

INTERNATIONAL COTTON GENOME INITIATIVE

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Abstract

The last decade has seen unprecedented advances in the use of DNA technology to unravel the genetic secrets of plants and animals, and to genetically engineer hybrid or transgenic organisms. Cotton has been a leader in the research and commercialization of transgene technology, but future success in cotton improvement will depend on using these new tools to expand our understanding of the fundamental components of the cotton genome. The scientific and technological effort required to study the complex cotton genome is immense and, realistically, can be addressed only by a coordinated, multi-disciplinary, international effort. With this concept in mind, scientists from USA, France and Australia met at CSIRO Plant Industry in Canberra, Australia on February, 2000 to discuss the current status of cotton genetic mapping, DNA markers, genomic research and marker-assisted selection. The outcome of this meeting was the International Cotton Genome Initiative (ICGI). The mission of the International Cotton Genome Initiative is to increase knowledge of the structure and function of the cotton genome for the benefit of the global community, and to facilitate global communication, collaboration, and education, knowledge and resource integration, technology and resource development, and coordinated research planning. The ICGI is a forum for discussing research objectives and promoting and exchanging ideas, and it is open to all researchers interested in the cotton genome. The mission, goals, and structure of the International Cotton Genome Initiative are summarized in The Proceedings of the ICGI 2001 Workshop (available at <http://icgi.tamu.edu>).