

MEDIA RELEASE
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Cotton industry appoints independent expert to reassess environmental performance

The Australian cotton industry has commissioned an independent expert to conduct an in-depth assessment of its environmental performance.

The assessment has been commissioned by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC), Cotton Australia and the industry's Sustainability Working Group and is being conducted by respected global firm GHD.

It is the fourth external examination of cotton's environmental performance in 30 years.

"Cotton was the first major Australian agricultural industry to seek a full independent assessment of its environmental impact back in 1991, marking the first cotton-wide commitment to improved sustainability," said CRDC General Manager for R&D Investment, Allan Williams.

"Further assessments in 2003 and 2012 have showcased progress and driven further improvements, and collectively, the industry has committed to undertake assessments every 10 years."

The assessment will review the industry's response to the recommendations from the third environmental assessment in 2012. It will also identify current and emerging environmental issues and their implications, and assess current action against these.

The assessment will include a combination of desktop research, interviews with industry stakeholders, and on-farm visits to farms of all sizes across all growing regions from December 2021 to June 2022.

Industry bodies including the best management practices program, *myBMP*, the industry's extension program, CottonInfo, and sustainability programs will also be reviewed to gauge responsiveness to environmental issues, and on-farm practices will be assessed to ensure they are in line with current and future expectations and trends.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay said the assessment is extremely important to the industry.

"This independent assessment will reveal what we are already doing well, and importantly, also show us what we can do better. We are committed to continuously reviewing and improving our performance," Mr Kay said.

A report from the assessment will be released in late 2022 and the findings will help inform the industry's sustainability efforts, driven by CRDC, Cotton Australia and the Sustainability Working Group under the PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock Sustainability Framework.

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Cotton Australia is the peak body for Australia's cotton growers. www.cottonaustralia.com.au

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