

1933

1933

3223

KENYA

3223

C 0533/437

Phosphatic material for fertilizers.Acquisition of interests in Sudan phosphate islands.

Previous	X 297	72/9
	Room 309	73/9
	R. 297	2/10
	Room 309	73/X
	297	25/11
Subsequent	Room 307	27
	311	
	B. 297	12/12
	Room 309	13/12
297	16/6	In Finsen
Room 309	17	The Strand
hiding	20/6	Room 316
In Finsen	21	298
309	23/6	297
In Finsen	1	M. Stockdale
298	27/6	In Finsen
197	28/6	Eastern Dep.
Room 309	29/6	M. Finsen
In Finsen	30	The Strand
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R. 297	23/8	
Room 309	23/8	

A.M.M. Moore 5%

18 May 53

Stalin Major Grogan has drawn attention to the import  
of an adequate supply of low priced phosphatic material for  
fertilizers & suggested that the phosphate islands off the Sudan  
coast should be assessed for E.A. Territories. Requests information  
regarding these islands may be obtained.

H. J. Dugay

Can you throw any light on this?

J. French

7

We have no information as to the  
occurrence of phosphate on islands  
off the Sudan coast. There is a considerable  
production of phosphate in Egypt,  
but the deposits are inland.

M. Kirkham

20/6/53

It is inconceivable that exploitable phosphates  
should have remained unexploited on a main  
trade route like the Red Sea. But I suppose  
we must refer to the Sudan Office.

Write to the Controller, Sudan Govt Agency  
Saying that it has been reported to S.G.B.  
that of phosphate islands off the coast of the  
Sudan, but that he has been unable to  
obtain confirmation of the statement. S.G.B. will

be qualified for any information on the subject  
but the Committee may be in position  
to suffice.

Take the other Conf.

G. R. Brewster  
21/6 1933

2 To Sader Govt Agency. Done 27/6

3 Sader Govt Agency 28/6 June 13

State that some off-shore wrecks from various  
break bulk bottoms or wrecks off the Sader coast  
which would helpfully furnish info, but  
nothing further information for off-shores.

No. 1. Acknowledged receipt, with  
thanks. The information  
in the other might be  
sent 1% to be done.

C. A. Forness  
27/6

Mr. Brewster  
28/6

27/6 To Sader Govt Agency (Done) }  
SACLA STATUS }  
By Regd 5 - Done } 27/6

(C)

No further reply to No. 2 has yet been received.

Wait a month. Noted 27/6 16.8.33  
C. A. Forness  
27/6 at once

6. T. M. Moore 2% 27 July 33.  
DESTROYED UNDER STAFFORD will be interested to hear result of reference to  
Electron. Party. (B/4 as requested  
above)

C. A. Forness  
27/6 at once

(a) Brought up one minute above.

27/6 22.9.33.  
Lys 297.

Wait another month  
27/6 22.9.33.  
Lys 297.

(b) Brought up one minute above.

22.10.33.  
Lys 297.

The more results  
the better. (S)

Brought up one minute above.

25.11.33.  
Lys 297.

On investigation  
1. It is now known  
No need to  
send unless  
longer time.

Party and  
any further  
info if available regarding the phosphate wrecks  
will be sent in the Regd. Sacla Status  
27/6 27/6

New wire to Sader Govt Agency, 27/6 3, saying  
that S.A.P. will be interested to hear whether any  
further info is available regarding the phosphate wrecks  
and if so will support its case in the Regd. Sacla Status  
27/6 27/6

7. H.M. Moore (c.o) 20 Nov. 33  
Encs. copy of cases with Imperial Institute's inquiries  
resulting researches at Hartmann.

? 1. Enquiry from the Court of the  
Sudan Govt. London Office with  
reference to No. 3 whether  
a reply from Khartoum may be  
expected shortly

2. To Mr. Stockdale as  
suggested in No. 7

*Stockdale*

13/12/33

The position of Nauru phosphate  
might be worth investigating. We may  
arrange for a reinforced shipment  
of 50 tons from Nauru to the  
Falkland Islands.

*Stockdale*

13/12.

You are most welcome engine of a ship  
Nauru might be available to fit a long way off

*Stockdale*

13/12

*Stockdale*

To Sudan Govt. Office Date 19/12/33

I should have thought that the first  
DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE place

to place which Kenya might look for its phosphatic requirements would have been the Seychelles group.

The main phosphatic guano deposits in the Seychelles are under lease but it is only the high-grade guano which is being extracted and exported. The supply of high-grade guano is in sight of being exhausted within the next few years but if low-grade phosphates would meet Kenya's requirements it is quite possible that considerable quantities might be available. It would be necessary for these to be analysed before importation into Kenya were advised, as some of them are ferruginous.

X The Seychelles Department or the Office could give particulars of the existing leases and the Department of Agriculture in Kenya might get into touch with the operating company. A copy of the Report of the visit made by the Governor and the Director of Agriculture to the outlying islands of the Seychelles in July and August, 1929, might also be sent to Kenya for their information. In this report are references to the nature of the guano deposits on the principal islands of the Seychelles and some indications of quantities available.

*F.R. Stockdale*

13. 12. 33.

*Easter Is.*

*Can you help?*

*Stockdale*

For leases, see 8492 f 11/12 Seychelles.  
For companies operating see 14427/11/4 Syria.  
For report on Guineas, see 64953/2/12 Liberia.  
Advis. 24/12/34

9 Sudan Govt Office 20 Dec 1933  
(Further enquiry shall be made through usual channels)

After speaking to Mr. Tait, I may  
say the British Phosphate Commission's office,  
obtained the data abt. Nauru in the  
Dept. in herewith to Mr. Moore.

(I understand from Mr. Stockdale  
that there is room for his opinion  
whether unlimited phosphate are the  
panacea for E.A. agriculture.)

PP  
8/1.

^ Not used by Carlton

I can't make out why the Sudan govt as slappy  
about a simple enquiry. Obviously the best thing to do  
is for Kenya to go direct to Khartoum.

J.C.W.H. 8/1. same

10 To Hamm moore 010 10/1/34  
(all Report in 3 on 04953/29 typewritten)

MR

C. O.

P.C.  
75.

Mr. Freeston.

Mr. Flood. *b1 b2* For Mr. Flood's signature.

Mr.

Mr. Parkinson.

Mr. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

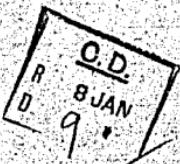
Perml. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Downing Street.

10 January, 1934.



Dear Moore,

Our enquiries into the

DRAFT.

H.M.M. MOORE, ESQ., C.M.G.

possibility of obtaining phosphates  
for E. Africa have resulted as follows:-

(a) The Sudan Govt. has not been

very helpful. After ineffective

correspondence with the Sudan Govt.

Office in London we are now politely

informed that any further enquiries

on the subject should be made through

the usual <sup>official</sup> channels of the Foreign Office.

This is now being done.

(b) I notice that Wolfe writes

throughout of "rock-phosphates". We

learn that <sup>Malau</sup> Malau could supply unground

phosphate for a.f.o.b. price of about

24/- a ton; freight to Mombasa for a

steamer-load, say 7,000 tons, is to

FURTHER ACTION.

It would probably cause further  
delay if you would now write  
officially to Khartoum.

*Report enclosed in No. 3 on  
14/9/33/39 Seychelles.*

C. O.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. Parkinson.

Mr. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Perm. U.S. of S.

Perly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

House Blackfriars, E.C.4; who ship

about 10,000 tons annually to New

Zealand, Europe and India;

(2) <sup>do. New Malabar.</sup> The Syndicate <sup>Barber Holdings,</sup> who export mainly to New Zealand; and

(3) Tenooljee and Company, who

seem to send regular shipments to

Mombasa - they sent 136 tons in 1932.

<sup>Department</sup>  
Possibly the Director of

Agriculture may think it worth while to  
get into  
keep in touch with these people.

Further particulars can be  
extracted from the enclosed Report by  
the Governor and the Director of  
Agriculture on a visit to the outlying  
islands in 1929.

We will let you know if anything  
comes from the official correspondence  
with the Sudan Govt.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) J. E. W. FLOOD

FURTHER ACTION.

The present losses are to be by

(1) the Seychelles Co. Ltd., delivery

4 on 14/11/33 Sing.

TELEGRAMS RECEIVED  
TELEGRAPHY, SOUTHWEST, LONDON.  
TELEGRAMS DESPATCHED  
TELEGRAPHY, LONDON.  
TELEGRAMS  
VICTORIA 8818

3223/33  
**SUDAN GOVERNMENT  
LONDON OFFICE.**

WELLINGTON HOUSE, FEC/WB.  
BUCKINGHAM GATE,  
LONDON, S.W.1.

L.O. 410.1.

20th December, 1933.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



Sir,

Replying to your letter No. 3223/33 of the 19th instant, I have to confirm by telephonic conversation with you to-day when I explained that the question of the existence of phosphate islands off the coast of the Sudan, mentioned in your letter of the 27th June last, had been referred to the authorities in the Sudan, and that a reply had been received, <sup>by telex</sup> that it would be appreciated if any further enquiries concerning this matter could be made through the usual channels, via the Foreign Office.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

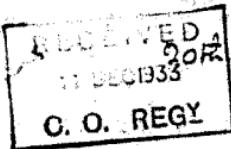
*H. Charlton*  
H. Charlton  
Under-Secretary.

The Under-Secretary of State,  
Colonial Office,  
Downing Street,  
S.W.1.



THE SECRETARIAT,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

WHEN REPLYING  
PLEASE QUOTE  
N.O.S./C AGR. 25/3/22.  
END DATE



November, 1933.

Dear [Signature],

With reference to your letter of the 3rd  
No. 5 July on the subject of phosphate deposits, I enclose  
copies of letters which have passed between the  
Mineral Resources Department of the Imperial Institute  
and Wolfe, the Acting Director of Agriculture.

2. Perhaps you will be able to say whether  
researches at Khartoum have revealed anything. If not,  
you may care to consult Stockdale as to whether the  
Colonial Advisory Council of Agriculture and Animal  
Health should be approached on the subject. Wolfe  
has informed me that he considers the matter to be of  
sufficient importance to warrant such consideration.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

J. E. W. FLOOD, ESQ:

C O P Y

No.M.4351.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE,  
SOUTH KENSINGTON,  
LONDON.

25th July, 1933.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of June 19th, No.C/Mamur/8/11, we have no information about phosphate rock deposits on any of the islands off the Sudan coast.

The only island in that part of the world about which we have any information concerning phosphate deposits is Mait Island off the coast of British Somaliland. No adequate description of the deposit is available, the most complete being that of R.A. Farquharson in his First Report on the Geology and Mineral Resources of British Somaliland (1924).

The material as bagged for shipment by the local Somalis for the Sultan of Makulla was found by Farquharson to consist of a miscellaneous collection of minerals and feathers, bones etc. The portion passing a 20-mesh sieve contained the most phosphate ( $18.5\% \text{ P}_2\text{O}_5$ ). Further analyses showed that the greater part of the phosphate was present in combination with iron and alumina, but the report points out that if the deposit were properly examined it might be possible to produce much better material.

Yours faithfully,

sd. Thos. Crook

Principal.  
Mineral Resources Department.

The Director of Agriculture,  
Nairobi,  
KENYA.

MANUR/8/60.  
24th August, 1955.

C O P Y .

The Director,  
Imperial Institute,  
South Kensington,  
LONDON, S.W.7.

Dear Sir,

I have to thank you for the information conveyed in the letter from the Principal of the Mineral Resources Department dated 25th July on the subject of phosphate rock deposits.

2. Perhaps I had better inform you of the object of this Government in making these enquiries. The object is not confined to the purposes of this Government alone, but those also of the neighbouring territories of East Africa. The soils in these territories are preponderantly deficient in phosphates and this will always be the limiting factor in production. This Government is anxious to explore the possibilities of securing rights to substantial rock phosphate deposits, of sufficient phosphatic content, so that a scheme may be evolved for working these deposits for the benefit of the East African territories. Phosphatic fertilisers of all kinds entering East Africa are priced beyond the means of most of the European farmers and of all native farmers, and it is highly desirable, almost essential, to ensure for the future a supply of cheap rock phosphate. In addition to the value of the phosphate content, distance is an important factor, and in view of the high charges for transport through the Suez Canal, it is desirable that deposits south of the Canal should first be explored.

3. The Government would be grateful for any assistance which your Institute may be able to afford, by way either of information, advice or suggestion.

Yours faithfully,

sd. H. Wolfe

AG: DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE.

~~COPY~~

No. V.4351

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE,  
SOUTH KENSINGTON,  
LONDON, S.W.7.

22nd September, 1933.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter Matur/V/60 of the 24th August regarding deposits of high grade phosphate rock which might be worked to meet the agricultural needs of East Africa. As you do not mention the production of superphosphate, I presume it is intended to use the rock in a finely ground condition for direct application to the soil.

I regret to say that I am not aware of any deposit of good quality phosphate south of the Suez Canal and convenient to East Africa which is not already being worked.

It is possible that one of the islands off the west of Madagascar may contain a deposit worth attention. For details regarding these islands, which are French possessions, you should consult Service des Mines de Madagascar at Tananarive, Madagascar.

Other possible sources, already referred to in our letter of the 1st June last, which might be worth consideration are the Egyptian deposits at Wadi Safaga and in the Seychelles. As regards the latter, much of the guano obtained is shipped to New Zealand. The best quality guano is stated to come from the outlying islands, but supplies of this material seem to have been largely exhausted. There is a large deposit of ferruginous phosphate on Aldabra. The phosphate possibilities of this group of islands is not well known and they might possibly be worth investigation. In any case, however, it seems unlikely that any large tonnage of high-grade phosphate will be located there.

Another possible source which might be investigated are the Island and Ocean Island deposits which are worked by the British Phosphate Commission for the benefit of the Governments of the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, without profit. Each country can take its quota of the production for home consumption but owing to the heavy cost of freight, the United Kingdom never takes its allotment (45%); this is divided between the two other countries.

It is possible, however, that some arrangement might be negotiated whereby the United Kingdom quota might be taken in part at least, by the Governments of the East African Dependencies. It may be mentioned that the shipments

The Director of Agriculture,  
Makratti,  
Kenya.

from Naura during the year 1931-3 amounted to 434,658 tons and the f.o.b. price averaged £1.7.7 per ton.

Recently attention has been directed towards the unworked phosphate deposits of the Zarga district of Trans-Jordan, some of which appear to contain good quality material. Although material from these deposits would have to be brought through the Suez Canal the occurrences might possibly be worth your consideration, failing others nearer at hand, in which case you could apply to the Trans-Jordan Government for details regarding possible concessions.

Yours faithfully,

Ed. Thes. Crock

Principal.  
Mineral Resources Department.

C.O.

Mr. Fletcher 30/6 f.  
Sir.

Mr.

Mr. Parkinson.

Mr. Tomlinson.

Sir C. Bottomley.

Sir J. Shuckburgh.

Permit. U.S. of S.

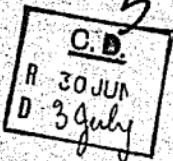
Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

3223/33

Kenya

4 to Sir Th. Blood.



3 JUL 1933

Dear None

After vain researches

## DRAFT.

H.M.-H. None by. C.R.C.

2 aff:

in the C.O. Library we  
wrote to the Sudan Office in  
London for information  
about Major Lyngren's  
"phosphate islands". They have  
replied:-

"[Insert [ ] in No. 3]

"We will, of course, pass  
on anything further that comes

to head. But I shall be  
surprised to have that explosive  
prophetic shell - little has  
remained unaffected  
on or near Lake Erie like

the Red Pen.

Yours sincerely  
JAMES J. E. W. FLOOD

TELEGRAMS INLAND:  
"SUDANOLOGY, SOWEST, LONDON."  
TELEGRAMS OVERSEAS:  
"SUDANOLOGY, LONDON."  
TELEPHONE:  
VICTORIA 6318.

SUDAN GOVERNMENT

LONDON OFFICE.

AH/VB.

WELLINGTON HOUSE,

BUCKINGHAM GATE.

LONDON, S.W.1.

L.O. 410.1.

CONFIDENTIAL.

RECEIVED

29 JUN 1933

O. O. REGY

28th June, 79 33.

(S)  
G  
J

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter No.  
3223/33 of June 27th, 1933.

[I understand from information available here that a considerable time ago, before the war, some sort of application was made to the Sudan Government for a concession to work phosphates in some of the islands off the Sudan coast in the Red Sea. An inspection was made and it was reported that though phosphates existed, they were, commercially speaking, negligible and the matter dropped.]

I have this information from a private source but I can obtain fuller particulars from Khartoum. I am therefore sending out a copy of your letter with the request that a search be made for the report in question, and I will let you know as soon as possible what reply is received.

I am,

Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

*C. A. B. Arnott, D.C.*

Controller,  
Sudan Government London Office.

The Under Secretary of State,  
Colonial Office,  
Downing Street,  
S.W.1.

C. O.

Mr. Grossmith 236  
Mr. Freeston 238

Mr.

Mr. Pethick

Mr. Tredennick

SG T. B. Balfour

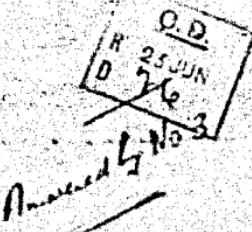
Sir J. Shallcross

Peres. U.S. of S.

Parly. U.S. of S.

Secretary of State

3223/33.



CONFIDENTIAL

27 June, 1933.

Sir,

DRAFT.

THE CONTROLLER,  
SUDAN GOVERNMENT AGENCY.

I am etc. to inform you that the existence has been reported to him of "phosphate islands" off the coast of the Sudan, but that he has been unable to obtain confirmation of the statement.

2. Sir Philip

Clifford-Lister will be grateful for any information on the subject which you may be in a position to supply.

I am, etc.

(Signed) E. B. FREESTON

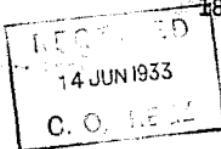


THE SECRETARIAT,  
NAIROBI,

KENYA.

WHEN REPLYING  
PLEASE QUOTE  
NO. S.  
AND DATE

18th May, 1935.



Dear Mr.

Major Grogan has stressed to me in private conversation the importance to the Colony of an adequate supply of low-priced phosphatic material for fertilisers. Wolfe, the Acting Director, entirely agrees with him as to the necessity which already exists and is likely in the near future for European farmers and in the more distant future for native farmers to have such a cheap source of supply available. In common with the soils of the rest of Africa, the greatest deficiency in Kenya is that of phosphates and constant cropping without replenishment is likely to be disastrous to the crop industry of the Colony.

In the course of the same conversation Grogan referred to what he called "phosphate islands" off the Sudan coast, and suggested that it would be very good business for the three East African Territories as a whole to secure these islands, or some controlling interest in them, before it was too late. He was exceedingly vague as to the location of these "phosphate islands" and what was the composition of the phosphates on them. He mentioned, if I remember aright, that he had raised the point with some Sudan official in the course of one of his flights and thought that it would be possible to obtain accurate information about them. The whole idea is exceedingly nebulous at present, but I wonder if you could find out from the Sudan Office in London or elsewhere any particulars as to the existence of these islands and whether

2.

their economic importance is realised and being exploited.  
Wolfe is writing to the Imperial Institute for any information  
they may have in their possession.

I am writing demi-officially as the whole matter  
is far too nebulous to form the subject of an official  
despatch.

Yours sincerely,

*J. E. W. Flood, Esq., C.M.G.*

J. E. W. FLOOD, ESQ., C.M.G.