

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF TROPICAL FORESTERS, INC.
1500 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Apt. 841
Washington DC 20005

NEWS NOTES NO. 32

January 1972

A Note About Ourselves: Over 20 years ago, a small group of foresters joined to form an international society dedicated to the interests of forests and forestry throughout the tropical world.

Since that far-off day, representatives of over 50 nations have affiliated themselves with the International Society of Tropical Foresters. Its membership now embraces Deans of forestry Schools, leaders in forest industries, Chiefs of Forest Services, and men on the threshold of their careers. Our Society files contain probably the most complete listing of tropical foresters, recording for each of its more than 500 members his professional achievements, affiliations, and special interests. Linguistically, too, the record is unique, encompassing over 50 languages ranging from the great dominant tongues - Chinese, Russian and English - to tribal dialects with vocabularies of less than 500 words and no provision for counting above ten.

Extending as it does over so enormous a geographical range, comprising a vast complexity of conditions, tropical forestry has always been faced with the problem of providing timely information covering its activities in both hemispheres. Within the spheres of their own interests, "The Commonwealth Forestry Review" and "Bois et Forêts des Tropiques" are invaluable, and for almost a quarter of a century our own Society has sought, however inadequately, to serve as a communication link between tropical foresters by publishing an annual list of ISTF members, and has attempted through newsletters to keep them in touch with important meetings, additions to the literature and events of interest. But it has been far from complete coverage.

Now, with the discontinuance of "The Caribbean Forester" and the threatened loss of "Unasylva", it becomes increasingly difficult for tropical foresters to keep abreast of developments in their profession.

In Buenos Aires, October 1972, in connection with the VII World Forestry Congress, ISTF will hold a meeting of its attending members. At that time, one item for consideration will be measures toward creating a central source of information on forestry activities throughout the tropical world.

--oOo--

With the passage of "The Forestry Professionalization Law", forestry in the Philippines becomes a duly recognized profession, of equal status with law and medicine. To all those who labored for this end, ISTF sends congratulations - and to the grand old man of Philippine forestry, Florencio Tamesis.

--oOo--

World Wood Supply from Tropical Hardwoods is the subject of a thought compelling report by P. Sartorius, reprinted in German with a French summary, in the June issue of the Swiss "Schweizerischen Zeitschrift fur Forstwesen". (Zurich)

Sartorius calls attention to the increasing economic importance of hardwoods from the humid tropics to Europe, the U.S.A. and Japan.

"Exploitation of the general utility woods from tropical sources has increased five-fold between 1954 and 1968. With few exceptions, exploitation has been carried on destructively with no provision for reconstitution. Very often the roads built for commercial exploitation open the virgin forests to shifting cultivation which follows cutting and brings about final destruction of these forests. The author estimates that between 1954 and 1968 exploitation for export, together with losses caused by shifting cultivation have reduced the forest area of the humid tropics of West Africa by 15,000,000 hectares and by 9,000,000 in Southeast Asia. This is exclusive of cutting for domestic use and losses through shifting cultivation in untouched virgin forests.

"If FAO's projections regarding export and domestic demands together with fire losses are correct, the tropical rain forests of Southeast Asia and of Africa will have disappeared in 10-20 years." (This prediction compares with P.W. Richards', who wrote in 1952, "The tropical rain forest may disappear within the lifetime of those now living." T.G.)

"Meanwhile, the unanswered question remains as to what extent the indigenous hardwoods of the Temperate Zones will be able to replace tropical hardwoods in the world's wood industry."

--oOo--

The World Consultation on Forest Education and Training, held in Stockholm last October, included a discussion of the critical shortage throughout the world of trained personnel capable of managing forests that would meet growing social and industrial needs. Ways were considered toward modifying forestry training, especially in the developing countries where the need is serious.

One of the important outgrowths of this Consultation is a series of papers, among which the following should be of particular interest to tropical foresters: "Forestry Education and Training in the Near East", by Dr. M. Said Kettaneh; "Forestry Education and Training in Latin America", by Hardy L. Shirley; "Forestry Education and Forest Industrial Education and Training in the Developing Countries of the Asia-Pacific Region", by S. D. Richardson; and "Forestry Education: To Whom and For What?", by Jack C. Westoby.

While the supply lasts, these papers may be obtained from the FAO Documentation Center, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 - Rome, Italy.

A world-wide consultation on the use of wood in housing was held 5-16 July at Vancouver, British Columbia. Dr. H. O. Fleischer, Director of the Forest Products Laboratory (Madison, Wisconsin) and discussion leader of the Section on "Wood Products and Their Use in Construction", has recorded in an excellent summary the more prominent subjects covered in the deliberations.

Earth's forests, it was pointed out, are abundant enough to supply more wood products for urgently needed housing than are now made use of and the main objective of the consultation was to improve the availability of housing, particularly for lower-income people.

The consultation called for more intensive use of wood for this purpose in all parts of the world where supplies are adequate; for the wide application of technology on wood and its uses in housing to developing nations; and for the establishment of needed agencies to stimulate production of wood products and housing.

According to FAO data submitted at the consultation, the world's 3.7 billion hectares of forest lands contain about 357.5 billion cubic meters of growing stock. Little more than 0.5 per cent is now being used annually.

--oOo--

It has been estimated that the deficit facing the timber industry in Europe in 1975 will be about 53 million cubic meters, including 20 million cubic meters of hardwood for pulping. (Compare with above.)

--oOo--

The Organization for Tropical Studies announces four graduate courses to be offered in Central America during 1972. These will include Biology, Ecology, and Geography. Graduate students are selected on the basis of academic record and interest in tropical studies. Expenses are paid largely under a grant from the National Science Foundation. For application forms, write to the Organization for Tropical Studies, North American Office, 5900 S.W. 73rd Street, South Miami Fl 33143.

--oOo--

Publications

THE EVERGREEN FORESTS OF MALAWI, by J. D. Chapman and F. White, is the first comprehensive account of the montane forests of any African territory. Based on over 13 years of field work, it is also one of the first books to be published on Afro-montane vegetation. The destructive effect of man is emphasized throughout the book, which consists of 190 pages, eight line drawings, and 45 pages of photographic illustrations. It may be ordered from The Curator of the Forest Herbarium, Dept. of Forestry, U. of Oxford, England. Price - 3 pounds net (postage extra).

SIX FOREST INVENTORIES IN THE TROPICS constitute an impressive series of publications produced in collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency, Ottawa, Canada. The inventories cover 1. Dominica, 2. Ceylon, 3 & 4. Pakistan, 5. Nigeria, and 6. Kenya. In Ceylon, Dominica and Kenya inventories are country-wide; elsewhere only in certain reserves which were potentially the most important timber-producing areas. Air photographic technique has made it possible for the first time to conduct such forest inventory surveys on a country-wide scale. Forestry and economic conditions of the inventory countries are noted briefly.

So long as the supply lasts, this series may be ordered, without cost, from the Information Services, Canadian Forestry Service, Dept. of the Environment, 344 Wellington St., Ottawa, K1A 0H 3, Canada.

ARBOLES COMUNES DE LA PROVINCIA DE ESMERALDAS, by Elbert L. Little and Robert G. Dixon, contains in its 535 pages non-technical descriptions and excellent drawings of 230 tree species - nearly half the number estimated to occur in Esmeraldas. Included are notes on description, uses, wood and silviculture. Common names and botanical synonyms have been added. This is the first major published work on the flora of Ecuador and many of the trees described are widely distributed throughout tropical America. To aid identification there is a key to the families of trees in Esmeraldas and a summary of the characteristics of each plant family is included. Request for copies may be addressed to FAO Documentation Center, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 - Rome, Italy.

AFRIKANISCHE EXPORTHOLZER, by Klaus-Gunther Dahms, is an illustrated publication of 270 pages which deals chiefly with African export timber species, prefaced by basic information regarding factors influencing forest conditions and wood production in Africa. This work includes detailed descriptions of over 120 of the most important species. The tables and indexes are especially useful and include botanical equivalents of trade names. Dr. Dahms will be remembered as the author of FORST UND HOLZ IN MITTEL- UND SUDAMERIKA. Information regarding these works may be obtained by writing the publisher - DRW-Verlags-GmbH, Postfach 104, 7 Stuttgart 1, Germany.

BOIS ET FORETS DES TROPIQUES, in its May-June issue, reports on paper-making studies of the umbrella tree (musanga smithii) which indicate that this species may be of eventual importance for the African paper industry. It is especially suited for high-yield material and produces pulp of better quality than poplar or aspen. Possibilities of artificial regeneration have yet to be studied.