged for the esteemed visitors by Rural Sustainable Development Organization; an NGO working in collaboration with WWF-Pakistan in order to empower women and farming communities by providing health, environmental education & income generation. The craftswomen were trained in vocational centers to create traditional dresses & items in order to get better income generation.

WWF-Pakistan's projects embed a strong element of Decent Work targeted at socio-economic development of poor women with the objective of creating and sustaining self-reliance among resource poor households while the community members are also given awareness about gender and social issues. Later the rural men & women trained under WWF-Pakistan Sustainable Cotton Initiative demonstrated the best practices in cotton picking, farm health & safety measures.

In the later part of the afternoon, honorable Ambassador visited Awami Cotton Factory, where Mr. Suhail Harral Managing Director of the ginning facility & Mr. Aman Ullah Qureshi chairman PCGA accompanied the guests on a guided tour of the factory in order to explain different production processes in a typical ginning factory.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME, WWF - Pakistan

As part of its Global Conservation Programme, WWF-Pakistan aims to help make agricultural commodities like cotton and sugarcane cultivation part of a sustainable industry so as to make its production environment friendly and to reduce its footprint on ecosystems. Accordingly, the projects are designed and implemented under the freshwater and commodities footprint and contribute to MTGI (Market Transformation Global Initiative).

WWF - Pakistan, which is country's largest environmental organization, has been working with businesses, Government, farmers, research institutes and other organisations to discover and demonstrate ways of growing sustainable cotton and sugarcane in Pakistan through efficient use of water, chemical fertilisers and pesticides since 1999. Sustainable Agriculture Programme (SAP) is the outcome of WWF-Pakistan efforts towards sustainable agriculture as a holistic, scientific approach and a participatory movement for socio-economic transformation that endorses & respects local knowledge and values for better Ecosystem Management.

SAP aims at empowerment & capacity building of the marginalized resource poor farmers' communities through innovation and dissemination of economically efficient ecological farming solutions & technologies, linkage development for agri commodities, supply chain improvement, ensuring food security & promotion of Decent Work for All.



EU Ambassador at Local Gathering



EU Ambassador Looking at Traditional Hand Loom



MOAS SIGNED BETWEEN SWITCH Asia-SPRING Project Stakeholders, Partners & WWF-Pakistan



MOA Signing Ceremony at NTU

National Textile University (NTU):

Being the premier textile institution of Pakistan, NTU is expected to provide support to project activities involving collation, review and technical evaluation of best practices for sustainable and efficient cotton ginning. NTU is also expected to provide valuable input regarding technological up-gradation of participating ginning SMEs.

A Memorandum of Agreement between WWF-P and National Textile University (NTU) was recently signed. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mumtaz, Director External Relations NTU expressed that through this collaboration both NTU & WWF-Pakistan will explore the possibilities of promoting research on Better Ginning Practices supporting SWITCH Asia-SPRING project activities.

Pakistan Cotton Ginners' Association (PCGA):

PCGA being the only representative organization of ginning SMEs in Pakistan makes it a natural partner of the SWITCH Asia-SPRING project. As the target beneficiaries are its members, the PCGA plays vital role in providing input for identification and endorsement of BGPs (Better Ginning Practices), interaction with member gins, motivating them and ensuring their participation in the project. Mr. Arif H. Makhdom, Director SAP WWF-Pakistan thanked PCGA for extending cooperation & hoped that enhanced capacities of PCGA members will ensure sustainability of the project objectives.

PCGA will support in endorsement, promotion and wider dissemination of BGPs via different communication strategies, assist in organizing meetings for ginning SMEs. WWF-Pakistan as part of promotion of better cotton

procurement will extend information regarding the locality, quantity, quality of better cotton available with producer organization to PCGA in order to develop new market channels for BC grower and ginners.

Center for the Improvement of Working Conditions & Environment (CIWCE):

One of the important component of SWITCH Asia-SPRING project is creation of an enabling environment for social standards implementation; Decent Work for All. For this WWF-Pakistan has collaborated with Centre for the Improvement of Working Conditions & Environment (CIWCE). CIWCE is a pioneering institution in Pakistan for providing professional services in the fields of occupational health, safety and environment (OHS&E). It is part of the Labour & Human Resource Department in the Government of Punjab, Pakistan.

As per the Memorandum of Agreement, CIWCE will provide technical support to WWF-Pakistan in SWITCH Asia SPRING project in Training & Education on OHS & E, OHS & E Risk Assessment, Gender Issues at workplace & Labour Laws and Compliances

Moreover, MOA with CIWCE will provide technical support for the training and capacity building workshops which will be conducted for improving working conditions in ginning SMEs. CIWCE will collaborate and support WWF-Pakistan in sharing of developed material specific to Decent Work in industries; so that the effective practices can be developed in relation to working conditions in ginning SMEs.

WWF – Pakistan organized Inception Workshop for its European Union (EU) funded project “Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs”

To define coordination protocol for ensuring effective implementation between WWF-Pakistan staff, project partners, consultants and stakeholders; WWF - Pakistan organized a two day inception workshop for its four year EU Switch-Asia funded project titled “Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs” (SPRING) on March 28th & 29th, 2012 in Bahawalpur. The workshop was an opportunity to understand each other's roles and responsibilities and strengthen the team's understanding and ability to deliver on EU expectations and obligations.

The two day workshop was attended by senior management of WWF - International, WWF - UK & WWF - Pakistan. Moreover, representatives from partner organizations and stakeholders including Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), IKEA, Levi Strauss & Co., Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute (PCSI), Pakistan Cotton Ginners' Association (PCGA), Small & Medium Enterprise and Development Authority (SMEDA), Cleaner Production Institute (CPI) and University of Agriculture - Faisalabad (UAF) also actively participated to plan effective coordination, defining responsibilities & bridging communication gaps throughout the project.



A MESSAGE on the launch of SPRING NEWS

by **Chairman PCGA**



Mr. Aman Ullah Qureshi, chairman Pakistan Cotton Ginners' Association (PCGA) has sent best wishes to the SPRING NEWS editorial team & SWITCH Asia-SPRING project staff on behalf of member ginning SMEs of PCGA for launching the project newsletter. In his message he assured all-out support to WWF-Pakistan in implementation and execution of SWITCH Asia-SPRING project which is vital in improving the overall ginning efficiency, fiber quality and sustainable cotton production. He further added that PCGA is thankful to European Commission for providing support to this project that will bring positive changes in the Pakistani cotton supply chain through reduction of the environmental costs, promotion of environmental friendly practices and efficient utilization of resources available ultimately increasing the supply of better cotton.

“ I assure all-out support to WWF-Pakistan in implementation and execution of SWITCH Asia-SPRING project which is vital in improving the overall ginning efficiency, fiber quality & sustainable cotton production. ”

Interesting Facts About COTTON FOOTPRINT

1. The Aral Sea lost 80 percent of its volume due to water being diverted for cotton upstream.
2. Nearly 70 percent of the all cotton is grown in 5 countries i.e. China (25 percent), USA (17.8 percent), India (10.2 percent), Pakistan (9.5 percent), and Uzbekistan (6.1 percent).
3. Cotton crops in China rely completely on irrigation- severely depleting and polluting fresh water supplies.
4. Cotton is planted on 2.4 percent of the planet's arable land, but accounts for 24 percent of all insecticides and 11 percent of global pesticides.
5. While 60 percent of the nitrogen applied to cotton fields is removed via harvested seed cotton, 40 percent of it remains behind, mostly in the local fresh water supply.
6. 2.6 percent of the global water footprint is used to grow and process cotton each year.
7. 44 percent of the water used for growing and processing cotton is exported.

Source: www.airdye.com

WWF-Pakistan & Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute (MINTEX) sign MoA

Pakistan's cotton is inherently of good quality, but improper picking practices, lack of good practices at post harvest handling stage at the farm level as well as absence of fibre quality control measures at ginning leads to depreciation of the value of raw cotton resulting in reduced quality of textile products.

As part of its EC funded SWITCH Asia SPRING project, WWF-Pakistan, in collaboration with Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute, intends to introduce standardization of cotton among ginning SMEs and bring their product at par with the internationally accepted standards for improving the competitiveness of Pakistan's raw cotton as well as ensuring better returns to cotton farmers, ginners, spinners, exporters and the national economy.

In order to formalize this partnership the two organizations inked the MoA during a ceremony held at the Ministry of Textile (MINTEX) which sets out the beginning of a long term partnership. As per the memorandum WWF-P and Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute will jointly undertake activities pertaining to cotton fiber quality & standards. Specifically, the agreement aims to support activities that promote capacity building of the ginning industry with reference to maintaining cotton fibre quality parameters & to promote better ginning practices among the cotton ginning SMEs of Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest Mr. Shahid Rasheed, Federal Secretary MINTEX said in his speech that the current context marked by the increased interest of global cotton brands in sourcing sustainable cotton, current EC funded SWITCH project will provide an opportunity to local textile industry to align itself against global standards. He particularly insisted on the importance to develop concrete projects that involve building the capacity of textile industry in resource conservation & value addition.

Dr Ghulam Akbar, Senior Director Programmes WWF-Pakistan underlined that the promotion of better ginning practices for better cotton quality which will work as an instrument of sustainability in the textile sector of Pakistan benefitting thousands of better cotton farmers, ginning SMEs & textile processing sector.

Mr. Arif H. Makhdam, Director Sustainable Agriculture Programme thanked Mr. Liaqat Ali Khan, Joint Director PCSI for his extended support in planning phase of the SWITCH Asia project and hoped that if these standards are implemented and maintained throughout the supply chain, Pakistan's better cotton will fetch better price in international market.



What is EU SWITCH-Asia Programme?



The European Union's regional environment programme SWITCH-Asia aims to promote Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and consumer groups in Asia. The SCP approach seeks to reconcile the increased demand for goods and services that respond to basic needs, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste, in order not to jeopardize future needs.

To achieve this objective, the Programme works simultaneously on the ground, with producers and consumers, and at the level of policy-making through supporting for formulation and implementation of SCP-related policies.



SWITCH Asia project team organizes

“BASIC LIFE SUPPORT & EMERGENCY HANDLING WORKSHOP”

There are numerous safety and health risks in gins, including manual handling of heavy loads, long and irregular working hours, exposure to extreme weather conditions, and handling machinery and equipment without proper training or safety gear. Under SWITCH Asia-SPRING project, WWF-Pakistan aims to improve the working conditions of labourers working in ginning SMEs under Decent Work component as described by ILO. Decent Work is understood as the International Labour Organization's concept of work that provides opportunities for both women and men to work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

In support of project activities pertaining to Occupational Health & Safety, SWITCH Asia project team organized a two day orientation workshop (11-12 July, 2012) on "Basic Life Support & Emergency Handling Workshop" for the management staff of ginning factories in coordination with Punjab Emergency Service (Rescue 1122) at SAP management office Bahawalpur. The Punjab Emergency Service (Rescue 1122) was established for professional management & prevention of emergencies and to recommend measures for mitigation of hazards.

The main objective of the workshop was to create awareness among the ginning staff regarding the possible emergencies which may occur in ginning factory and the measures to mitigate these, such as fire prevention and handling work related accidents.

“Raising Awareness of basic life support and emergency handling through this workshop among working staff of ginning factories will enable them to protect themselves & other colleagues in occurrence of any accident. PES in collaboration with WWF-Pakistan is pleased to extend its outreach to people working at farms and ginning factories.” said the chief guest Mr. Asif Raheem Channar, Divisional Emergency officer, Punjab Emergency Rescue 1122.

Mr. Masood Khaitran, Coordinator Switch Asia thanked participants of the workshop and professional trainers of 1122 and hoped that this collaboration will continue in future.

SWITCH Asia-SPRING Project STEP-1

Ginners Trained for Cotton Selection & Grading

Sukkur:

Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute (PCSI), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Textile Industry is working towards maintaining cotton standards and ensuring the quality of cotton through trainings for cotton quality assurance. As part of SPRING project objectives, WWF-Pakistan arranged a “Cotton Selector Training Course” in collaboration with Pakistan Cotton Standards Institute (PCSI) for building the capacity of STEP-1 ginners on cotton selection & grading standards. The workshop continued from May 07 to May 31, 2012. Eighteen ginners were trained in different concepts of cotton quality standards & selection as well as in operation of latest fiber testing instruments in PCSI's cotton fiber testing laboratory at Sukkur.

The objective of the training was to give knowledge regarding standards and grading of seed cotton and lint. They learnt proper techniques used for sampling seed cotton and lint with reference to fiber quality. If these standards are implemented and maintained throughout the supply chain then Pakistan's better cotton can attain better price in international market.

The training was a chance for ginners to get an on hand experience of improved sampling techniques and measuring fiber quality parameters such as fiber grading length strength, color grades, micronaire value etc. The participants of the training also gained knowledge about proper seed cotton storage, moisture control, heap formation & ginning machine-handling techniques to prevent cotton lint damage during ginning operations. After the training, the participating ginners appraised the workshop as very useful in enabling them to classify cotton based on the grades as devised by PCSI. The participants were awarded with certificates on successful completion of training course.



SWITCH Asia-SPRING Project Implementing Strategy

To achieve the Project's objectives,

The project will work with 30 gins to demonstrate more sustainable ginning practices (and business benefits)

Develop BGP Guidelines & build the capacity of 200 gins and key supporting institutions to adopt and support BGPs.

Promote BGPs among further 300 gins (PCGA members) and other cotton producing countries.

Encourage EU retailers to procure better cotton, and strengthen their links with Pakistan gins and to increase supply of better cotton to European markets;

Ginning SMEs will be supported in BGP covering three core areas of Better Cotton Sourcing and Tracking; Ginning Efficiency; Process Efficiency, Energy Efficiency and Waste Management; and Decent Work.

COTTON GINNERS ORIENTATION

Meetings Held at
SWITCH ASIA-SPRING
Regional Project Offices

Bahawalpur, 24 April:



Three Ginnings' Orientation Workshops were arranged by SWITCH Asia Sustainable Cotton Production in Pakistan's Cotton Ginning SMEs (SPRING) in WWF-P SAP offices at Bahawalpur, Sukkur and Rahim Yar Khan. Asad Imran Manager SAP gave a comprehensive presentation regarding introduction of WWF-Pakistan and its mission, along with "SWITCH-Asia" project introduction, objectives, outcomes and core areas of action i.e. better cotton sourcing & bale tracking, process efficiency, energy efficiency, waste management and Decent Work.

Participating ginnings were also given an overview of better cotton system, its requirements, field level implementation, how to access better cotton for procurement, better cotton coding and its tracking throughout the supply chain.

During the meetings, global cotton market trends & development of production & social standards for cotton production were also discussed & consensus among the ginnings was sought for aligning Pakistan cotton industry with international standards to meet brand requirements

SAP, WWF-Pakistan is enhancing the capacity of cotton producers for growing environment friendly better cotton for the last seven years. Efforts made by WWF-Pakistan were appreciated by the participating ginnings, moreover, they mentioned that the cotton produced from WWF-Pakistan intervention areas contained less trash.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Overall "By 2040, sustainable production and consumption in the cotton market worldwide predominates as best practice, resulting in increased environmental sustainability and poverty reduction".

Specifically; "By 2015, at least 500 cotton gin SMEs in Pakistan recognise the benefits of sustainable cotton production, consumption and 40% of these commit to more sustainable production practices, in line with agreed Better Ginning Practice (BGP) guidelines, & supported by the procurement practices of the European retailers"

WWF-Pakistan & Cotton

Pakistan is the 5th largest producer of cotton, 3rd largest exporter of the raw cotton, 4th largest consumer of cotton and the largest exporter of cotton yarn. Despite its economic significance, cotton has a large environmental footprint. It consumes pesticides, chemical fertilizers and water in excess throughout the cropping cycle while at ginneries excessive use of energy & inefficient production processes are common.

WWF-Pakistan is striving to make cotton cultivation in Pakistan more sustainable, currently working with 80,000 cotton farmers over 300,000 ha under the Sustainable Agriculture Programme. In 2010, Pakistan was declared the pioneer country to produce certified "Better Cotton". Through SWITCH-ASIA, WWF-Pakistan aims to expand its efforts further up the supply chain and specifically target cotton ginning SMEs in Pakistan to ensure the development of a sustainable cotton supply chain from the farm to final product.

SPRING PROJECT TEAM STRENGTHENS LINKS

between Better Cotton Producer Organisations and SPRING project ginneries

In order to establish and facilitate a strong linkage between better cotton producers' organizations & ginneries participating in SWITCH Asia-SPRING project a series of three meetings were conducted. The primary aim of the meetings was provision of a chance for the stakeholders to express their expectations and possible cooperation with each other. Participants from both groups were briefed about the importance of better cotton with reference to its global market demand. Moreover, they were also briefed about "SWITCH-Asia" project objectives, outcomes, core areas of action and importance of linkage development between ginneries and producer organization.

In the meetings the ginneries stressed upon the fact that Ginning Out Turn (GOT) largely depends on the quality of seed cotton arriving at the ginning factories. They were of the view that better harvesting & picking practices should be adopted by the farmers so as to minimize the trash & contamination content in the seed cotton. Replying to the arguments made by the ginneries, producer organizations conveyed their views to the ginneries by demanding for a quality based procurement system for better cotton procurement.

Participating ginneries and members from producer organizations agreed upon keeping a close contact with each other for improved procurement of better cotton in the project areas as well as on conducting extensive trainings of farmers for better picking & post harvest handling of seed cotton. The participants were quite hopeful that WWF-Pakistan's recent project will bring positive change in better cotton supply chain and will help in up gradation of existing ginning infrastructure & productivity.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Integrated Gap Analysis regarding Ginning Efficiency, Quality and Productivity will undergo in 45 ginning SMEs with the technical collaboration of CPI (Cleaner Production Institute).
- Signing ceremony of MoA between WWF-Pakistan & Fiber and Textile Technology Department, University of Agriculture Faisalabad.
- Switch Asia SPRING project stakeholders and Partners meeting
- Ginning Industry Safety Risk Assessment Survey in Collaboration with CIWCE (Center for Improvement in Working Conditions & Environment)

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