



CONSEIL AFRICAIN ET MALGACHE POUR L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR
01 BP 134 OUAGADOUGOU 01 (BURKINA FASO)
TEL (226) 25 36 81 46 - FAX (226) 25 36 85 73 - Email: comes@lecomes.org

COMITES CONSULTATIFS INTERAFRICAINS

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Guirguissou MABOUDOU ALIDOU
Assistant de Recherche

INSTITUT NATIONAL DES RECHERCHES AGRICOLES DU BENIN (INRAB)

CENTRE DE RECHERCHES AGRICOLES NORD-OUEST (CRA-NO)

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COTTON PRODUCTION IN BENIN: FROM COLONIAL SYMBOL TO WHITE GOLD TO PEST

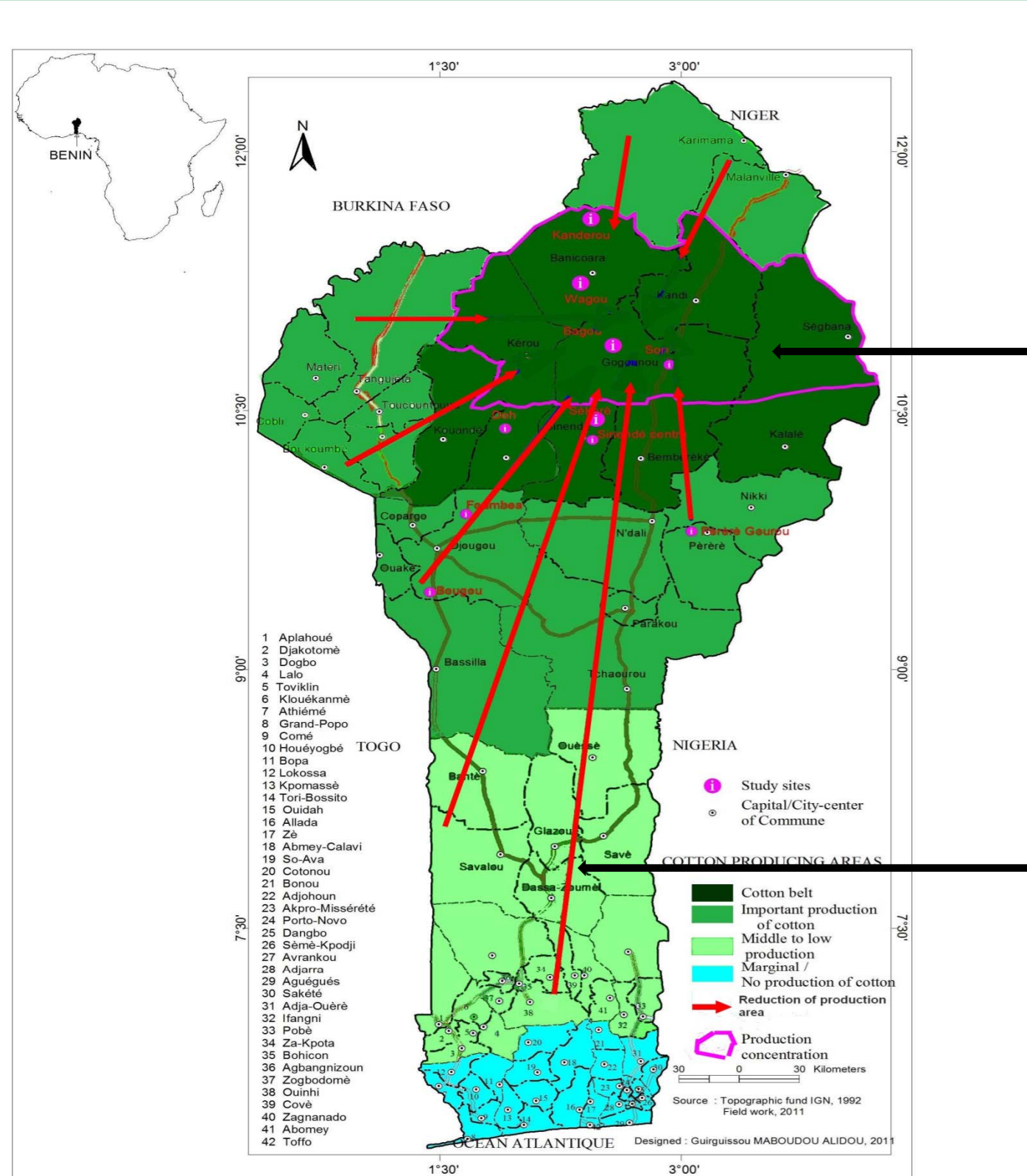
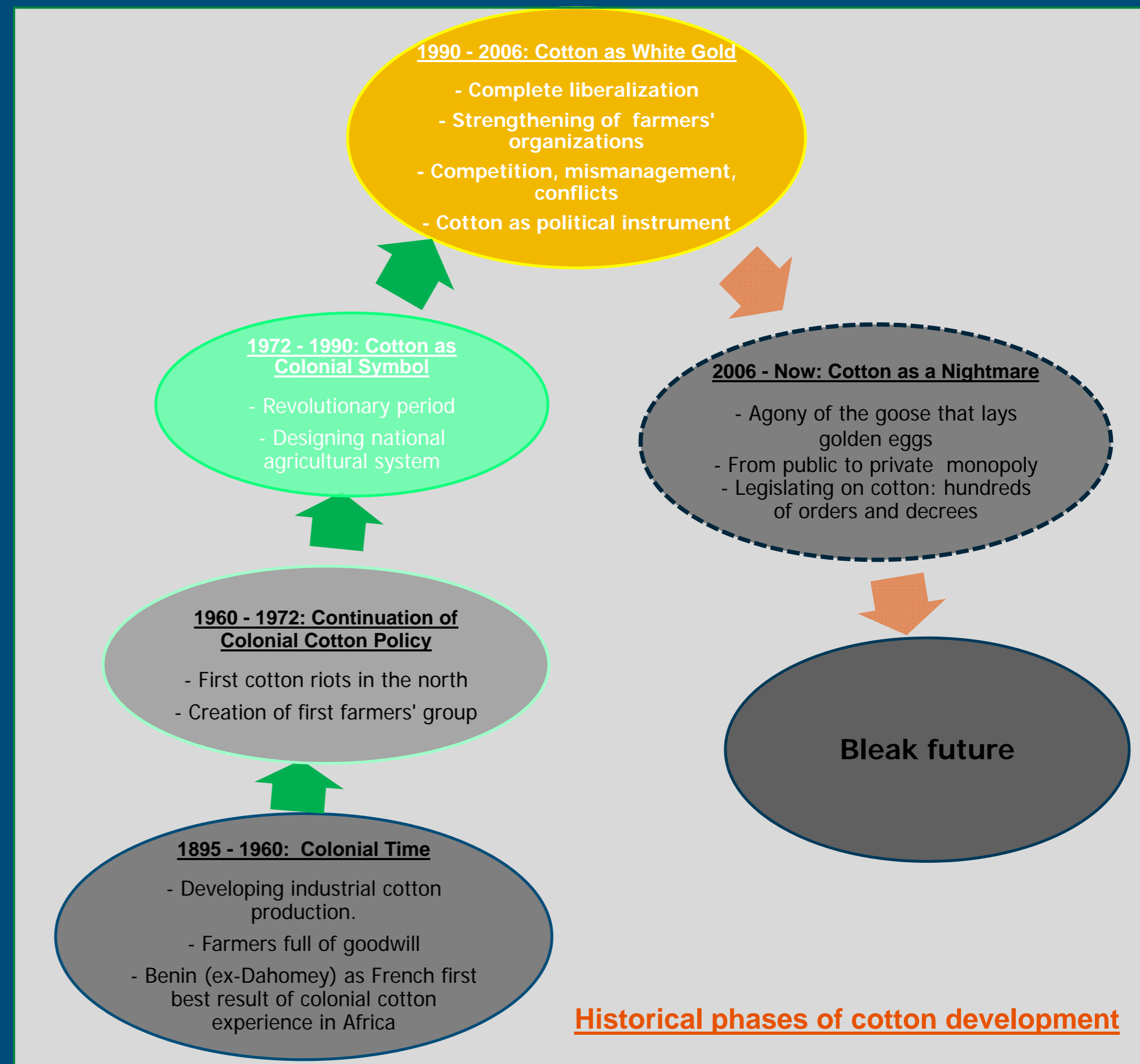
Guirguissou Maboudou Alidou, Frans D. Huijzendveld, Anke Niehof
Wageningen University and Research Center
Correspondence: 1st author at guirguissou@gmail.com



1. IMPORTANCE OF COTTON SECTOR

- Agriculture in Benin: Semi-subsistence system
 - 54% of active population; 25 – 40% of the GDP.
- Cotton: chain-value & main cash crop valuing before 2005:
 - 350,000 farmers & 37% of the total cultivated area
 - 35% of households & 80% of rural household incomes
 - 80% of agricultural exports & 25% of fiscal revenues
 - 60% of the country's industrial sector.
- Why and how such a profitable and critical sector scrambled ?

4. DEVELOPMENT OF COTTON PRODUCTION



2. OBJECTIVES

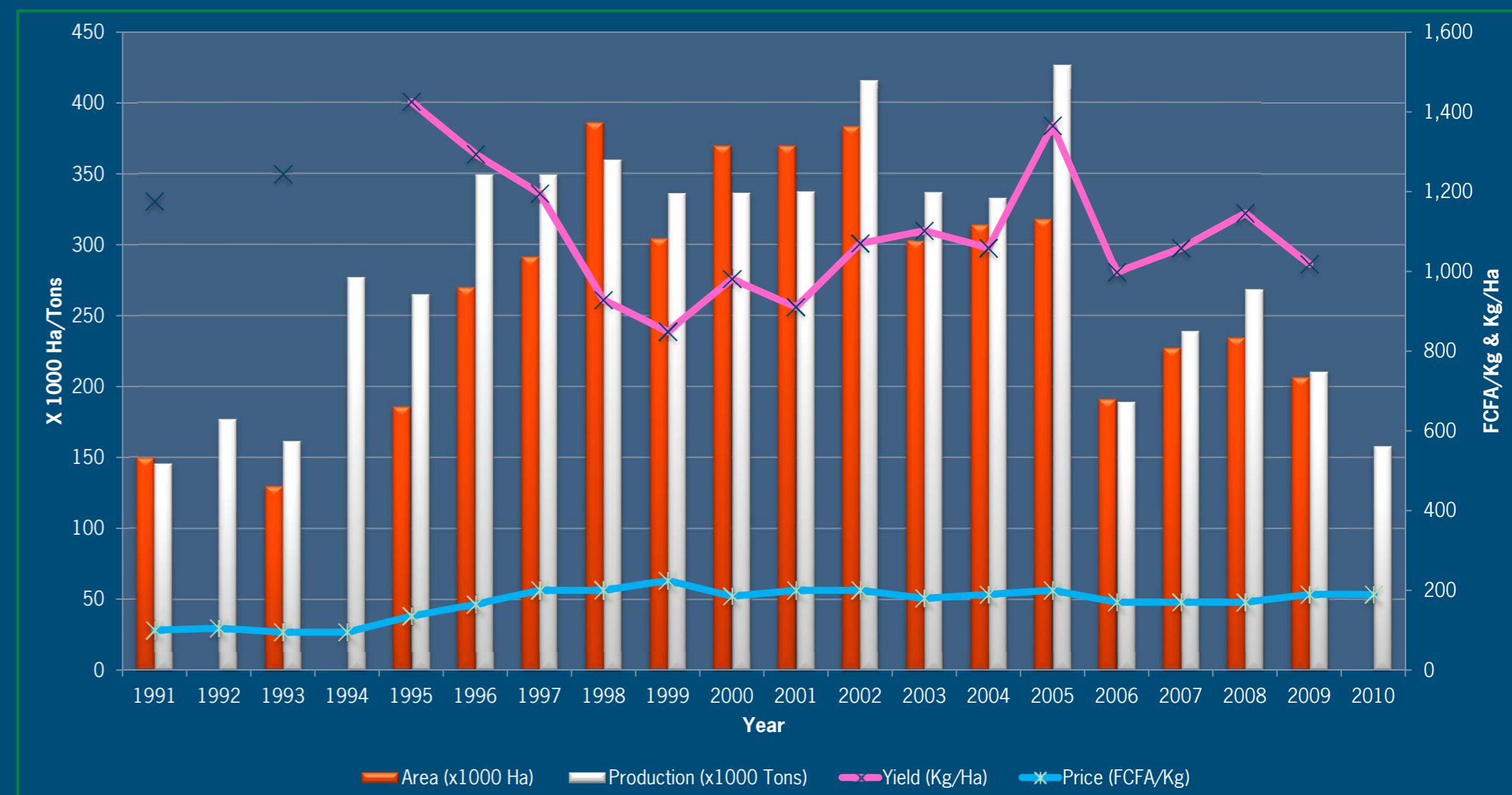
- Analyze the historical evolution of cotton production in relation to the perceptions of farmers in Benin.
- Identify social processes that the sector has undergone in the context of international contingencies.

3. METHODOLOGY

- Literature review.
- Key informants interviews.
- Exploratory survey through focus-group interviews.
- In-depth interview with :
 - Farmers' organizations leaders
 - Households & Case studies



5. PRODUCTION & PRICE TRENDS



6. WEAKNESSES OF THE SYSTEM & CONSEQUENCES

- Overly-regulated system.
- Over-politicization of the sector.
- Over-ginning capacity (~600,000 tons) and low production (350,000 tons)
- Atomization of organisations.
- Mismanagements & billions of arrears
- Shifting to private monopoly.
- High rate of abandonment & sharp decline of production.

7. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

- Actors of cotton system caught in a trap they designed to make profit.
- Cotton as a makeshift crop or last resort.
- Cotton production has become a vicious cycle.
- More coherence needed in state role.



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