

**Report of the**

**NINETEENTH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE  
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

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**Bridgetown, Barbados, 5-13 August 1986**



**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

*FAO Member Nations serviced by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean  
(at 13 August 1986)*

Antigua and Barbuda	Dominica	Nicaragua
Argentina	Dominican Republic	Panama
Bahamas	Ecuador	Paraguay
Barbados	El Salvador	Peru
Belize	Grenada	Saint Christopher and Nevis
Bolivia	Guatemala	Saint Lucia
Brazil	Guyana	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Chile	Haiti	Suriname
Colombia	Honduras	Trinidad and Tobago
Costa Rica	Jamaica	Uruguay
Cuba	Mexico	Venezuela

*Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Latin America and the Caribbean*

First	— Quito, Ecuador, 18 – 25 September 1949
Second	— Montevideo, Uruguay, 1 – 12 December 1950
Third	— Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1 – 10 September 1954
Fourth	— Santiago, Chile, 19 – 30 November 1956
Fifth	— San José, Costa Rica, 12 – 21 November 1958
Sixth	— Mexico City, Mexico, 9 – 20 August 1960
Seventh	— Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 17 – 27 November 1962
Eighth	— Viña del Mar, Chile, 13 – 29 March 1965
Ninth	— Punta del Este, Uruguay, 5 – 16 December 1966
Tenth	— Kingston, Jamaica, 2 – 13 December 1968
Eleventh	— Caracas, Venezuela, 12 – 20 October 1970
Twelfth	— Cali, Colombia, 21 August – 2 September 1972
Thirteenth	— Panama City, Panama, 12 – 23 August 1974
Fourteenth	— Lima, Peru, 21 – 29 April 1976
Fifteenth	— Montevideo, Uruguay, 8 – 19 August 1978
Sixteenth	— Havana, Cuba, 26 August – 6 September 1980
Seventeenth	— Managua, Nicaragua, 30 August – 10 September 1982
Eighteenth	— Buenos Aires, Argentina, 6 – 15 August 1984
Nineteenth	— Bridgetown, Barbados, 5 – 13 August 1986

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Rome, 1986



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## SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

### For the Attention of Governments

The Conference:

1. reiterated the need for concerted measures to achieve self-sufficiency in food production in the Region (para. 13).
2. urged Member Governments to increase trade between Latin American and Caribbean sub-regions, to strengthen technical cooperation between them and to find the ways in which those more advanced countries in Latin America could offer fellowships for training Caribbean technicians (para. 24).
3. urged Member Nations to increase significantly the share of agriculture in their national budgets (para. 30).

### For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

4. suggested that once an improvement in the food situation of Africa has been achieved, FAO give renewed attention and additional resources to Latin America and the Caribbean in future programmes of work and budget (para. 18).
5. endorsed the proposal for carrying out a study on Latin American and Caribbean agriculture and its long-term perspectives including the formulation of a plan of action and requested the Director-General to allocate the necessary resources for the initiation of the study as soon as possible (para. 20).
6. requested FAO's support in developing audio-visual techniques for training and transferring technology to farmers (para. 25).

### FAO Activities in the Region

#### For the attention of FAO

The Conference:

7. expressed its full support to the activities carried out under the Technical Cooperation Network System sponsored by the Regional Office (para. 47).

### Representation of the Region on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

#### For the attention of Governments

The Conference:

8. expressed satisfaction with the active representation of the Region on the Consultative Group during the 1985-86 biennium (para. 53).
9. elected Venezuela to represent the Region on the CGIAR for the period 1987/1990 (para. 54).

## The Role of Women in Rural Development

### For the attention of Governments

#### The Conference:

10. stressed the need for more information on such aspects of rural women's role in development as current legislation, statistical coverage and quality, and the conditions of indigenous women (para. 11, App. F).
11. suggested that efforts continue in applied research on energy sources for household and farm tasks, on appropriate technology to simplify women's work at home, and on simple agro-industrial techniques for food production and processing (para. 14, App. F).
12. emphasized the need that Member Governments provide literacy training for rural women (para. 15, App. F).
13. recommended that women be guaranteed access to ownership and administration of land as well as the inputs and resources necessary for its exploitation, in those countries where this has not yet been done (para. 16, App. F).
14. suggested that the impact on women of discriminatory applications and interpretations of legislation be looked into with the view of their elimination (para. 16, App. F).
15. suggested that Member Nations further study the consequences of female migration on demographic age structure in rural areas (para. 18, App. F).
16. stressed the need to ensure permanent integration of women into livestock production, agro-forestry, fisheries and marketing, etc., as established by Resolution 12/85 of the FAO Conference in 1985 (para. 20, App. F).
17. recommended more active participation by non-governmental organizations in implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Decade for Women (para. 30, App. F).

### For the Attention of FAO

#### The Conference:

18. suggested that FAO activities in support of exchange of experiences among countries of the Region for a better understanding of the situation of rural women be continued and reinforced by new ones (para. 13, App. F).
19. suggested that FAO reinforce technical, administrative, entrepreneurial and social training for rural women in its programmes and projects (para. 15, App. F).
20. suggested that FAO along with other UN agencies support Member Nations in studying the impact on women of discriminatory applications and interpretations of legislation (para. 16, App. F).



21. requested that FAO and the other UN Agencies intensify their efforts to alleviate problems of housing, health, roads and transportation, as well as those dealing with the social aspects of rural communities, with adequate funding and integrated action (para. 24, App. F).
22. supported the leading role played by FAO in rural development within the UN System and suggested that the Organization take an even more active part in the integration of women in rural development (para. 26, App. F).

#### Helping the Small Farmer

##### For the Attention of Governments

###### The Conference:

23. reaffirmed the importance for Member Nations in promoting access to land ownership by small farmers, guaranteeing them security of tenure and easing titling procedures, in those countries where these problems have not yet been solved (para. 39, App. F).
24. recommended that Member Nations and international financing institutions increase resources available to finance programmes and projects for small farmers (para. 42, App. F).
25. recommended that the 1990 agriculture censuses include elements that could provide a true picture of the socio-economic conditions of small farmers and that studies on land tenure structures and socio-economic conditions of the peasant sector be updated (para. 49, App. F).
26. suggested that as far as possible and bearing in mind the specific characteristics of each country, participation of non-governmental organizations in rural development be expanded (para. 51, App. F).

##### For the Attention of FAO

###### The Conference:

27. recommended that the small farmers' item be placed on the Agenda of future Regional Conferences so that advances made by this sector could be systematically analyzed (para. 34, App. F).
28. suggested that the documentation and ensuing discussion of this item at the Regional Conference be used in the preparation of the report on the evaluation of the follow-up to WCARRD to be discussed at the FAO Conference in 1987 (para. 35, App. F).
29. suggested that FAO continue giving special attention to the definition of the concept of small farmers (para. 37, App. F).
30. suggested that FAO give wider publicity to successful experiments in the Region with credit schemes specifically tailored to the needs of small farmers (para. 41, App. F).
31. requested FAO to disseminate the results of successful experiments in agricultural insurance schemes (para. 47, App. F).

32. requested FAO to promote and facilitate exchange of experiences on small farmers' problems, not only at technical level but also among small producers and their organizations (para. 48, App. F).

Round Table on Problems Affecting Agricultural Development in the Small Island States of the Caribbean

For the attention of Governments:

The Conference:

33. urged Member Governments to apply at sub-regional level the recommendations put forward by the FAO document presented to the Round Table (para. 61, App. F), making use of native knowledge, technologies, experiences and skills available in the countries of the sub-region (para. 62, App. F).

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

34. suggested that FAO contribute through research and technical assistance in putting into best use human and technical resources traditionally available within the Caribbean sub-region in promoting development of the area (para. 62, App. F).

Aquaculture and Rural Development

For the Attention of Governments

The Conference:

35. supported Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) in the field of aquaculture and recommended that TCDC programmes include activities for artisanal fishermen (para. 71, App. F).

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

36. requested FAO assistance in attempting to device low-cost aquaculture technologies for rural population (para. 68, App. F).
37. suggested that FAO promote the exchange of experiences and knowledge among those directly linked to productive activities independently of technical level (para. 73, App. F).
38. recommended that audio-visual and other information materials be introduced and distributed to promote rural aquaculture (para. 76, App. F).

Livestock Development Policies and Regional Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean

For the Attention of Governments

The Conference:

39. requested that Member Nations undertake concerted action to combat amblyoma variegatum tick (para. 93, App. F).
40. urged Member Governments to intensify action in the field of marketing, animal health, genetic improvement, training and technology dissemination and feed resources research in view of stimulating higher productivity and production levels (para. 94, App. F).

For the Attention of FAO

The Conference:

41. recommended that a Livestock Committee be established as an advisory body to the FAO Council, in accordance with Article VI-2 of the FAO Constitution and requested the Secretariat to initiate the necessary action for the implementation of this recommendation (para. 89, App. F).
42. recommended that a Livestock Expert Consultative Group or Panel of Experts be established to address regional issues related to the livestock sub-sector and provide a regular forum for consultations among Member Nations of the Region (para. 90, App. F).
43. requested FAO to support Member Nations' efforts in combatting amblyoma variegatum tick and coordinate with them and other agencies regional activities in this field (para. 93, App. F).
44. invited FAO to strengthen its efforts in assisting Member Nations to establish regional and sub-regional technical cooperation networks, ensuring the active participation of national institutions (para. 95, App. F).
45. pointed out the following specific areas in which FAO assistance was required: livestock development funding; development of feed programmes focusing on potential of indigenous grasses; cattle and small ruminant health and development; application of biotechnologies in livestock production; health and genetic improvement (para. 96, App. F).



## INTRODUCTION

1. The Nineteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Sam Lord's Castle in St. Philip, Barbados, from 5 to 13 August 1986.
2. The Conference was attended by delegates from thirty Member Nations of the Region, observers from other countries outside the Region, representatives of various agencies of the United Nations System, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. The Agenda of the Conference, the List of Participants, the List of Documents, the statement by the Acting Prime Minister of Barbados, the inaugural statement by the Director-General of FAO, and the full text of the Report of the Technical Committee are presented as Appendices A, B, C, D, E and F, respectively.

### Inaugural Ceremony

3. Dr Edouard Saouma, Director-General of FAO took the floor. He drew special attention to the presence at the Inaugural Ceremony of the Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Education of Barbados, the Honourable Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, heading the Government due to the absence from the country of the Prime Minister, Mr Errol Barrow. He mentioned that the career of the Acting Prime Minister is closely linked with the history of Barbados. Mr Sandiford, a teacher by profession, spent a long period as Minister of Education in the late 1960s and 1970s; a period as Minister of Health, and represented his country at the United Nations. After the recent change of Government, he took up office again as Minister of Education and Deputy Prime Minister.
4. The Acting Prime Minister delivered a statement of major importance and declared the Nineteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean open. The complete text is presented in Appendix D to this report.
5. The Director-General of FAO congratulated the Acting Prime Minister of Barbados on his excellent speech, in which he had raised questions of great importance for regional and world agriculture, which would constitute a guide for the Conference discussions. He drew attention to the Acting Prime Minister's deep concern for the needs of agriculture and particularly those of small farmers, and noted with sympathy his interest in eradicating, with FAO cooperation, some pests and diseases affecting animal and plant production. He thanked the Government of Barbados for hosting this Regional Conference, requesting that FAO's gratitude be conveyed to the Prime Minister of Barbados for the excellent logistic support provided by the Government, and extended his best wishes for the prosperity of the people and Government of Barbados.

### Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur

6. The Conference unanimously elected Warwick O. Franklin, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries of Barbados, as Chairman. In a brief speech of acceptance, Mr Franklin expressed his appreciation to the delegates who had chosen him to lead the discussions, and pledged his utmost efforts for the success of the Conference.
7. The Conference then elected unanimously as Vice-Chairmen the following Heads of Delegations, who are listed in alphabetical order by country: Robin Yearwood, Minister of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries of Antigua and Barbuda;

Fidel Braceras, Under-Secretary of Agriculture of Argentina; Lázaro Ferreira Barboza, Vice-Minister of Agriculture of Brazil; Carlos Aquilino Duarte Funes, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador; and Eduardo Pesqueira Olea, Secretary of Agriculture and Water Resources of Mexico. Mr Humberto Carrión, Ambassador of Nicaragua to FAO, was elected Rapporteur, with the authority to seek whatever assistance he needed to perform his task.

#### Statement by the Director-General of FAO

8. The Director-General of FAO, Mr Edouard Saouma, made a statement in which he reviewed the general economic and agricultural situation of the region. The complete text is presented in Appendix E to this report.

#### Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

9. The Conference unanimously approved the Agenda and Timetable submitted for its consideration by the Secretariat.

### PLENARY SESSION ITEMS

#### Situation and outlook of Food and Agriculture in the Region

10. The Conference expressed its gratitude to the people and Government of Barbados for their warm welcome and the facilities provided for the Regional Conference, and congratulated the Minister of Agriculture of this country on his appointment as Chairman of the Nineteenth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean.

11. The Conference congratulated the Director-General of FAO on his lucid analysis of the economic situation of the Region and of agriculture in particular. Despite the sombre perspective revealed by this analysis, the delegations supported the optimistic note regarding the future of the Region on which the Director-General concluded his statement.

12. The Conference recognized the serious many-sided, structural and long-term crisis affecting the Region. The interdependence between these factors and between national and international policies make it necessary for the Governments of the Region, developed countries and regional and international organizations to adopt comprehensive, multidisciplinary, urgent and coordinated measures. Failure to do so would lead to a systematic deterioration of Regional economies, with unpredictable social, economic and political effects. The Conference emphasized the right of all nations to equitable development.

13. The Conference highlighted the fact that Latin America and the Caribbean were undergoing a serious and unprecedented economic crisis, intensified by the heavy burden of external debt, the fall in export prices, adverse terms of trade, and by a net transfer of resources out of the Region, which had led to a reduction in per caput income and food supplies and an increase in poverty and malnutrition, especially in the most vulnerable population groups. Countries in the area are reappraising their development strategies and priorities and re-examining the pivotal function of agriculture in the economic recovery and growth of the Region. In this context, the Conference reiterated the need to take concerted measures to achieve self-sufficiency in food production in Latin America and the Caribbean Region.

14. The Conference examined document LARC/86/INF/4 entitled "Background Paper on Food and Agricultural Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean", covering the specific problems of agriculture in their countries, including forestry and fisheries, and the strategies and policies they were preparing to overcome these problems. One delegation requested the Director-General of FAO to take into account the interests and priorities of Member Nations reflected in these statements when planning future FAO activities in the Region.

15. The Conference condemned protectionist policies and the subsidies war which particularly affect developing countries. The placing of large agricultural surpluses through dumping practices has significantly depressed the prices of staple commodities in international markets, and severely limited the capacity of the countries of the Region to relaunch their development processes and to face their external debt commitments. In this regard, the Conference called the attention of industrialized developed countries responsible for such practices, to refrain from these ominous policies which so affect the economies of the countries of the Region.

16. The Conference considered that these policies are irrational, since these countries, on the one hand, demand payment of the huge external debt of countries in the Region and, on the other, put up barriers to prevent debtor countries from finding outlets for their exportable products on the international market, thus obtaining resources with which to service their debts.

17. The Conference pointed out the need to request, at the forthcoming session of GATT, that the same treatment be given to agricultural products, as is presently given to manufactured goods.

18. Several delegations stated that they understood the efforts made by FAO in channelling exceptional resources to Africa, in view of the severe famines suffered by that continent in recent years. However, at the same time they pointed out that this has affected the level of FAO assistance towards Latin America and the Caribbean. In this respect, they were of the opinion that the improvement in Africa's food situation will lead to renewed attention and additional resources for Latin America and the Caribbean. They also stated their disagreement with policies of international finance agencies in the sense of limiting the allocation of resources to Latin America and the Caribbean countries based on mere statistical considerations of average income per caput or on the reasoning that most countries in the Region have reached an intermediate level of development, overlooking the existence of pockets of extreme poverty that urgently require external resources to alleviate their situation of marginalization from the benefits of development.

19. Several delegations referred to the arms race, emphasizing the injustice of wasting vast sums of money for the war purposes while a substantial part of the world population suffers from acute deficiencies and malnutrition.

20. The Conference expressed its satisfaction for the Director-General's acceptance, in his statement, of the suggestion made by the Representatives of the countries of the Region to FAO, that the Organization conduct a specific study on the economic situation, as well as its implication on the long-term development of the Region, in what pertains to food and agriculture. In this respect, they requested the Director-General to allocate the necessary resources to initiate this study as soon as possible. They also requested that the study should contemplate the formulation of a Plan of Action including the

role of FAO as well as that of the Governments themselves and the cooperation of other international organizations interested in the development of the Region.

21. The Conference referred to the subjects analyzed by the Technical Committee, highlighting their importance, and expressed its satisfaction for the conclusions reached stressing the high significance of the role of women in rural development and in agricultural and food production and the growing importance of their participation within an integral development system. The Conference noted that the contribution of small farmers has become one of the most significant elements of agricultural development in the Region. It expressed its agreement with the orientations of document LARC/86/5, "Helping the Small Farmer", particularly with regard to the strategies, policies and programmes which will allow this sector of farmers to overcome the problems they face. Likewise, upon approving document LARC/86/6 "Problems Affecting Agricultural Development in the Small Island States of the Caribbean", the Conference stated that this is a matter of great concern, requiring particular attention. It also referred to the relatively unexplored field of aquaculture and its potential; to the specific and valuable attention afforded by the Conference to the problems of the island states of the Caribbean; to problems of the livestock sector and to the strategies for approaching their solution.

22. The Conference stated that, in the present crisis affecting the countries of the Region, agriculture appears to be most important and strategic sector for reactivating and developing their economies and pointed out that the Governments were paying special attention to this aspect. It emphasized the important role that FAO technical assistance can play in this respect.

23. The Conference denounced the campaign conducted by some developed countries against multilateralism, and the threat to the stability and the very existence of several agencies in the United Nations System. Along the same lines, there was criticism of the imposition by these countries of "zero growth" on the budgets of international agencies, which, in the case of FAO, has limited its possibilities of granting greater assistance to the countries of the Region.

24. It was highlighted that, although the specific problems of the Caribbean countries are different from those of Latin America, emphasis should be given to the need for increasing trade among both groups of countries; to the strengthening of technical cooperation among them; and to the need of finding the ways in which those more advanced countries of Latin America can offer fellowships for training Caribbean technicians in their technical institutions.

25. The importance of audio-visual techniques for training and transferring technology to farmers was emphasized. The consensus was that FAO has the technical and operational capabilities to help the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in developing these communication methods and FAO's support was requested for this purpose.

26. The Conference expressed its appreciation for the prompt and positive response of the Director-General of FAO through its Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), to request to the Organization for assistance in emergency situations. In this respect, the delegations reiterated their endorsement to the form of operation of this Programme and expressed the hope that resources allocated to the TCP would be increased.



27. The Conference noted with interest the important initiative adopted by two countries of the Region, in the form of a joint declaration, on an eventual regional treaty of assistance in food emergencies.

28. The Conference pointed out that the recommendations of the Eighteenth Regional Conference held in Buenos Aires, had been useful for programming actions in favour of the most vulnerable groups of the agricultural sector.

29. One delegation mentioned its government's intention of making available to all countries of the Region who so desired, the finding of its research in the production of high-yielding plantain and banana varieties, resistant to Black Sigatoka.

30. Some delegations referred to the share of the national budgets allocated to the agricultural sector and urged governments of Member Nations of the Region to increase it significantly.

31. One delegation mentioned the action being undertaken by its government, in cooperation with another, against narcotraffics. It stated that because of the important number of small farmers involved in the problem, the final solution in the country will necessarily be based on the adoption of agricultural development policies which will favour the substitution of coca cultivation by other agricultural products of similar profitability. Finally it requested FAO's attention and cooperation in the search of a solution to this problem.

32. Some delegations from English-speaking countries of the Caribbean expressed their hope that, when recruiting technicians for technical assistance projects, candidates from the subregion would be considered, in view of their experience and knowledge of the problems of the subregion.

33. The Conference reiterated the principle that food should not be used as an instrument of political pressure.

Report on FAO activities in the Region in 1984-85, including action taken on the main recommendations of the Eighteenth Regional Conference, and Programme of Work and Budget 1986-87

34. The Assistant Director-General of FAO and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr Mario E. Jalil, presented both items, referring to basic documents LARC/86/2 and LARC/86/3. He emphasized that the report and the Programme of Work of FAO in the Region covered the activities of all the Organization in Latin America and the Caribbean.

35. He informed in detail and with concrete figures, on projects financed either with Regular Programme or extrabudgetary resources; on missions fielded by the FAO Investment Centre; on World Food Programme projects; on missions carried out by the regional officers and on activities of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries sponsored by the Regional Office, within the framework of the technical cooperation networks system.

36. He described the functions of the Regional Office, stressing that in the interest of optimum performance, the Office holds constant consultations with national institutions, and promotes and implements a significant variety of a technical-professional nature, which are inserted in national efforts through the advisory services of regional officers or consultants, or through specific studies, or the promotion and organization of horizontal technical cooperation or TCDC (Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries).

37. He reviewed the origin and development of the technical cooperation networks system, highlighting the strong endorsement it has received from the countries of the Region. He made special reference to the comprehensive evaluation of this system carried out in 1985 by the Regional Office, which resulted in extremely positive conclusions on their operation as well as in suggestions for consolidating the system.

38. He informed in detail on measures adopted with reference to the recommendations of the Eighteenth Regional Conference held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1984.

39. He presented the Programme of Work 1986-87, which includes a series of joint actions between the departments and divisions of Headquarters, the Regional Office, the FAO Country Representations and the Field Programme, financed with extrabudgetary resources, with a total estimated budget of US\$ 105 million, which responds to the major objectives established by the Director-General in the selection of priorities.

40. He mentioned some administrative and operational problems within the countries which, if solved, would facilitate the operation of the technical cooperation networks and, therefore, would provide a greater benefit to the countries concerned.

41. He concluded referring to the Distance Training and Orientation Programme sponsored by the Regional Office to develop, together with the national institutions, a series of channels for the transfer of knowledge and experiences, which he considered a highly effective instrument for strengthening horizontal cooperation amongst the countries of the Region.

42. The Conference concluded its examination of the Programme of FAO in the Region, with unanimous support to the efforts displayed by the Organization and congratulated the Regional Representative on the work achieved.

43. The Conference expressed its great concern for the absence of a meaningful increase in the Organization's budget for Latin America and the Caribbean, condemned the zero growth policy applied in the budget of multi-lateral assistance agencies, and emphasized the effort made by the Region in helping to find solutions to the African crisis.

44. Three delegations indicated the need to increase available resources and to intensify their utilization and recommended that FAO continue to work in close cooperation with other international agencies.

45. The Secretariat reported in detail on the situation of and prospects for availability of budgetary resources.

46. Most delegations emphasized the wide scope, quality and usefulness of the data contained in document LARC/86/2, "Report on FAO activities in the Region". One delegation suggested that, in future, this document be printed in a more simple, practical and less costly manner, in view of the increasing scarcity of resources.

47. The Conference reiterated its full support to the activities carried out under the Technical Cooperation Network System, sponsored by the Regional Office. One delegation indicated that training should start at the grass-root level, and that the Regional Office is performing an instrumental role in the transfer of technology.

48. One delegation informed that the 1987/1991 Medium-Term Plan of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), which was analyzed by the Executive Committee of that organization at its meeting in July 1986 and submitted by its Resolution 56 to the Inter-American Board of Agriculture for approval, has discontinued the programmes of Information and Conservation and Management of Renewable Natural Resources. The delegation considered that, although these programmes could implicitly be included in others in the new IICA Medium-Term Programme, there are aspects of conservation of natural resources such as flora and fauna and watershed management and protection, that will remain marginalized, proposing, therefore, that FAO undertake them.

#### Consideration and adoption of the Report of the Technical Committee

49. The Conference examined the report of the Technical Committee and adopted its conclusions and recommendations. The text of the report of the Technical Committee, as approved by the Conference, is attached in Appendix F to this Report.

#### Representation of the Region on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

50. In introducing this item, the Secretariat made a brief summary of document LARC/86/9, giving detailed information on the structure, and main functions of the CGIAR, on its objectives, financing and the participation of developing countries.

51. The Secretariat indicated that one of the present representatives of the Region, Colombia, was about to complete its term of office and should be replaced by another country of the Region for the period 1987/1990.

52. The Representative of Argentina, who will continue in office until the end of 1988, gave additional information to the one provided by the Secretariat on the introduction referring to activities conducted during his term of office and to the problems faced by the Group in order to expedite the transfer of the findings of advanced agricultural research. He emphasized the need to attain a greater institutional representation of the Region on the Consultative Group.

53. The Conference expressed its satisfaction with the active representation of the Region on the Consultative Group during the 1985-86 biennium.

54. The Conference unanimously elected Venezuela to replace Colombia as Representative of Latin America and the Caribbean on the CGIAR for the period 1987/1990.

#### CONCLUDING ITEMS

#### Date and Place of the Twentieth Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

55. The Conference took note of the offer by the delegation of Colombia, to host the Twentieth Regional Conference.

56. The Director-General thanked the delegation of Colombia for this offer and advised that the date and place would be determined taking into consideration other offers and the timing of other important meetings to be held in 1988.

#### Adoption of the Report

57. The Chairman submitted the draft report prepared by the Rapporteur, with the support of the Secretariat, for consideration by the Conference, which after considering each section of the draft report and introducing the modifications that were incorporated in this final version, unanimously approved it.

#### Closure of the Conference

58. The Director-General of FAO, Dr Edouard Saouma, in his closing remarks praised the excellence of the Conference organization and expressed his appreciation to the Chairman and the Government and people of Barbados for their hospitality.

59. The Director-General highlighted the role of country statements in the FAO Biennial Conference and particularly in the forum of regional conferences. He mentioned that country statements, firstly, gave a policy statement of the external and internal factors affecting food and agriculture, in particular their perception and experiences of the international economic and financial situation, the effect of the debt reimbursement and high interest rates, the paradox of subsidies to agriculture in the developed world and resulting surpluses, while agriculture in the developing world is stunted by protectionism in international trade and low commodity prices, the lack of resources for inputs and incentives and the marginalization of the small farmer. Secondly, the statements included a wealth of interesting and useful information on the strategies of governments, their achievements, difficulties and their aspiration for the development of their agriculture, fisheries and forestry subsectors.

60. The Director-General emphasized that the country statements were valuable because they provided an opportunity to become better acquainted with the problems requiring further FAO assistance and that he had noticed, apart from broad fields such as food security, numerous requests for specific assistance. He assured the delegations who voiced the requests that he would ensure specific action through his representatives.

61. The Director-General stated that, in addition to the general debate, he had benefited greatly from private discussions, which had enabled him to understand and appreciate more acutely the problems and individual needs and how FAO could respond to them.

62. The Director-General pointed out that the ready adoption of the report submitted to the Conference by the Technical Committee was testimony of its quality. Thanks to the thoroughness of its analysis and the clarity of its conclusions, it provided clear recommendations on a wide range of issues which are of particular relevance to the Region, which, if consistently implemented, will give fresh impetus to agricultural development for the rest of this decade and beyond.

63. In referring to the debates the Director-General stated that recommendations regarding the role of women in rural development and helping

the small farmer, could be viewed jointly. He stressed that although the message of major world conferences such as the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development and the Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women was so direct and evident, very often it is basic changes which are most difficult to bring about. He expressed his belief that changes in this area are crucially dependant on the human factor, training, and the exchange of experience for common benefit; he was aware of the emphasis given in the Region to these issues, and they will continue to represent the core of our efforts.

64. The Director-General indicated that the relatively minor share of this Region in world production from aquaculture is a striking reminder of the possibilities opened for development. He was keen to see the same progress as in Asia, where FAO was proud to have been associated, with the advance in genetic selection, technology and operation; he was sure that in the years to come there would be reasons to be proud of this Region's achievements in aquaculture, an area for significant regional and inter-regional cooperation.

65. The Director-General referred to the substantial natural resources and very favourable conditions with which the Region is endowed for livestock development and pointed out that the Region's progress in this sector has been dramatically slowed because of the protectionist policies of importing countries. He recalled that the Technical Committee and the Regional Conference had expressed a wish for a forum to deal with these issues in FAO and stated that he will consider this. He mentioned that there had been recognition for the comprehensive programmes of FAO in this field, but that the Organization had carefully noted the further steps it had been called upon to take so that FAO would have a leading role in coordinating international assistance to the livestock sector of this Region.

66. The Director-General stated that he was satisfied with the innovative approach of discussing a subject of concern to a group of countries in the Region at a round table, as was the examination of the problems affecting agricultural development in the small island States of the Caribbean. This process resulted in clear policy guidelines for further harnessing the wealth of human, cultural and technological resources of the island states and concentrating on agricultural diversification aimed at maximizing family income and export earnings. He expressed FAO's readiness to assist in their implementation.

67. The Director-General stated that the recommendations addressed to FAO would receive his careful attention and, as always, he would convey them to the Council and the FAO Conference, indicating how he proposed to take them into account in framing the next Programme of Work and Budget for 1988-89, which he would start to prepare in September.

68. The Director-General warned that the financial outlook for the next three years is still unclear, but is not promising. Like other organizations of the United Nations System, FAO faces serious losses this year and next, as a result of several factors, including the devaluation of the dollar and the expected shortfall in contributions aggravated by the payment of less than its assessed contribution by the largest contributor. He reminded the meeting that FAO resources are limited in comparison with needs and that more efforts were required to help Africa to recover, but added that he will do his best to give appropriate response to the demands of member countries of the Region.

69. The Director-General referred to his opening remarks and indicated that he was particularly stimulated by the request for an in-depth study on the potential and prospects for agricultural development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Work will need to be initiated during this biennium in order to submit this study to the next Regional Conference in 1988. Although budgetary stringencies are very real, he will not delay taking the action required. The study would assess past and present performance, as well as future prospects for the food and agricultural sector of the Region. The objective would be to suggest a plan of action for governments, for achieving not only accelerated growth, but also alleviation of poverty. It will seek to identify national programmes and policies for consideration by governments and also assist them in mobilizing the support of the international community in achieving their objectives. It will also have implications for FAO's programme in the Region. The study, as suggested by a number of speakers, will examine the latest data, developments and policy measures as well as the role of the sector in the Region's overall development. At the same time, in view of the differences in agro-ecological, social and economic factors, it will need to differentiate between subregions. The Director-General shared the view that it was important to involve other organizations which can usefully contribute, in particular the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, with which FAO has close collaboration through the Joint Division. He also stated that at an appropriate stage in the preparation of the study, he will seek the advice and comments of experts from the Region, which will enable the Organization to assess the realism and relevance of the analysis and the proposed plan of action, before finalizing them.

70. The Director-General thanked all the member countries of the Region for renewing their commitment to support the Organization and the Director-General personally.

71. Several delegations supported the general consensus that the Acting Prime Minister of Barbados, in his candid and forthright address, had set the tone for this Regional Conference by bringing into sharp focus the problems which beset the developing countries of the Caribbean and Latin America. They praised the way in which the Chairman had conducted the Conference, in a manner consistent with the high traditions and ideals of FAO and thanked him and the people of Barbados for the excellent hospitality. They thanked the Director-General of FAO and his dedicated staff for the excellent arrangements made for the Conference, which had vastly contributed to the high quality and objectivity of the general debate and to the speed with which the Agenda was dealt with. They also thanked all who, in one way or another, had contributed to the success of the Conference.

72. The Chairman thanked all the participants for the opportunity offered to Barbados and himself to extend the hospitality of this country and declared the Nineteenth Regional Conference of FAO for Latin America and the Caribbean closed.

APPENDIX A

AGENDA OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

(5-8 August 1986)

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Opening of the Technical Committee
2. Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

II. TECHNICAL ITEMS

4. Role of Women in Rural Development
5. Helping the Small Farmer
6. Round Table on Problems Affecting Agricultural Development in Small Island States of the Caribbean
7. Aquaculture and Rural Development
8. Livestock Development Policies and Regional Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean
9. Adoption of the Report

AGENDA OF THE PLENARY SESSION

(11-13 August 1986)

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. Inaugural Ceremony
2. Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

II. STATEMENTS

4. Statement of the Director-General
5. Country statements and general debate on the food and agriculture situation in Latin America and the Caribbean
6. Report by the Assistant Director-General, Regional Representative on FAO activities in the Region, including action taken on the main recommendations of the 18th Regional Conference, and Programme of Work and Budget 1986-87

III. CONCLUDING ITEMS

7. Consideration of the Report of the Technical Committee
8. Representation of the Region on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)
9. Any other business
10. Date and Place of the 20th FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean
11. Adoption of the Report
12. Closure of the Conference



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LARC/86 Series

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LARC/86/2	FAO Activities in the Region, including Action taken on the Main Recommendations of the 18th Regional Conference
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STATEMENT BY THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER AND  
MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF BARBADOS

Director-General, Honourable Ministers, Heads of Delegations, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Prime Minister Barrow has asked me to apologise for his inability to address you this morning. He has had to attend to Government business overseas, and left Barbados for it, over the weekend.

Today's meeting in Barbados is the fulfilment of an undertaking some two years ago by the then Government of Barbados. At the 18th Regional Conference of the FAO for Latin America and the Caribbean, it was agreed that Barbados would host this, the 19th Regional Conference. We accept that responsibility gladly.

On behalf of the Government and people of Barbados, I extend a very warm welcome to you. We hope that you will experience an environment that will be conducive to both work and recreation.

This conference is being held when the world is emerging from deep recession. The most recent economic recovery in the developed countries which began in the year 1984 has only touched marginally, some developing countries. Of course, we welcome the trend towards recovery. But at the same time, we note that developing countries remain confronted by severe socio-economic pressures. Our agricultural sector, like the other sectors of our economies, which have been hard hit by the recession, has not been spared.

In many of our countries during the past twenty years, the basic trade balance has deteriorated from surplus to an increasing deficit. Instead of contributing to foreign exchange the agricultural sector has been making increasing demands on any surplus generated by productive sectors.

As we seek to trace the origins of our problems, a general picture of handicaps emerges, including high international interest rates, fluctuating exchange rates, trade restrictions, protectionism, adverse terms of trade, and scarce investment funds.

The magnitude of the strain on regional economies is reflected in regional balance-of-payments problems, the inability to service foreign debt comfortably, a weakening in the potential and capacity of regional Governments to get employment-generating projects into place, and the adverse cost/price structure of producing agricultural goods.

We note that regional agricultural products, particularly primary goods, continue to be confronted by falling commodity prices and rising protectionism in several of the industrialized countries.

All of this places us in an extremely disadvantageous situation. For, without exception, the countries of this region need to increase export earnings not only to meet growing debt service commitments, but also to facilitate the financing of their development programmes.

At the domestic level, a large section of our populations depends directly or indirectly upon agriculture, fishing, forestry and related

pursuits, for their day-to-day survival. When agriculture fails our countries fail, as evidenced, for example, by heavy dependence on two typical monocrops, namely bananas and sugar.

It may be easy to censure us for perpetuating the monocrops and to recommend the diversification of agriculture. But this is far easier said than done, especially in the smaller countries. The problem of securing and maintaining markets remains real. The range of possible enterprises is limited. Buyers in the developed society are adept at trading one small tenuous economy against the other to theirs, the buyers', full advantage. So we have concluded that the salient component of a development strategy for agriculture is fair trade.

It is therefore regrettable to note that some of the rhetorical benefits extended under the Caribbean Basin Initiative are becoming evanescent including a diminution of import quotas for Caribbean sugar.

Developed countries still expect to receive primary produce from developing countries at minimal cost for processing, and to re-export at highly inflated prices. It is extremely difficult to rationalise the relationship between the cost of primary product exports and the so-called finished product which eventually returns to the supermarket shelves of primary producing countries.

Whereas the price to the farmer has remained steady or has been increased by some small factor, the housewife must pay for the packaged product, an enormous sum, very often way out of proportion to the value added factor.

Perhaps our first thrust in this regard must be seriously to contain our large food import bill through the promotion of our own manufacturers and products on local and regional supermarket shelves. We will need to, through planned and sustained effort, to orient and in some instances, re-orient the palates of our people towards domestic products. We may need to intensify efforts for regional food security.

The stranger to our shores may still point to the need for us to develop more efficient food production techniques, to explore the feasibility of canning processes, and better storage conditions.

The role of the small farmer will come into sharp focus. And that small farmer will advance legitimate claims for a practical package which includes reasonable access to land, training, irrigation facilities, and not least of all finance, to form the basis for viability.

Among our people too, one may reasonably expect that fishing and fish products would not only provide protein for populations, but that some of the countries would be well placed to export their surplus. What, however, is the scenario? Fishing fleets of some of the major maritime powers literally scrape the sea bed and ocean floor of our Territorial or Exclusive Economic Zone. Countries of this region continue to see their fishing stocks depleted and their marine life threatened by maritime pirates and poachers whose added advantage is their ability and propensity to sell us, island people, cockles and mussels and more.

The spectre of dumping is always a real threat to our economies. Dumping is severe enough when the goods are of acceptable quality, reprehensible though the practice must be. But where the dumped product has been banned in the home country for whatever reason, including health, but "flogged" in an unsuspecting country at a high price, such action is, in our view, totally unacceptable.

I am also concerned about another tendency which seems to be gathering momentum on the international scene. I speak of the growing threat to multilateralism. After World War Two the founding fathers of international organizations accepted that the system of secret bilateral treaties and agreements between countries involving trade and other questions was partly responsible for the war.

They agreed therefore that this system would be replaced by new relationships in which all countries could participate as equals in reaching agreement on major questions confronting mankind.

Unfortunately, nearly half a century later there is evidence of attempts to dismantle these multilateral agreements. The evidence is surely perceptible when you examine the obstacles placed in the way of international funding agencies established by mutual agreements between sovereign states and which are in some instances binding at international law. Is it not strange that these destructive efforts have been particularly pronounced in institutions capable of providing significant developmental assistance to developing countries?

One agency has even developed a mechanism by which countries like Barbados may be graduated from its technical assistance programmes. This mechanism is supposed to prove that my country has no need of aid. It is based on factors which do not and cannot truly reflect the level of development in Barbados.

There are other countries in this region which face a similar situation; yet we know that in many of them, the factors used to measure that level of development can change dramatically due to circumstances beyond our control.

We all know of the threats from certain agencies to withhold loans on concessional terms to countries like Barbados. There are countries in our region with endowments superior by every system of measurement to Barbados which, using the criteria developed, would permit them to receive loans on concessional terms while Barbados is debarred from such assistance.

You are all aware of the struggle in FAO, as some developed states seek to destroy one of the most important programmes ever to be operated in the United Nations System. The Technical Cooperation Programme through which developing countries may be afforded quick assistance in emergencies, and with the minimum of red tape, is in jeopardy. And may I suggest that it is in the interest of all developing countries to ensure that efforts to further frustrate the work of the FAO do not succeed.

The concerns that I have expressed today lead me to make the following further observation. It is this: while we witness attempts to destroy the system of multilateralism inherent in the Charter of the United Nations, there is an aspect of that document that points us towards a future in which we might well be able, mutually, to assist each other. I refer to the provision

in the Charter for regional arrangements. These provisions recognize the inherent right of countries to meet in their own region to address social, political and economic problems special to their area and common to all or almost all of the Nation States therein.

At best, our countries may only cushion the impact of external influences by pursuing structural adjustment programmes, as have been recently witnessed in the Caribbean area.

It will be even more necessary to lobby for greater access to markets in the industrial countries, and to seek the relaxation of trade protectionism which is hampering regional agricultural production.

The region appreciates the role of the FAO in promoting its interest, in this regard. This meeting will, no doubt, identify ways in which the region and the FAO can further work to strengthen the relationship and mutual interest that exist among us.

Indeed, the Buenos Aires Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and the Plan of Action adopted at the time, certainly create a concept which provides for cooperation between developing countries.

It should therefore be easy for Latin America and the Caribbean region, with the potential for ingenuity so evident among our people, to widen and deepen the possibilities which do exist for other forms of mutual cooperation. Moreover, I cannot see why this new approach to cooperation cannot begin immediately. For example, I would urge that with the help of FAO, measures might be devised to isolate and eradicate animal diseases which inhibit trade in livestock produce between countries of the region. Similar action to eradicate harmful fruit flies could result in this region being able to satisfy all its requirements for fruit.

There is no doubt about the potential of Latin America and the Caribbean as a region; and, it is certainly within our regional capability to mobilize the will and devise the mechanisms for establishing its true place among the nations of the world.

The future of our region will depend to a large extent on our capacity to make the necessary effort to cooperate, and to concentrate and organize those efforts so as to reach the global objective of economic and social advancement.

What is needed is a combination of imagination and realism to turn stumbling blocks into pillars for development.

Our own individual efforts to develop our respective agricultural sectors would be inadequate if they are not accompanied by significant regional cooperation.

In spite of your heavy work-schedule, I hope that you will find time to enjoy what Barbados has traditionally offered visitors.

I now have great pleasure in declaring the 19th Regional Conference of FAO for Latin America and the Caribbean open.

Thank you!



STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO THE PLENARY

Mr Chairman,

This is the second occasion on which the FAO Regional Conference has been held in the Caribbean, a clear pointer to the growing importance of countries in this part of the world. Moreover, this Nineteenth Regional Conference is being hosted by a state which has a symbolic significance for the rest of the region, Barbados being one of the young countries which have most impressed the region and the rest of the world by their maturity and wisdom. It is a dynamic country, very representative of authentic Caribbean culture. I take great pleasure, therefore, in thanking the Government and people of Barbados for inviting us to hold the Conference here.

Mr Chairman, in electing you, the Barbadian Minister of Agriculture, the Conference undoubtedly wished to pay tribute to your country as well as to express its recognition of your personal qualities. If my congratulations, Your Excellency, are particularly warm, it is because I well remember the ability you displayed on the occasion of your visit to Rome. I should also like to commend the splendid way in which the Conference has been organized. I might add that behind the much appreciated efficiency we have all caught a glimpse of your country's famous charm.

This Conference opens in a particularly difficult economic and financial climate. After forty years of progress in the region, per caput gross income started to decline in 1981. Since then there has been a general downturn in economic activity; public expenditure has fallen, inflation has frequently soared out of control, and the terms of trade have taken a marked turn for the worse. Almost everywhere conditions are becoming harsher, purchasing power is being eroded, unemployment has spread and malnutrition is again on the rise.

One major problem, though, overshadows everything else - the external debt. You will not need reminding that it now totals 400 thousand million dollars for the Latin America and Caribbean region alone, or that servicing it absorbs nearly 50 percent of export revenues. In fact, poor countries are now net exporters of capital; the outflow from Latin America over the last four years amounts to 100 thousand million dollars, equivalent to eight years of net inflows before the crisis. Unfortunately, this is a picture with which we are all too familiar.

In an effort to regain their financial equilibrium, countries in the region have been forced to agree to some extremely tough conditions, often dictated by their creditors. They have had to embark on austerity measures which have made life intolerable for the very poor. Investment has had to be slashed, thereby compromising the chances of sustained long-term recovery; and most of the available resources have had to be diverted to the export sector.

In return, countries have obtained new lines of credit. But is this really a solution? Will these new loans not go mainly toward financing the debt, thus extending its burden indefinitely? I am appalled at the thought that every child in the region is in debt from the moment it is born, and will remain in debt until the day it dies.

I therefore wonder whether these policies are not short-sighted. Admittedly the immediate concern is to prevent a default of debtor nations

that would spark off a major banking crisis. But do existing financial policies not also constitute a threat to the economies of the richest countries? Do they not shut down export markets and slam the door on new investment in Latin America? A million workers in the United States have already been thrown out of work following the slump in exports to Latin America. In the final analysis the message is clear: wealthy countries are just as much victims of the debt as debtor countries.

It is not for me to suggest ways of resolving the problem, but my involvement in development issues in this part of the world compels me to plead for a different approach. In the richer countries there are already encouraging signs that in some political circles radical solutions to the problem are no longer regarded as heresy. Maybe the tide has begun to turn at last.

Mr Chairman,

We all know that the general economic crisis has dealt a heavy blow to agriculture. The vigorous growth of the seventies has ground to a halt in the eighties. Worst hit have been the most dynamic enterprises - the very ones which had made most effort to invest and modernize.

The main shock has come from export markets. Tumbling world prices, shrinking demand from importing countries and creeping protectionism have combined to throttle expansion of the region's traditional exports. Unfortunately it looks as though these constraints are here to stay, despite the temporary improvement predicted this year in the price of some export commodities.

Structural adjustments and the financial crisis have both contributed to agriculture's difficulties. Rising import costs brought about by devaluation, have had immediate repercussions on the price of agricultural inputs, machinery and equipment. The credit clampdown has checked agricultural investment and undermined efforts at modernization. And the brake on subsidies and public expenditure has further aggravated the situation.

Paradoxically, it is the smallest farmers who have been least affected. They supply most of the traditional staples, and being less dependent on the outside they have been able to maintain their production levels. Thanks to them the worst has been avoided. This does not mean that their economic situation has improved - far from it. Inflation and a lack of other job outlets have conspired to make them even poorer. Their problems remain the same as always. If their true economic importance were now to be recognized, the crisis would at least have achieved something.

It has also highlighted the need to improve national farm policies, reform unsatisfactory agricultural structures, boost productivity and strengthen food security.

Above all, the crisis has exposed the vulnerability of the region's economies with regard to foreign markets. One of the few solutions possible is to strengthen regional economic integration; otherwise the disparity between the partners in North-South talks on agricultural commodities will persist, and regional trade will continue to be disrupted by agricultural surpluses dumped by the North.

Mr Chairman,

As usual, the Conference will be studying the Technical Committee's conclusions on various important matters affecting the region as a whole. I should now like to run briefly over the main themes.

The first relates to the agricultural development of the small Caribbean island states. Here in Barbados we might be said to be "in the field", so we shall discuss this subject with special interest. The document you have received identifies one major problem in particular; the economic vulnerability of these countries. There are no easy solutions, but some countries have shown that agriculture could be diversified so as to produce both food crops and high-earning export crops. Fostering agricultural development in this context requires joint strategies supported by regional organizations such as CARICOM or the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.

The next two subjects are closely linked; the role of women in agricultural development, and assistance for small farmers. In reviewing the general situation I have already emphasized the importance of small-scale agriculture. By examining the role of women at the same time you will be taking into account one of its main dimensions, since the problem of small-scale farming is very closely linked with that of the condition of women.

The last two items relate to important sectoral problems. The first concerns regional cooperation in the field of animal husbandry, a traditional activity in Latin America which is being forced to adapt to new demands. The best response is undoubtedly to increase productivity and to improve intra and inter-regional marketing channels. Here the regional cooperation networks provide far and away the most suitable framework for action.

The sectoral problem concerns aquaculture, a significant activity in other regions but relatively little known in Latin America and the Caribbean. It has definite potential, but it does pose considerable initial difficulties, particularly for small producers. A sound marketing base and facilities for intensive technical training are needed if aquaculture is really to take off.

Mr Chairman,

These problems and possibilities require us to take a close look at the future of cooperation between us.

We have already made a promising start. My colleague Mr Jalil, the FAO Regional Representative, will be taking stock of the Organization's activities in Latin America and the Caribbean. They show a satisfying diversity and scope, and I am glad to see that some of them - the meetings on fisheries and animal health, for example - have made a notable contribution to strengthening regional cooperation.

However, FAO has, as you know, had to cope with emergencies elsewhere in the world. And here I should like to thank the countries of the region for agreeing to the Organization devoting substantial resources to the critical situation in Africa: a proof of solidarity which deserves to be applauded. Nevertheless, it is important that FAO maintain its capacity to intervene promptly in your region whenever the occasion demands, and the strength of our Organization's commitment is illustrated by two recent examples.

The first is the large-scale international campaign against the tropical cattle tick, which transmits two diseases posing a serious threat to animal production in much of the western hemisphere, including the Caribbean and the United States. FAO is ready to play a central role in preparing a feasibility study on ways of eradicating this parasite from the Caribbean. We have received an official request from CARICOM, and I hope that it will be possible to initiate the study in the very near future, in collaboration with other interested bodies.

The second example is the action being taken to strengthen facilities for training agricultural planners. The Government of Italy has generously offered more than 6.3 million dollars over five years to fund this programme, and has agreed with the Argentine Government that the headquarters should be in Buenos Aires. I recently wrote to all member countries in the region informing them of the programme, and I invite them to be represented at a meeting to be held at the FAO Regional Office on 23 and 24 September 1986. If all goes well, the project should be underway within a few months.

We must also look further ahead, though. I am aware that Latin America and the Caribbean are now facing a completely new situation. The crisis cannot be shrugged off overnight - its roots go too deep. This makes it even more important to investigate new approaches to development, particularly with regard to cooperation with FAO.

The process of adaption involves giving a great deal of thought to current agricultural development problems. The policies pursued over the last few decades have not been an unqualified success, and it behoves us to ask why. We also need to take a hard look at long-term prospects for rural development in the region. Is poverty inevitably going to be the salient feature of rural societies by the turn of the century? Are countries irrevocably condemned to mounting food dependency and shrinking export markets? This is certainly not my view; such pessimism is quite unwarranted when one considers this continent's tremendous potential.

The region is already one of the world's major producers of wheat, meat, sugar, coffee and other agricultural commodities. For some products it ranks with the major developed countries, and this importance is likely to grow over the next few decades.

According to FAO projections, nearly two-thirds of the land brought under cultivation in the world between now and the year 2000 will be on this continent. That gives some idea of how great its reserves are, and the region has extensive forestry and fishery resources as well.

The continent could develop into one of the planet's major suppliers by boosting production of all its agricultural commodities, but first it must overcome the obstacle of its weak trading position. The region is in direct competition with some of the giants of agricultural production, and unfortunately it is not yet strong enough to combat successfully the protectionist barriers raised against its farm exports and the subsidies on commodities such as cereals, meat and sugar which compete with its own produce.

There seems little doubt that the future of this part of the world will depend on its ability to organize its trade and to defend itself. In the long run there is no other choice but to strengthen regional agreements and, dare I say it, to set up a common market. I know this is an old dream, but dreams

give us the incentive to persevere. The trade agreement that Brazil and Argentina have just signed is a particularly hopeful omen. After all, the European Economic Community was born in the same way, out of an initial agreement between two countries.

There is, then, a force pulsating through the region. We must determine its contours, assess its dimensions and understand its limitations if we are to come up with the right policies for future agricultural development. What does this mean in practice? A most interesting proposal has been made by your Representatives in Rome. They have suggested that the time may have come for FAO to carry out a specific study on the long-term development of Latin America and the Caribbean. After some reflection a few preliminary guidelines have emerged. The study would be addressed chiefly to regional policy-makers and the international community. It would make an objective evaluation of past experience, and then try to assess the potential for development over the next 25 years. It would be conducted in close association with other international organizations involved in the development of the region, and would make use of the work they have already carried out. The core of the study would consist of a plan of action embracing not only long-term programmes but also policies of more immediate relevance.

I must admit that the suggestion appeals to me. I believe it would provide a response to today's problems, without sacrificing the necessary objectivity. I am therefore ready to commit FAO to this undertaking, should you so wish. As you know, FAO is always at your disposal, and by far the most important task of its Regional Office and of its numerous Representatives in the region is to provide you with support.

Mr Chairman,

In bringing my intervention to a close, I realize that it has mostly been taken up by the economic crisis and its consequences. This would be a source of worry and doubt to me did I not see some hope on the horizon. Whatever damage the crisis may have brought, it has also kindled the fierce pride of Latin America and the Caribbean, bringing out the very best in its people. Progress that was unimaginable just a short while ago is now under way. Some countries have confounded outside opinion by successfully combating inflation, industries have carved themselves a niche in the world markets, and societies are demonstrating increasing political maturity. These are the reasons for my optimism. For nearly two centuries, your region has astonished the world over and over again. I am sure it will continue to do so.

I thank you for your attention and wish you every success in your work.



REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

(Barbados, 5 - 8 August 1986)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Technical Committee met in Sam Lord's Castle Resort in St. Philip, Barbados, from 5 to 8 August 1986.

Opening of the Technical Committee

2. At the opening session of the Technical Committee the Assistant Director-General, FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr Mario E. Jalil, took the floor and on behalf of the Director-General of FAO, Mr Edouard Saouma, and in his own name, welcomed delegates of the Latin American and Caribbean countries and observers from various organizations, and expressed appreciation of the generous hospitality extended by the Government and people of Barbados.

3. He emphasized the importance of the items which, in consultation with the countries themselves, had been selected for discussion by the Technical Committee, noting that the relevant technical documents had been distributed before the meeting.

Election of Officers

4. The Committee unanimously elected Clifton Maynard, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries of Barbados, as Chairman, and the Permanent Representative of Brazil to FAO, Ambassador Octavio Rainho Neves, and the Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture of Ecuador, Mr Jorge N. Muñoz as Vice-Chairmen. The Permanent Representative of Peru to FAO, Ambassador Javier Gazzo Fernández, was elected Rapporteur.

5. The Chairman of the Technical Committee, Mr Clifton Maynard, on behalf of his country, expressed his appreciation of his appointment and welcomed delegates and observers.

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

6. The Committee adopted the Agenda and Timetable, with the comment that Item 6, "Problems Affecting Agricultural Development in the Small Island States of the Caribbean", would be discussed in a Round Table of the Member Nations directly concerned, which would also be open to any other delegations that wishes to attend.

II. TECHNICAL ITEMS

The Role of Women in Rural Development

7. The Secretariat, in its presentation of this item, stressed that FAO had, as requested by the countries of the Region, focused on the special problems of women's integration into the process of food production and their participation in rural development. The current situation of rural women in Latin America and the Caribbean was reviewed. Women's contribution to agricultural production was described. Also highlighted were the constraints

to more active, effective, women's participation in development and the problems raised by urban growth, farm modernization and the persistence of rural poverty. FAO and government action, progress and experience in favour of rural women in development were reviewed. A mosaic of strategy components underpinning the adoption of policies and programmes targeted at rural women was presented.

8. The Committee expressed its thanks to the Director-General of FAO for including this item on the Agenda of the Regional Conference, in line with the suggestions and recommendations adopted by the 1985 Conference of FAO.

9. The Committee expressed its appreciation of the document before it, endorsed its priorities and commented on the progress of the UN Decade for Women and Development, citing the greater awareness, more acute conceptual approach to the issue, and increased funds earmarked for action to solve the problems identified. Many delegations, however, held that progress in other aspects had been minimal during the Decade, and a clearly defined conceptual framework was therefore needed to give this item muscle.

10. The various interventions by delegations described progress made within their countries in integrating women into rural development programmes.

11. The Committee agreed there was a need for more information on such aspects of women's role in development as specifically national features of the problem, current legislation, the statistical data gap on rural women (both coverage and quality), and unique situations such as those of indigenous women.

12. The Committee expressed its support for the line of work developed by FAO in its integrated approach to the problem of women and its acknowledgement of their plural and simultaneous role in the home, the workplace and the community.

13. The Committee acknowledged FAO's action in support of exchanges of experience among the various countries of the Region and suggested that these activities should continue to be reinforced by new activities, as should studies to provide a better understanding of the situation of rural women.

14. The Committee suggested that a determined effort should continue to be made in applied research on energy sources for household and farm tasks, on appropriate technology to simplify women's work in the home, and on simple agro-industrial techniques for food production and processing.

15. Training was considered one of the major tools for improving the present status of rural women. The Committee noted FAO's activities to support the countries in this matter, and suggested that FAO reinforce technical, administrative, entrepreneurial and social training for rural women in its programmes and projects. The Committee also emphasized the need for Governments to provide literacy training for rural women.

16. Concerning legal constraints on rural women, the Committee supported the document's recommendation that women be guaranteed access to the ownership and administration of land and the inputs and resources needed for its exploitation, in those countries where this had not yet been done. The Committee also suggested to governments and FAO that they, along with the necessary technical back-up services of other agencies such as the International Labour Office, look further into the impact on women of discriminatory applications



and interpretations of civil, penal and labour (as well as agrarian reform) legislation, including those laws which on paper apply equally to women and men but which in practice do not. This equality should be clearly stated in the working of such laws.

17. The Committee took note of the observation by one delegation that land tenure and membership in rural associations of an economic nature should be granted to the couple where applicable, i.e. where the couple was the recipient unit. The same delegation observed that common-law marriages should be recognized as valid for the above purposes so as to guarantee the rights of both members of the couple and their children. With the expressed reservation of one delegation, the Committee deemed it advisable to look further into this matter, except in those countries where such problems had already been successfully dealt with.

18. The Committee suggested further study of the consequences of female migration on demographic age structures, because female migration had a detrimental and much more acute impact on the economic and family unit (sometimes to the point of breakdown of the unit) than did male migration. It was suggested that FAO might be able to propose ways to halt this migration.

19. Various delegations, in suggesting ways to better the present state of knowledge on the problems of rural women, underscored the need for FAO to take a close look at the situation in Caribbean countries, where the role of women in urban and rural areas had a number of features unique within the Region. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the contribution which would be offered by the Technical Cooperation Programme Project on the Integration of Women in Agricultural and Rural Development in English-speaking Caribbean Countries. This project, scheduled to start soon, would afford an opportunity for all English-speaking island countries to exchange experiences and information and analyze the issue from a sub-regional standpoint.

20. The Committee stressed the need to ensure the permanent integration of women into all livestock production, agro-forestry, fisheries, marketing, financing and other such rural development projects, as established by Resolution 12/85 on rural women approved by the Conference of FAO in 1985.

21. Some delegations recommended that FAO pay particular attention to the part played by women in marketing agricultural products, and that the Organization support activities which tended to generate income and employment for rural women.

22. The Committee particularly emphasized the importance of ensuring, from their very inception, the participation of rural women in the conceptualization, design, planning and evaluation of projects of which women were the intended beneficiaries.

23. Some delegations requested FAO technical assistance in the identification and formulation of projects, and in getting the resources and developing the activities needed to enhance the participation of women in rural development. The Committee took note of and expressed its appreciation for the opportunity afforded by the planned Sub-Regional Workshop on the Design and Formulation of Projects to Assist Rural Women in Food Production Activities, to be held in Panama City in December 1986.

24. The Committee asked that FAO and the other UN agencies intensify their consideration of problems of housing, health, roads and transportation and the other social aspects of rural communities. Adequate funding and integrated action were required.

25. One delegation stated that technical staff should travel to rural areas to impart indigenous technologies to rural women and that there should be exchanges of visits among rural women from other countries within the Region. While rural women had been the main producers of food, engaged in the back-breaking task of working in the fields, their contribution had gone unnoticed. It was therefore recommended that the organizations of the United Nations System, including FAO, attach high priority to the following issues, within their respective mandates:

- (a) the provision of proper transportation for rural women workers to and from home and plantation;
- (b) mobile toilet facilities and other necessary services at or near the plantations;
- (c) proper storage facilities for their tools to be stored at their work sites.

26. The Committee reiterated its support for the leading role played by FAO in rural development within the UN system, and suggested the Organization take an even more active part in the integration of women in rural development. Some delegations suggested that FAO seek ways of dovetailing its action and projects for rural women with those of other agencies working in the Region but not members of the UN family.

27. The Committee stated that more concrete country action was urgently needed to better the present conditions under which rural women live and work.

28. In its discussion of the institutional aspect of women in rural development, the Technical Committee approved the lines of action proposed by the Secretariat. Concerning the institutional aspect, mention was made of the need for a clear-cut definition of the technical and administrative units responsible for implementing women's projects and programmes in the agricultural sector. This should ensure that the proper resources would be allocated and that development would not get bogged down in the traditional welfare approach so common in the field. Stress was laid on the need to continue disseminating information on the institutional aspect of women's development and to provide awareness training for the staff members of the Ministries of Agriculture and Planning on the importance and economic justification of action in favour of rural women.

29. Note was taken of the interest expressed by the delegation of one country, in having FAO prepare a study along the lines of other similar studies, on the role of women in rural development in that country.

30. Lastly, the Committee proposed that FAO and governments implement the recommendations of the Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, held in Nairobi in 1985, and recommended more active participation in this work by non-governmental organizations working to help rural women.

### Helping the Small Farmer

31. In presenting this item, the Secretariat emphasized the importance of small farmers in Latin America and the Caribbean Region, with particular reference to this group's contribution to agricultural production. Emphasis was laid on the major role played by this sector of the population in the problems of poverty and rural development, and the structural, institutional and socio-economic limitations on this production group were identified.
32. The Secretariat proposed a list of specific policies to improve the contribution of small farmers, emphasizing the size and significance of this group in national economies. These policies were mainly concerned with: education and training; agro-industrial development and investment in non-agricultural activities in rural areas; generation of employment; and research and transfer of technology.
33. As well as describing FAO and Government activities in the Region in this field, the Secretariat made an appeal to all Member Nations to give high priority to policies for the small farmers' sector.
34. The Technical Committee thanked the Director-General of FAO for having placed this item on the Agenda of the Regional Conference, praised the quality of the document presented and agreed with the proposals contained in it. The Committee also expressed its satisfaction with the progress made by FAO in defining the concept of the small farmer, taking into account the ways in which different nations saw the problem. Recognizing the importance of this item for the Region, the Committee recommended that it be placed on the Agenda of future Regional Conferences, so that Governments and FAO could systematically analyze advances made by the small farmers' sector.
35. In discussing this item, the Committee expressed its support for the orientation of FAO's work and its specific activities in the Region, implementing the Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) held in Rome in 1979. The Committee suggested that the documentation and the discussion of this item be used in the preparation of the report on the evaluation of the follow-up to WCARRD, to be discussed at the Conference of FAO in Rome in 1987.
36. Many delegations took part in the discussions, providing detailed information on programmes for small farmers in their countries. Various delegations pointed out that, in addition to the problems normally confronting small-scale agriculture, there were not external influences aggravating this situation still further.
37. In discussing the concept of the small farmer, various delegations referred to the need to define this category more precisely, in view of the different interpretations existing at present. The Committee suggested that FAO continue to give special attention to this aspect and that efforts be made to define the scope of different connotations in the language commonly used with regard to the situation of problems of small farmers.
38. The Committee agreed that there should be an integral approach to the problems of small farmers and possible solutions, taking into account aspects such as: access to resources and factors of production, education and health, to production support services and marketing; promotion of producers' organizations as a basic instrument of development; support to production and marketing and transfer of appropriate technology.

39. The Committee reaffirmed the importance of Governments promoting access by small farmers to land ownership, guaranteeing security of tenure and making it easier for them to obtain title as promptly as possible, in countries where these problems have not yet been solved.

40. Attention was drawn to the need for FAO to conduct studies which would examine in greater depth the small farmer's contribution to food production.

41. In various interventions, delegations referred to the difficulties small farmers encountered in obtaining enough credit at the right time and at low interest rates. They suggested that FAO give wider publicity to successful experiments made by certain countries in this field. Emphasis was also laid on the need for credit institutions to modify current requirements for granting loans to small farmers, allowing the security to be the crop instead of title to the land.

42. The Committee recommended that Governments and international financing institutions increase the resources available to finance programmes and projects for small farmers. The Committee expressed its concern with regard to the financial situation of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, an organization which was created specifically to channel resources to small farmers, and requested that its resources be fully replenished as soon as possible, strongly urging contributors to honour their outstanding commitments with regard to the second replenishment of the Fund.

43. The Committee agreed that one of the major aspects to be considered was training for small farmers. This training should be geared to facilitate the adoption of appropriate technologies, whose introduction should nevertheless respect the special idiosyncrasy of small farmers. The Committee pointed out that, if training were to be successful, it would have to be supported by literacy courses and the reorganization of educational systems to bring them more closely into line with the rural reality.

44. Various delegations expressed their gratitude to FAO and their support for its work in the formulation and application of socio-economic indicators with regard to the situation of the rural population, and suggested that the results of this work be distributed to multilateral and bilateral financing agencies.

45. Several delegations referred to the limited achievements of integrated rural development projects and indicated that the solution and policies of national scope, including the establishment of and support to organizations devoted specifically to this sector, should be properly coordinated.

46. The Committee emphasized the need for, and importance of, small farmers' participation in the development process, with special reference to the role to be played by community producers' organizations in achieving this objective.

47. Several delegations noted the need to establish agricultural insurance systems to mitigate the adverse effects of any contingency which might arise, including natural phenomena and disasters, on the economic stability of the small farmer. In this connection, FAO was requested to disseminate the results of successful experiments in this field in various countries.

48. The Committee appreciated the efforts made by FAO to achieve a deeper understanding of the problems of small farmers, and suggested that it continue

with this work, assisting governments to conduct national studies so that the present situation of the small farmers' sector could be understood in greater detail. The Committee emphasized the desirability of countries in the Region exchanging experiences, and requested FAO to promote and facilitate this exchange, not only at technical level, but also among small producers and their organizations.

49. In discussing this item, the Committee mentioned the need to update and improve statistics on small farmers. To this end, it recommended that agricultural censuses in 1990 include elements that would give a true picture of the socio-economic conditions of this group of producers. It was also suggested that various studies on the structure of land tenure and the socio-economic conditions of the peasant sector be updated.

50. The Committee appreciated efforts made by FAO to achieve a deeper understanding of the specific problems of rural development in the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean.

51. The Committee attached special importance to the role played by non-governmental organizations in rural development, particularly their experience in working with small farmers. The Committee suggested to governments and FAO that they expand, as far as possible and bearing in mind the specific characteristics of each country, the participation of non-governmental organizations in rural development.

52. During the debate on this item, several delegations requested specific technical assistance from FAO in rural development and agrarian reform.

53. Attention was drawn to the close connection between the situation of small farmers and food security, since any concrete assistance that FAO could provide, through governments, to small farmers, would have an effect on food security, as implementation of the World Food Security Compact would create additional employment and marketing opportunities for small farmers.

#### Round Table on Problems Affecting Agricultural Development in the Small Island States of the Caribbean

54. As agreed by the Technical Committee, this Round Table was held on Wednesday, 6 August. The event was attended by delegates from countries directly involved in the study as well as by delegates from the other countries participating in the Committee and observers from various organizations.

55. The background information available for the discussions was included in document LARC/86/6, "Problems Affecting Agricultural Development in the Small Island States of the Caribbean", which was presented by the Secretariat.

56. Caribbean island states constitute a specific grouping of developing countries, characterized both by their general problems and those directly related to insularity and small size. In examining the impact of these last two features, the study highlighted the extremely low land/population ratios, the limited resource base, their narrow market size, high per caput cost of infrastructure and services, the difficulty of integrating national economies, the effects of natural disasters and the rigorous credit policies of regional financial institutions.

57. The historical development of Caribbean agriculture was examined. Prominent features were a heavy orientation towards mono-crop exports, a low level of domestic food crop production and skewed land tenure and land use patterns, resulting in a high volume of food imports. More recently, poor performance of traditional exports had sharpened the need for diversification in various areas among which the expansion of domestic food production, the development of non-traditional exports and increased food processing and agro-industry were highlighted.
58. In this process, the role of small farmers was seen as fundamental. The study analyzed the significant features of rural communities in these island states, indicating the high average age of farmers, a declining youth participation in farming, growing urbanization and a serious net decline in rural farming populations. These factors had a strong impact on production potential and the need to raise productivity to maintain and expand output.
59. The study also recognized efforts by Caribbean Governments with international assistance to address some of the problems raised, among which the establishment of institutions, the development of regional cooperation and research in key areas of production technology and systems, extension techniques and crop varieties were singled out. The accumulated knowledge and experiences were considered basic to intra- and extra-regional exchanges.
60. The study concluded that the continued development of these island states would hinge upon addressing the problems of small size and insularity through such measures as maximizing domestic and export market potential for traditional and non-traditional products, significantly increasing agricultural production and productivity, supporting the forestry, fisheries and processing subsectors, increasing assistance to research and development and supporting small farmers, especially women, who play an important role throughout the entire agricultural production and marketing process.
61. During the discussions several delegations emphasized the timeliness, importance and relevance of this study prepared by FAO and reiterated the urgency of implementing its recommendations within the subregion with the full support of governments, regional institutions and the international community.
62. Participants at the Round Table recognized the existence of human and technical resources within the Caribbean subregion which could be harnessed and channelled into promoting development of the area. In this respect, it was stressed that there was a wealth of native knowledge, technologies, experiences and skills among rural communities which should be directed towards cooperation among developing countries to promote adoption of appropriate development strategies. These strategies offered prospects for agricultural diversification and community industry at the level of small farmers, thus maximizing the use of indigenous materials, and generating family income as well as export earnings on a broader international scale. It was suggested that FAO could contribute through research and technical assistance to make greater use of these resources.
63. Participants expressed concern over the criteria and indicators applied in defining development levels in the case of Caribbean countries. These focused mainly on per caput income without regard to other considerations such as distribution of wealth, potential for sustaining economic growth or the high cost of maintaining basic infrastructure and services in island or multi-island states. It was pointed out that the high GNP per caput levels in

the subregion had prompted international financing agencies to "graduate" the Caribbean away from concessionary financing for development. This position was not justified by a wider review of the indicators and criteria, which would indicate the need for special measures in favour of insular states.

64. Participants also suggested that the objectives of Caribbean development should be broadly defined so as to include not merely material and economic growth but also genuine scope for grassroot participation and harmonious personal development among rural peoples. Such development implied integrated approaches involving a wide and diverse range of national agencies with effective and sensitive international assistance.

65. The following specific areas were cited by participants as requiring technical assistance from FAO and other international agencies to Caribbean governments:

- establishing agricultural insurance schemes, particularly related to facilitating the rehabilitation of production following natural disasters;
- creation of mechanisms to ensure access by small farmers to necessary agricultural equipment and inputs for production;
- training and other types of technical support to establish food production programmes with particular reference to the identification, formulation and implementation of projects;
- application of various support measures to enable countries of the subregion to take greater advantage of the provisions offered within the UN Law of the Sea Convention in favour of maritime developing countries;
- changing consumption habits through sustained promotional programmes throughout the region. These would aim at reducing illiteracy levels and creating greater awareness of new uses of foods and indigenous raw materials for food processing so as to reduce the region's high food import bill;
- strengthening institutions and international cooperation, with particular reference to credit, research, marketing and to internal, overland and external transportation;
- improving mechanisms to allow for exchanges of trained manpower and the sharing of experiences;
- support to develop effective planning systems and well-defined, long-term programmes for efficient and competitive agricultural production and marketing;
- assistance to strengthen the handicraft sector by disseminating existing research, promoting new technologies to process agricultural products and developing new ones capable of generating income both in the domestic as well as in the export market.

## Aquaculture and Rural Development

66. In introducing this subject, the Secretariat referred to document LARC/86/7, which looked at the potential for aquaculture development in the Region as a means of improving the quality of life of the rural poor. The attention of the Committee was drawn to the main issues affecting aquaculture development as a means of rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was pointed out that in-depth multidisciplinary planning was needed for rural development schemes which had aquaculture components integrated with other forms of rural production.

67. The Committee congratulated FAO on the inclusion of this topic for discussion, and for its comprehensive and clear presentation. It endorsed the views given in the document and underscored the need and the potential for aquaculture development in the Region in contributing to the achievement of many of the economic and social objectives of the governments. Among these were mentioned food security and self-sufficiency, improved nutrition, better foreign exchange balance, stemming rural migration, employment opportunities and, in general, improvement of the quality of life of the rural poor. Special note was also taken of the suitability of aquaculture as an activity to be undertaken by rural women.

68. Some delegations considered that, given the size and limited inland water resources of some small island states, aquaculture in these islands with species requiring substantial investment would be developed primarily by corporations and entrepreneurs. However, with the assistance of FAO and other institutions, attempt should be made to find low-cost aquacultural technologies for the rural population.

69. The Committee emphasized the need for more trained manpower to support aquaculture in the Region, with particular reference to rural producers, extensionists and technical personnel. It was noted that most such training could feasibly be done within the Region. In this regard, mention was made of FAO Regional Office collaboration with the Governments of Jamaica, Panama and Chile in providing training for a number of persons of the Region in aquaculture centres in these countries.

70. Some delegates highlighted the need for carrying out technological research and development within the Region. It was noted that technology transfer from outside often proved difficult to adapt to the specific conditions of the Region.

71. Many delegations, referring to their national experience, gave their support to Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) in this subject area, and welcomed the strengthening of technical cooperation networks within the Region. It was recommended that TCDC programmes should include activities for artisanal fishermen. Several delegations offered their facilities and special experience in support to TCDC activities. It was noted that a firm financial base was necessary to support these activities. Also, the Network News as a means of information sharing and coordination was noted and welcomed.

72. Several delegations cautioned, on the basis of their own experiences, that some care should be taken in embarking on aquaculture programmes. As examples, it was mentioned that the introduction of exotic species had sometimes proved problematic, and that shrimp culture had resulted in the unnecessary destruction of valuable mangroves in some instances.



73. Various delegations expressed their desire that, in horizontal technical collaboration activities sponsored by FAO, the Organization should promote the exchange of experiences and knowledge among those who were directly linked to productive activities, independently of their technical level, so that experienced aquaculturists could transfer their knowledge to those who were just starting in this activity.

74. The Committee noted that the theme of World Food Day in 1986 would be "Fishermen and their communities". One delegation referred to this subject and urged all countries in the Region to accord maximum importance and support to this celebration.

75. Delegations noted the good work being done by the Regional Latin American Aquaculture Centre (CERLA), expressed their support for the institution and noted with satisfaction the assistance now being provided to it by FAO with the financial support of the Government of Italy. Special emphasis was laid on the need to find permanent sources of finance. In this connection, Mexico, in agreement with COPESCAL (Commission for Inland Fisheries of Latin America), offered its national facilities for transfer of technology through one of the national centres connected to the CERLA programme.

76. The Committee recommended the production and distribution of audio-visuals, and other information materials for the promotion of rural aquaculture. Mention was made of some materials already produced which could be exchanged within the framework of the networks.

77. Delegates praised the work of FAO and its Regional Office, but requested that attention be given to close cooperation with organizations involved in aquaculture development in the Region. Mention was made of the forthcoming session of the COPESCAL Working Party on Aquaculture, at which this issue was scheduled to be discussed.

#### Livestock Development Policies and Regional Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean

78. The Secretariat, in presenting this item, described the main features which have characterized livestock development within recent years in the Region. While there have been differences between and within countries and livestock species, the general pattern observed is one of unsatisfactory development of this subsector.

79. It was stated that the total expansion in animal production during this period, resulted more from increased numbers of animals rather than from higher productivity levels, which stagnated and even declined in the case of cattle. As a result, average per caput beef, mutton and goat meat production declined regionwide. Milk production rose only slightly, while per caput production of poultry meat more than doubled due mainly to large imports of feed materials and other inputs.

80. The significant stagnation of productivity of ruminants was regarded as crucial, considering the vast resources and potential for their production in Latin America, where more than 70 percent of agricultural land is under natural pastures.

81. Self-sufficiency ratios in the livestock subsector declined as a consequence, leading to reduced exports and increased imports of animal products, thus further affecting the indebtedness of countries in the Region.

82. The situation described is a result of various constraints among which are: inadequate feed resources and insufficient technical skills to optimize use of existing pastures, animal health problems, inadequate marketing arrangements, export discrimination, deficiencies in training and extension, as well as the low genetic quality of stocks.

83. The Secretariat presented a brief outline of FAO activities in this subsector in support of governments' efforts, which included programmes to improve animal feed security and genetic resources, dairy and meat development, animal health, training and publications, cooperative research networks, education and training.

84. The scope for increased cooperation among international, regional and subregional agencies was indicated in the following areas: animal health, marketing, science and technology and utilization of feed and improvement of genetic resources.

85. During the course of the discussions, several delegations expressed appreciation for the inclusion of this item, of great regional importance, in the Agenda of the Conference, and praised the quality of the document and its presentation. The document highlighted possible areas to orient governments in defining priority actions to promote the development of the subsector.

86. The Committee expressed concern over the unfavourable situation of livestock development stemming from environmental factors and the lack of adequate technologies, financial capability and development policies for this purpose. The Committee deplored the downward trend in livestock production in the Region and stressed the urgent need for positive action to change this situation.

87. Some delegations urged the Secretariat to take greater initiative in devising imaginative and comprehensive proposals and strategies for the consideration of governments.

88. Some delegations expressed the need for doses of semen from purebred cattle to improve their herds. One delegation offered to provide limited amounts of this article as a gesture of goodwill towards the other countries of the Region.

89. The Committee recommended the establishment of a Livestock Committee as an advisory body to the Council of FAO, in accordance with Article VI-2 of the FAO Constitution. In this context, it was suggested that FAO undertake the necessary action to implement this proposal. Two delegations indicated that though they had no objection to the core of the proposal, they were not in a position to support it at this time.

90. Another proposal was that a Livestock Expert Consultative Group or Panel of Experts be set up to address regional issues related to this subsector. Such a group could serve in an advisory capacity to define needs and priorities and provide a regular forum for consultations among Member States. This proposal was unanimously supported by the delegations and it was stressed that this regional consultative group should be composed of high-level livestock policy-makers and should meet at least once every two years.

91. Some delegations expressed surprise and reservations concerning the statements included in paragraph 33 of document LARC/86/8. This statement invited the governments of the exporting countries of Latin America to consider the adoption of strategies for adjusting output of livestock products to domestic and external market demand given the ongoing international context of depressed meat and dairy product prices. They were also asked to reconsider the advisability of production subsidies for domestic consumption in countries facing financial and economic problems. The Secretariat clarified the doubts expressed by these delegations, indicating its basic agreement with what had been said.

92. Some delegations stressed that the protectionist policies and export subsidies applied by some industrialized countries, particularly the EEC countries, contributed significantly to the lack of sufficient progress in the Region. In this context, the Committee reiterated the need for such countries to abolish these restrictions to trade.

93. Several delegations referred to the presence of the amblyoma variegatum tick, a vector for heartwater disease and dermatophilosis in some of the Caribbean countries and to the urgency for concerted action among governments and international and regional institutions and agencies. The Committee was apprised of the existence of a proposal for a feasibility study for the eradication of this vector and these diseases from the Caribbean countries. Some delegations expressed the view that FAO could play a leading role in coordinating international assistance efforts to address this issue. Other delegations considered that it was important for FAO to coordinate its support efforts with those of governments and other agencies already active in this field.

94. With respect to the need for eliminating constraints to livestock production and stimulating greater production and productivity levels, the Committee indicated the urgent need for action in the following areas:

- i) technical assistance and support to livestock marketing programmes, infrastructure development, animal health, genetic improvement and animal feed;
- ii) training and extension with particular reference to increased dissemination of technology through audio-visual media including self-instruction manuals, publications and films, drawing upon successful experiences such as the FAO/DANIDA Regional Dairy Development and Training Team for Latin America and the Caribbean;
- iii) research with particular reference to feed resources, including pasture development and alternatives to traditional livestock feeds, bearing in mind livestock feed requirements during the dry seasons, utilization of by-products and development of animal production systems, especially for small farmers.

95. The Committee noted with satisfaction FAO's progress and achievements in promoting technical cooperation among developing countries and invited FAO to strengthen its efforts to assist the governments to establish regional and subregional technical cooperation networks, ensuring the active participation of national institutions. In this respect, several delegations referred to the Subregional Network on Small Stock Development in the Caribbean Countries

and the Regional Network on Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratories and their potential for greater exchange of information and experiences in livestock development.

96. The following specific areas were identified by the Committee as requiring FAO assistance:

- i) identification of sources of additional funding to support livestock production and development in the Region;
- ii) preparation of a medium- and long-term action programme to find viable solutions to the livestock feed problem, focusing particularly on the potential of the indigenous grasses and legumes within the Region;
- iii) preparation of a long-term regional programme to eliminate animal health problems which constitute real barriers to trade in livestock products in this area;
- iv) design of programmes to control animal diseases in small animals and in particular small ruminants;
- v) support to the development and application of biotechnologies to increase livestock production, improve animal health and further genetic improvement.

97. The Committee highlighted the extreme urgency of reversing these downward trends in the production and consumption of livestock and dairy products in the Region. It was considered that this reversal could be brought about by fuller and more rational utilization of existing resources. Firm commitments by governments to develop this subsector in coordination with FAO and other international assistance agencies, were also considered necessary.



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