

GTOE-ATBC2009

Abstract of the organized Symposium (session #27)

Title : Cultivation of conventional and organic cotton in West Africa: ecological and economical impact, land use practices and future options.

Goal : This interdisciplinary symposium presents multiple aspects of cotton cultivation in West Africa. For several West African countries, the production of cotton constitutes the most or one of the most important revenues to the country. Studies on the conventional cultivation of cotton revealed significant consequences on land use, biodiversity and socio-economy. Depletion of soils, increasing aridity and financial constraints as increasing prices of fertilizers and pesticides at the same time with decreased productivity have aggravated the situation of cotton farmers, who either abandon cotton production or are forced to change land use practices. In recent years, the production of organic cotton gained increasing importance and offered new opportunities to integrate economical and ecological interests. The application of NTFPs (non-timber forest products) as biological insecticides enlarges the scope of products involved in cotton cultivation. To be in line with the conceptions of organic cotton cultivation, these products also need to achieve the predicate “organic” and require new strategies for sustainable forest management.

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