

INTRODUCTION

A vast area of land under shifting cultivation in the tropics supports only an estimated 14 people per square mile: the staff of the Food and Agriculture Organization (1957) declare that "a world in expansion cannot tolerate this relative vacuum". In many areas the problem is even more acute. Increasing population causes more intensive use of the land by shifting cultivators which always leads eventually to the production of useless wastelands. Such depletion of the world's natural resources is intolerable.

This report outlines the features of the practice, poses the problem and examines a particular case in British Guiana. An attempt is made to indicate the type of immediate action required to alleviate the problem.