The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Crop Seed Quality Assurance in Ethiopia: -A Review

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are increasingly being deployed to enhance crop seed quality assurance processes, which are critical for agricultural productivity and food security. This paper examines the potential role and applications of AI in improving seed quality assessment and management in Ethiopia. It provides an overview of current seed quality assurance practices in Ethiopia and explores how AI tools like machine learning algorithms, computer vision, and predictive analytics can be leveraged to enhance seed selection, monitoring, and quality control. The paper discusses challenges in implementing AI-based systems in the Ethiopian context, including limited infrastructure and farmer training. It also highlights opportunities for AI to address issues like climate change impacts on seed viability. Case studies of AI applications in seed quality assurance are presented, along with an analysis of relevant agricultural policies and regulations in Ethiopia. The paper concludes with recommendations for future research and development of AI-driven seed quality assurance systems tailored to Ethiopia's needs. Overall, AI has significant potential to transform seed quality management practices in Ethiopia, contributing to improved agricultural productivity and sustainability.

keywords: artificial intelligence, quality assurance, Ethiopia, machine learning, predictive analytics, datadriven decisions, seed quality assessment

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1. Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies, particularly machine learning (ML) algorithms, are increasingly being deployed to create autonomous online systems for managing and guaranteeing crop seed quality (Storm *et al.*, 2024). Quality assurance for crop seeds is critical in light of climate change, food security threats, and the increasing prevalence of crop diseases (Spielman *et al.*, 2021). High-quality seeds significantly affect crop productivity (Hampton *et al.*, 2016). Seed quality assurance is essential due to the complex nature of seeds and the need for microscopic evaluations of various quality aspects (Hampton *et al.*, 2016). Seed quality assurance is typically done manually by seed analysts, which is time-consuming and requires highly specialized skills(Chithra *et al.*, 2018). To address these issues, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, particularly machine learning (ML) algorithms, are being applied to create autonomous online systems for managing and guaranteeing crop seed quality (Teressa, 2019).

As a developing nation situated in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia relies on agriculture for employment, income, and export purposes (Ampatzidis, 2018). Despite recent industrialization efforts, Ethiopia's economy remains reliant on agriculture. However, the agriculture sector faces many challenges, significantly affecting food security (Taffesse *et al.*, 2011). Climate change, land degradation, and increased crop diseases threaten agricultural productivity and exacerbate food scarcity (Alemu et al., 2023). The agricultural research system has significantly developed improved crops, including high-yielding and disease-resistant varieties (Dhankher & Foyer, 2018). In parallel, efforts have been made to ensure farmers have access to quality seed of improved varieties, as seeds are critical for agricultural production (Cramer, 2018). Seed quality assurance is an essential action to consider whenever improved seeds are produced and multiplied (Bassa *et al.*, 2018). This process is particularly critical in Ethiopia, where agricultural productivity is essential for ensuring food security and

economic development (Bula *et al.*, 2019). By implementing rigorous seed quality assurance measures, stakeholders can enhance the reliability of seed supply, thereby improving crop yield and resilience against pests and diseases (Tarekegn & Mogiso, 2020). This approach guarantees the genetic purity of seeds and fosters greater trust among farmers and consumers in the agricultural sector (Spielman *et al.*, 2021). By implementing advanced AI technologies, stakeholders can ensure that seed quality meets the highest standards, ultimately leading to enhanced agricultural productivity and sustainability in the region (Rp & Agrawal, 2018). This approach not only aligns with international agricultural standards but also fosters a culture of innovation among local farmers (Abebe & Alemu, 2017). As Ethiopia continues to face challenges such as climate change and population growth, the integration of AI in seed quality assurance becomes increasingly vital.

2. Background of Crop Seed Quality Assurance in Ethiopia

Crop seed quality assurance in Ethiopia has become increasingly vital due to the country's reliance on agriculture for economic development and food security (Crop Variety Register, 2023). This is largely due to the increasing demand for high-quality seeds that are resilient to pests and climate variability (Bula et al., 2019). As Ethiopia strives to enhance its agricultural productivity, ensuring seed quality has emerged as a critical component in achieving sustainable development and improving food security (Bula et al., 2019). This emphasis on seed quality is significant in a country where agriculture is the backbone of the economy, providing livelihoods for most of the population (Yalew *et al.*, 2020). The role of artificial intelligence in this domain can significantly enhance the processes involved in seed quality assurance, enabling better monitoring and analysis (Wei et al., 2021). By utilizing machine learning algorithms, AI can analyze large datasets related to seed performance under various environmental conditions, enabling farmers and agricultural experts to make informed decisions regarding seed selection and management (Storm et al., 2024). This capability enhances the precision of seed quality assessments, ultimately contributing to higher crop yields and sustainable agricultural practices (Abebe & Alemu, 2017). Furthermore, AI-driven models can predict how different seed varieties will perform in specific regions of Ethiopia, assisting in the adaptation to local climatic challenges (Bula et al., 2019). This capability enables farmers to make informed decisions regarding which seeds to plant, enhancing crop yields and ensuring food security in a country where agriculture plays a vital role in the economy (Yalew et al., 2020). As Ethiopia continues to face challenges in agricultural productivity, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into crop seed quality assurance processes is becoming increasingly vital (Bula et al., 2019). By leveraging AI technologies, stakeholders can optimize seed selection and enhance the overall quality of seeds available to farmers (Kumar et al., 2021). This process not only aids in identifying high-performing seeds but also reduces the risks associated with crop failure due to poor seed quality (Bassa et al., 2018). Furthermore, it enhances overall agricultural productivity by ensuring that farmers have access to seeds that are not only genetically superior but also well-suited to the local climate and soil conditions (Fikre, 2018) This is crucial for enhancing crop yields and increasing food security in the region (Abebe & Alemu, 2017). By utilizing advanced AI technologies, stakeholders can monitor seed quality at various stages of production, ensuring compliance with established standards (Kumar et al., 2021).

3. Overview of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative technology, offering innovative solutions for enhancing crop seed quality assurance through data analysis, predictive modeling, and automation (Ampatzidis, 2018). These advancements enable farmers and agricultural professionals in Ethiopia to make informed decisions that ultimately lead to improved seed quality and higher yields (Bassa et al., 2018). By leveraging data-driven insights, AI technologies can help identify the best seed varieties suited to specific environmental conditions, thereby enhancing both quality and productivity (Bassa et al., 2018). This approach enables farmers to make informed decisions about which seeds to plant, ultimately leading to improved yields and sustainable agricultural practices (Abebe & Alemu, 2017). By utilizing AI algorithms, farmers can analyze historical data, weather patterns, and soil conditions to select the most suitable seed varieties for their specific environment (Yiannis, 2018). This data-driven approach enables them to enhance crop yield and ensure that the seeds they choose are resilient to local pests and diseases (Pravallika et al., 2021). This data-driven approach enables them to enhance crop yield and ensure that the seeds they choose are resilient to local pests and diseases, ultimately contributing to sustainable agricultural practices and improving food security in Ethiopia (Bula, et al., 2019). By integrating machine learning algorithms, farmers are empowered to make informed decisions based on real-time data analysis, ultimately leading to improved seed selection and planting strategies (Ryan, et al., 2023). This technology enables the assessment of seed quality by analyzing various factors, such as genetic makeup, environmental conditions, and historical performance data (Srinivasaiah et al., 2023). Consequently, farmers can optimize their planting choices and enhance overall agricultural productivity (Badua, *et al.*, 2019). By leveraging machine learning algorithms, they can assess the quality of seeds based on various parameters such as germination rates and resistance to pests (Srinivasaiah *et al.*, 2023). This enables farmers to make informed decisions regarding seed selection, ultimately improving crop yields and promoting sustainable agricultural practices (Rahman & Cho, 2016). Moreover, the integration of AI technologies, such as machine learning algorithms and data analytics, allows for real-time monitoring of seed quality and performance, thereby enabling timely interventions (Storm *et al.*, 2024). This capability not only enhances the accuracy of quality assessments but also supports the development of predictive models that can forecast potential issues in seed production (WEN *et al.*, 2018). As a result, agricultural stakeholders can make informed decisions to optimize crop yields and ensure food security in Ethiopia (Bassa *et al.*, 2018). This integration of AI technologies not only enhances the quality of seeds but also promotes sustainable agricultural practices by minimizing resource wastage (Ryan *et al.*, 2023). Moreover, the deployment of AI in analyzing seed genetics allows for the identification of traits that enhance resilience to climate change and pests, which is crucial for the agricultural landscape in Ethiopia (Habtamu *et al.*, 2019).

4. Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture

Artificial intelligence is increasingly being integrated into agriculture, providing innovative solutions for enhancing crop seed quality assurance through advanced data analysis, predictive modeling, and automated monitoring (Bezas & Filippidou, 2023). These technologies enable farmers to make informed decisions regarding seed selection, planting schedules, and resource allocation, ultimately leading to improved yields and sustainability (Srinivasaiah et al., 2023). By leveraging data analytics and machine learning algorithms, these technologies can accurately assess the quality of seeds and predict their performance under various environmental conditions (Storm et al., 2024). This capability not only enhances the selection process for highquality seeds but also helps farmers make informed decisions regarding their crop choices (VN, 2017). Additionally, AI can monitor growing conditions and suggest optimal planting times, contributing to increased agricultural productivity (Ryan et al., 2023). This technology can also analyze soil health and pest patterns, enabling farmers to make data-driven decisions that enhance seed selection and management (Naresh et al., 2020). By leveraging machine learning algorithms, farmers can predict the best planting times and optimize irrigation schedules, ultimately leading to higher yields and better-quality seeds (Srinivasaiah et al., 2023). This precision agriculture approach not only enhances productivity but also ensures that the seeds produced meet the required quality standards, which is crucial for the sustainability of the agricultural sector in Ethiopia (Bula, et al., 2019). Furthermore, the integration of advanced machine learning algorithms allows for real-time monitoring of crop health and soil conditions, enabling farmers to make informed decisions that directly impact seed quality (Ryan et al., 2023). This capability not only enhances the efficiency of agriculture (Kocian & Incrocci, 2020). By utilizing AI-driven analytics, farmers in Ethiopia can practice but also ensure that farmers can proactively address potential issues before they affect yield and optimize their seed selection processes, leading to improved crop resilience and productivity (Gwagwa et al., 2021). This advanced approach not only enhances the selection of high-quality seeds but also reduces the risk of crop failure caused by pests and diseases (Bassa et al., 2018). Moreover, by utilizing predictive analytics and machine learning algorithms, farmers can make informed decisions regarding the optimal planting times and conditions, ultimately leading to improved yields and sustainability (Ryan et al., 2023). These advanced technologies enable the monitoring of soil health and crop conditions in real-time, allowing for timely interventions that can significantly enhance productivity and reduce waste ("Environmental Benefits of Precision Agriculture, 2021.). By leveraging data collected through sensors and AI algorithms, farmers can make informed decisions that optimize their resources and maximize yield (Sáiz-Rubio & Rovira-Más, 2020). Additionally, machine learning models can analyze historical data to predict potential pest outbreaks or diseases, enabling preemptive actions that safeguard crop health (Sivakumar et al., 2021).

5. Challenges and Opportunities of Crop Seed Quality Assurance in Ethiopia

The effectiveness of crop seed quality assurance in Ethiopia is significantly influenced by a range of challenges such as limited access to technology, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient training for farmers, while also presenting opportunities for innovation and collaboration among stakeholders (Bassa *et al.*, 2018). Additionally, the implementation of AI technologies can help to address these challenges by improving seed selection processes, enhancing traceability, and facilitating data-driven decision-making (Storm *et al.*, 2024). By fostering partnerships between government agencies, research institutions, and private sector players, Ethiopia can leverage these innovations to enhance the overall quality of crop seeds (Bula *et al.*, 2019). This collaborative

approach will not only improve the genetic quality of seeds but also ensure that farmers have access to the latest advancements in agricultural technology (Bassa et al., 2018). Furthermore, addressing the challenges of seed quality assurance through these partnerships can open up new opportunities for sustainable agriculture in Ethiopia (Yitayew, et al., 2023). This includes leveraging AI technologies for monitoring seed quality, enhancing data analysis for decision-making, and improving access to resources for farmers (Yenus et al., 2021). Furthermore, by utilizing machine learning algorithms, stakeholders can predict potential quality issues before they arise, enabling proactive measures to be implemented (Kocian & Incrocci, 2020). This integration not only empowers farmers with timely insights but also fosters collaboration between agricultural experts and technology providers (Storm et al., 2024). By leveraging AI technologies, stakeholders can identify seed quality issues early, ensuring that farmers receive high-quality seeds that can significantly enhance yield and sustainability (Otieno, 2023). This proactive approach not only minimizes the risks associated with poor seed quality but also promotes a more resilient agricultural system (Rp & Agrawal, 2018). Furthermore, AI can facilitate the development of seed varieties that are better suited to local climatic conditions, thereby supporting the overall growth of the agricultural sector in Ethiopia (Tarekegn & Mogiso, 2020). This approach not only enhances the resilience of crops but also ensures that farmers have access to high-quality seeds that can thrive in varying environmental conditions (Bula et al., 2019). Additionally, by utilizing AI-driven data analysis, stakeholders can identify the most pressing challenges in seed production and distribution, paving the way for innovative solutions that increase overall agricultural productivity (Abebe & Alemu, 2017). This proactive approach can lead to better seed selection techniques and enhance the overall quality of crops, ultimately supporting food security and economic growth in the region (Abebe & Alemu, 2017). Additionally, the integration of machine learning algorithms can facilitate the identification of high-performing seed varieties, thereby streamlining the breeding process and allowing for more tailored solutions to local agricultural challenges (Ryan et al., 2023). This approach not only enhances the selection process but also increases the resilience of crops to varying environmental conditions (Cramer, 2018). By leveraging AI, stakeholders can better understand the specific needs of different regions in Ethiopia, leading to improved seed quality and overall agricultural productivity (Zkariyas et al., 2018).

6. Theoretical Framework of Artificial Intelligence in Seed Quality Assurance

The theoretical framework of artificial intelligence in seed quality assurance encompasses various methodologies and technologies that enhance the evaluation and selection of crop seeds (Deep Learning Based Seed Quality Tester, 2019), ensuring their viability and resilience in Ethiopian agricultural practices (Srinivasaiah et al., 2023). This framework integrates machine learning algorithms, computer vision techniques, and data analytics to systematically assess seed characteristics (Yitayew, et al., 2023). Leveraging vast datasets enables the identification of optimal seed traits that contribute to higher yields and better resistance to local pests and diseases (Singh et al., 2020). This analytical approach not only enhances the breeding process but also ensures that farmers receive seeds that are best suited to their specific environmental conditions (Bailey-Serres et al., 2019). Furthermore, by integrating AI-driven methodologies, stakeholders can monitor seed performance in realtime, thereby allowing for adaptive management strategies that align with agricultural best practices (Adamides et al., 2020). This ensures that quality assurance processes are not only effective but also scalable to meet the growing demands of Ethiopian agriculture (Tarekegn & Mogiso, 2020). By integrating machine learning algorithms, farmers can leverage real-time data analytics to monitor seed health, predict yield outcomes, and implement proactive measures to enhance both productivity and sustainability (Sharma et al., 2020). This integration allows for the identification of potential issues early on, enabling timely interventions that can significantly reduce crop losses (Kocian & Incrocci, 2020). Additionally, leveraging data from various sources, such as weather patterns and soil conditions, further enhances the decision-making process, ultimately leading to improved seed quality assurance practices (Bassa et al., 2018). This approach not only allows for real-time monitoring of seed conditions but also facilitates predictive analytics that can anticipate potential quality issues before they arise (Wen et al., 2018). By integrating machine learning algorithms, the system can analyze historical data and identify patterns that indicate deviations in seed quality, thus enhancing the decision-making process for farmers and agricultural stakeholders (Kocian & Incrocci, 2020). This approach not only assists in monitoring the quality of seeds but also facilitates timely interventions when subpar seeds are detected (Srichandan, et al., 2018). By leveraging advanced analytics, agricultural experts can provide targeted recommendations that help optimize seed selection and improve overall crop yields (Durai et al., 2018).

7. Methodologies for Implementing AI in Seed Quality Assurance

The implementation of artificial intelligence in seed quality assurance in Ethiopia requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses data collection, algorithm development, and stakeholder engagement (Long et al., 2021). This approach not only involves harnessing advanced machine learning techniques to analyze seed quality data but also necessitates collaboration with local farmers and agricultural experts to ensure that the AI models are grounded in practical realities (Srinivasaiah et al., 2023). Furthermore, training programs should be developed to empower stakeholders with the necessary skills to utilize AI technologies effectively (Chen et al., 2023) These programs should focus on both theoretical knowledge and practical applications, ensuring that farmers, agronomists, and seed quality inspectors understand the intricacies of AI tools (Ampatzidis, 2018). By fostering a collaborative environment where knowledge is shared, Ethiopia can enhance the efficacy of its crop seed quality assurance processes (Bassa et al., 2018). This collaborative approach can leverage local expertise and technological advancements, leading to improved seed quality standards and better crop yields. By integrating AI-driven tools such as machine learning algorithms and remote sensing technologies, stakeholders can monitor seed quality in real time, ensuring that only the best seeds are selected for planting (Storm et al., 2024). This not only enhances the performance of crops but also supports sustainable agricultural practices in the region (Srinivasaiah et al., 2023). By integrating AI technologies such as machine learning algorithms and computer vision, farmers can monitor seed quality more effectively, ensuring that only the best seeds are utilized for planting (Ryan et al., 2023). This approach not only streamlines the assessment process but also minimizes human error and enhances the accuracy of quality evaluations. Additionally, the application of AI can facilitate predictive analytics, allowing farmers to anticipate potential quality issues before they arise (Storm et al., 2024). By leveraging historical data and machine learning algorithms, farmers can implement effective interventions and optimize seed selection processes (Smith, 2018). This approach allows for the identification of highperforming seed varieties that are better suited to local climatic conditions, ultimately enhancing crop yields and ensuring food security (Dokyi, et al., 2021).

8. Case Studies of AI Applications in Seed Quality Assurance

Numerous case studies have demonstrated the potential of artificial intelligence in enhancing seed quality assurance practices in Ethiopia. One such example is the implementation of a computer vision-based system for the assessment of maize seed quality (Bula, et al., 2019). This system utilizes high-resolution imaging and deep learning algorithms to accurately classify maize seeds based on their physical characteristics, such as size, shape, and color. The system has shown a high degree of accuracy in differentiating between high-quality and lowquality maize seeds, enabling farmers and seed producers to make informed decisions about seed selection (Srinivasaiah et al., 2023). Several innovative applications of artificial intelligence have emerged, showcasing its effectiveness in monitoring and improving seed quality across different regions of Ethiopia. For instance, the use of machine learning algorithms has allowed researchers to analyze various factors affecting seed germination rates, such as soil quality, moisture levels, and temperature fluctuations (Tsehaye, 2023). These applications not only enhance the quality assurance processes but also enable farmers to make data-driven decisions that optimize their crop yields. By leveraging AI technologies such as machine learning and predictive analytics, farmers can gain insights into seed performance and potential disease resistances, ultimately leading to more sustainable agricultural practices (Tsehaye, 2023). Another case study involves the use of predictive analytics to forecast seed germination rates. By analyzing historical data on seed performance, weather patterns, and other environmental factors, researchers have developed machine-learning models that can accurately predict the germination potential of different seed varieties (Zhou et al., 2022). This information allows farmers to optimize their planting strategies, ensuring that they utilize the most viable seeds and maximize their crop yields. Furthermore, the integration of remote sensing technologies and AI has enabled the monitoring of seed health and disease detection in real time. By leveraging satellite imagery, drones, and computer vision algorithms, researchers have been able to identify early signs of disease or pest infestations in seed crops, allowing for timely interventions and preventive measures.

9. Ethiopian Agricultural Policies and Regulations Related to Seed Quality Assurance

Ethiopia's agricultural policies and regulations play a critical role in ensuring the quality of crop seeds, which is essential for enhancing agricultural productivity and food security (Yalew, *et al.*, 2020). These policies are designed to regulate seed production, distribution, and quality control measures, thereby ensuring that farmers have access to high-quality seeds that can withstand the challenges posed by climate change and pests (Rp & Agrawal, 2018). This ensures that agricultural practices in Ethiopia can leverage advancements in technology,

such as artificial intelligence, to enhance seed quality assessment and improve overall agricultural productivity (Bula et al., 2019). By implementing robust policies and regulations, the Ethiopian government can promote the integration of AI technologies in seed quality assurance processes, thereby ensuring that farmers have access to high-quality seeds that are essential for maximizing crop yields (Workineh et al., (2020). This approach not only enhances the quality of seeds available to farmers but also fosters innovation within the agricultural sector, aligning with broader national goals of food security and economic development (Fikre, 2018). By implementing effective policies and regulations, the Ethiopian government can ensure that seed quality is not only monitored but also improved over time, thereby increasing farmers' yield and resilience against climate change (Bula et al., 2019). This can be achieved through stringent quality control measures, the promotion of best practices in seed production, and the encouragement of collaboration between governmental bodies and agricultural stakeholders (Hampton et al., 2016). These efforts should be supported by comprehensive agricultural policies that prioritize research and development, ensuring access to high-quality seeds for farmers across the country (Bula, et al., 2019). This will not only enhance the overall quality of seeds but also improve the productivity and sustainability of Ethiopian agriculture (Bassa et al., 2018). Additionally, collaboration between government agencies, research institutions, and private sector stakeholders will be crucial in formulating policies that address the specific challenges faced by farmers in accessing quality seed.

10. Future Directions and Recommendations for AI in Seed Quality Assurance

As Ethiopia looks to enhance its agricultural productivity and sustainability, the integration of artificial intelligence into crop seed quality assurance presents significant opportunities for improvement and innovation. To maximize these benefits, it is essential to invest in robust AI technologies that can analyze seed quality parameters, enhance predictive modeling for seed performance, and facilitate real-time monitoring of crop health. Furthermore, collaboration between the government, research institutions, and the private sector will be crucial in developing scalable solutions that are tailored to the unique challenges faced by Ethiopian farmers. This includes leveraging AI technologies for real-time monitoring of seed quality, enhancing genetic analysis, and ensuring that production practices meet international standards. In addition, investing in training programs for farmers will empower them to utilize AI tools effectively, thereby improving their crop yields and overall sustainability. This will not only enhance their understanding of AI applications but also foster a culture of innovation in agricultural practices. Furthermore, collaborating with local agricultural institutions to develop tailored AI solutions can address specific regional challenges, ensuring that the technology is accessible and relevant to Ethiopian farmers. This collaborative approach will not only enhance the efficacy of AI applications but also promote sustainable farming practices that can lead to improved seed quality and increased yields. Furthermore, integrating AI-driven analytics into agricultural practices will enable farmers to make datainformed decisions that enhance the overall quality of seeds. This will require collaboration among researchers, agronomists, and local farmers to develop tailored AI solutions that address specific challenges in Ethiopian agriculture. By leveraging machine learning algorithms and data analytics, stakeholders can create predictive models that enhance seed selection processes, ultimately leading to improved crop yields and sustainability. These models can analyze historical data on seed performance, environmental conditions, and agronomic practices, thereby offering insights that help farmers make informed decisions about which seed varieties to adopt.

11. Conclusion and Summary

In conclusion, the integration of artificial intelligence in crop seed quality assurance has the potential to transform agricultural practices in Ethiopia, enhancing productivity and sustainability. This advancement not only facilitates better seed selection processes but also ensures that farmers have access to high-quality seeds, ultimately leading to increased crop yields and food security in the region. Furthermore, the integration of AI in agricultural practices not only enhances efficiency but also promotes sustainable farming methods, which are crucial for addressing the challenges faced by Ethiopian farmers. This is particularly important in a country like Ethiopia, where agricultural practices are often hindered by resource limitations and climate variability. By leveraging AI technologies such as machine learning and data analytics, farmers can make informed decisions about seed selection and crop management, ultimately leading to improved yields and economic stability. This transformative approach not only enhances the quality of seeds but also contributes to the sustainability of agricultural practices in the region. Additionally, by leveraging advanced data analytics and machine learning, farmers can optimize their seed selection process, leading to increased crop yields and resilience against climate change. This innovative approach not only enhances the quality of seeds but also contributes to sustainability agricultural practices, ensuring food security in the region.

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