

MEMORANDUM

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February 9, 1951

TO: PSA ✓
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SUBJECT: U.S. participation in a Regional Meeting on Land Utilization in Tropical Areas of Asia and the Far East, Nuwara Eliya, Ceylon, September 17-29, 1951.

Attached is a copy of a letter dated January 26 from the Director General of FAO, inviting this Government to participate in subject conference.

Your comments would be appreciated.

HFN
Henry F. Nichol - IC

*Len -
I'm strongly
for it. Wld you
take action unless
you have comments?
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OFFICE OF PHILIPPINE
AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN
AFFAIRS
FEB 13 1951
BUREAU OF FAR EASTERN
AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

C O P Y

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

1201 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest
Washington 6, D. C.

G/A-X/48

26 January 1951

Excellency,

On 30 December 1949, pursuant to a recommendation of the Fourth FAO Conference, I had the honor of inviting all Member Governments of FAO situated or having territory in tropical regions, to participate in an "International Meeting on Land Utilization in Tropical Regions," for which the Government of Ceylon kindly consented to act as host. Because of a lack of favorable response to this invitation on the part of most Governments, particularly those at the greatest distance from the proposed site, I postponed the Meeting until 1951 and decided that it should be held on a regional basis.

I now have the honor to invite your Government to participate in a Regional Meeting on Land Utilization in Tropical Areas of Asia and the Far East. The region to be considered will comprise South and East Asia and tropical islands of the Pacific Ocean. The Government of Ceylon having generously offered to act as host, the meeting will be held in Nuwara Eliya, Ceylon, 17 to 29 September 1951, inclusive.

Purpose of the Meeting

Very large parts of tropical regions, as you are aware, are suffering from a progressive deterioration of the forests, livestock ranges, farms, and soils and the disruption of water supply because of destructive nomadic agriculture, overgrazing, overcutting, burning and other misuses of land.

On the other hand, proper planning of land utilization and use of adequate methods of soil and water conservation would afford the possibility of correcting the misuse of land now occupied and of developing unutilized land resources on a permanent basis, increasing supplies of food, fibres, timber, and other agricultural and forest products which the world needs, and assisting the inhabitants of tropical countries to achieve living levels increasingly satisfactory according to modern standards.

The purpose of the proposed Regional Meeting is to provide an opportunity for Governments to exchange experience and views as to the solution of common problems in the utilization and conservation
of soil

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of soil and water in tropical areas of this region, and arrange for continued cooperation in research and in the dissemination of new knowledge on this subject. The Meeting will be concerned with practical ways and means of determining and promoting the best uses of land of varying characteristics in the tropics from the standpoint of production and conservation.

It is recognized that the solution of such problems in the tropics, while based on science, is essentially a human problem, and can be solved only through education, organization, and administration, with the cooperation of the people on the land. In the proposed meeting it is planned that the utilization and conservation of soil and water will be discussed not as an end in itself and not primarily from the physical point of view, but as a means of improving the livelihood, nutrition, health, and general welfare of the people in the tropical areas of the Region concerned.

Delegates

In order that concrete problems may be discussed from a practical point of view, it is suggested that Member Governments choose as delegates persons of broad experience who have positions of direct responsibility in the development and administration of land resources in tropical regions, including technical and educational experts who are employed in connection with such work.

Member Governments administering territory in tropical areas of the Region concerned are invited to include delegates to the Meeting from each country or territory under their jurisdiction. It is desirable that delegates have administrative and technical responsibilities in and for the countries or territories they represent.

Preparation of Papers

It is proposed that papers be limited to one paper prepared by each delegation. It is suggested that the paper of each delegation be built upon the outline that is attached as Appendix A of this letter, (also sent as Appendix A of our letter G/A-X/31 dated 30 December 1949) and that a Government administering more than one tropical territory in the Region may best treat each territory in a separate section of its paper.

It is requested that each participating Government submit to FAO by 1 June 1951, 75 mimeographed or other duplicate copies of its delegation's paper. This should be in English or French. FAO will then distribute one or more copies of each delegation's paper to the chairman of every other delegation.

In addition, each delegation should bring 75 copies of its paper to the Meeting.

It is desired that papers be concise in style. No desirable length can be suggested, since this will depend on the number and character of the land utilization problems requiring solution in tropical territories of each country and the extent of the present land utilization program.

Delegations' papers will not be read to the Meeting nor discussed as entities, but will serve as a necessary fund of information for delegates and a factual background for their discussions of land utilization problems. The discussion will not follow the same outline as the Delegations' papers, but will proceed in accord with the agenda.

We shall be happy at any time to answer questions that may occur to your Government concerning the preparation of its paper. Some Governments have already completed or begun the document as part of their preparation to attend the International Meeting that was postponed.

Agenda of the Meeting

A draft agenda of the Meeting will be worked out after FAO has been notified of the number and composition of delegations, and has received copies of each delegation's paper. This will be presented to the Meeting for suggestions and approval. The Meeting will be opened by an introductory statement on the existing maladjustments and undesirable practices in land use in tropical regions and obstacles to the solution of such problems, as revealed in the papers of national delegations. It is expected that the agenda will include the following main topics, with subtopics to be determined later:

- I. Mapping and classification of tropical land resources.
- II. Organization, administration, and financial support of land utilization and conservation programs in the tropics, including research, education, and extension or advisory work.
- III. Need for further research on tropical land utilization problems.
- IV. International cooperation in furthering the best use of tropical land resources.

Two or more delegates of different countries or other participants will be requested to open, with brief and informal and analytical talks, the discussion of each topic that will be listed under the main headings of the agenda. Those opening the discussion of a particular topic will have had available as background, in addition to their own experience, the relevant material in the papers of delegations.

Organization of the Meeting

Details of the organization of the Meeting will be planned with the assistance of the Government of Ceylon. It is proposed that several days during the two-week period of the meeting be devoted to field trips to permit delegates to examine at first hand, with the assistance of the Government of Ceylon, some of the land utilization problems and programs in Ceylon.

Cooperative Action Based on the Meeting

It is contemplated that the conclusions of the Meeting will be embodied in a concise document for distribution to all participating Governments. FAO will draw to the attention of those Governments any recommendations of the Meeting for cooperative or other action on their part.

Notification of Participation

In closing, I have the honor once more, Excellency, to express my earnest hope that your Government will accept the invitation of FAO to participate in the proposed Meeting. An early reply would be deeply appreciated, and I should be happy to be informed as soon as possible of the names, positions, and addresses of the chairman and other members of your Government's delegation.

Accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Norris E. Dodd
Director-General