



ICAC 77th Plenary Meeting

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire 2 - 6 December 2018

Dr Michel Fok

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Michel Fok has a Master's degree in agronomy (major in breeding) and a PhD (agricultural economics). He spent the first decade of his career in Mali to promote food crops and diversification in cotton production areas. Since 1993, he has been focused on the issue of rural development in cotton areas as a scientist of CIRAD and has been involved in studies in various countries, mainly in Africa (Mali, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mozambique,

Tanzania, Côte d'Ivoire), but also in China and Brazil. He has been member of the international expert panel on the Social, Economic and Environmental Performance of Cotton (SEEP), under the auspices of the ICAC, from 2007 to 2015. He is the current Chair of the international Cotton Researchers' Association (ICRA).



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Abstract for Mr. Fok's presentation during the Sixth Breakout Session of 77th Plenary Meeting of the ICAC.

How to Make New Technologies Effective in Africa

Africa lags far behind most of the world in cotton yields. Production techniques have evolved little so it is tempting to apply technologies that work elsewhere and insert them into Africa to increase yields. This presentation describes some examples of these technologies and analyses the constraints to its immediate adoption in terms of production equipment, labor requirements, inputs (or means to acquire them), knowledge, and organisation — but also on the mindset of change, which is partly linked to the economic, social and institutional environments of production. No technology working elsewhere could work immediately in Africa without overcoming specific constraints first. However, the varying extent of the difficulties in overcoming those constraints is a criterion for deciding on the program and the sequence of the technologies to be promoted.