

AUSTRALIAN COTTON SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE 2023



PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK. is the Australian cotton industry's sustainability framework. It guides work to identify the environmental, social and economic topics assessed as being most important to industry and its stakeholders; coordinate a whole-of-industry strategy to manage these topics, and; engage with stakeholders on actions and progress.

PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK. is not a compulsory standard or a brand. It provides a path for the entire industry to benefit from improving sustainability performance.

PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK. is delivered by a Sustainability Working Group comprised of industry representatives from Cotton Australia, Cotton Research and Development Corporation, CottonInfo, myBMP and the Australian Cotton Shippers Association.



AUSTRALIAN COTTON SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK
PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK.

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2022/2023 SUSTAINABILITY

This snapshot provides a summary of the Australian cotton industry's sustainability progress for the 12 months to 30 June 2023 across its most important PLANET (environment), PEOPLE (social) and PADDOCK (economic) topics.



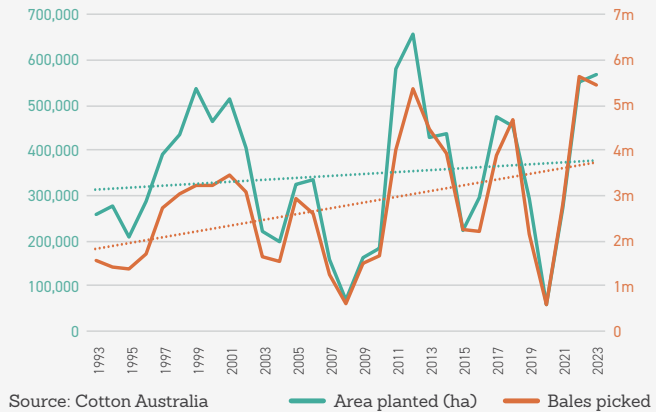
THE FULL 2022/23 SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE AND ADDITIONAL DETAILED INFORMATION IN AN ONLINE DATA PACK IS AVAILABLE HERE >>

2022/2023 SEASON

As cotton is an annual crop, growers adjust the area of cotton they plant each year to reflect water availability.

Good seasonal conditions saw a large area planted and about 5.5 million bales picked valued at \$3.7 billion. Australian cotton growers have dramatically improved their productivity over time: the five-year average area planted to cotton has increased by just 19 per cent since 1994, but total production has increased by 94 per cent.

Australian cotton area and production: 1993 - 2023



	Targeted Outcomes	Five-year trend	2023	KEY 2023 TAKEOUT	SDG Alignment
PLANET	Water Increase water use efficiency, within sustainable river & ground system limits	-	✗	About 50% less water is used to grow a bale of cotton compared to 1997 in most seasons. In very wet (like 2022) or dry seasons, that figure is closer to 40%.	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
	Greenhouse gas emissions Contribute to the Paris Agreements' aim of a climate neutral world	No trend data		Previous year comparisons can't be made due to new input data used to more accurately estimate emissions. Defining a low emission path is a current priority.	13 CLIMATE ACTION
	Native vegetation Native vegetation management on cotton farms contributes to regional priorities	-	-	An ambitious and collaborative project to better manage and measure native vegetation on cotton farms continued to progress.	15 LIFE ON LAND
	Pesticides Support optimal crop production while having no negative impact on human & environmental health	Bees Algae	Bees Algae	The hazard to bees (from insecticides) and algae (from herbicides) has reduced by 91% and 60% respectively since 2004. Wet seasons have contributed to more herbicide use in recent years.	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
	Soil Health Sustained cotton productivity growth by improving soil health	No trend data		Regenerative practices continue to be commonly used by growers. The cotton industry is collaborating with other sectors on a consistent way to measure soil health.	2 ZERO HUNGER
PEOPLE	Workplace Keep farmers & core employees Attract casuals & contractors	No trend data	No trend data	A new approach is being introduced to identify and measure the impact drivers of keeping and attracting people.	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
	Keep everyone safe & skilled	Fatalities Injuries Skills	NA NA NA	Fatalities declined slightly but serious injuries increased. For the first time, research showed misinformation may be impacting grower wellbeing.	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
PADDOCK	Productivity Increase yield within sustainable environmental boundaries	Irrigated Dryland	Irrigated Dryland	The yield gap between irrigated & dryland cotton continued to grow. This shows the key role of sustainably withdrawn water to deliver sustainable intensification.	2 ZERO HUNGER
	Economic contribution Resilient farms able to invest in their business & community		✗	Irrigated cotton is very important to whole farm profitability and resilience, which in turn gives more stability to regional communities.	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH