

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF TROPICAL FORESTERS - NewsNotes No. 4 - July 3, 1953  
1214 16th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C., USA

Enclosed is a list of ISTF members as of July 1, 1953 -- a total of 221 names, or nearly ten times the membership on January 1, 1951, shortly after the Society's organizing meeting.

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The ISTF extends congratulations and best wishes to LA SOCIEDAD DASONOMICA DE LA AMERICA TROPICAL (SDAT), organized last December in Comali, Honduras. The Sociedad Dasonomica has already issued the first two issues of its Boletin Informativo (No. 1, May, 1953, and No. 2, July, 1953), as well as a list of statutes and objectives. The objectives, briefly, are to promote closer relations between forestry technicians of tropical America, to exchange information, and to increase the prestige of the forestry profession. The Sociedad will also be concerned with the conservation of renewable natural resources through wise use, with offering news of employment opportunities to its members, preaching the importance of forestry, securing protection and recognition for its members, and interesting governments in creating forestry departments or improving the technical competence of those already in existence.

Four classes of membership have been set up: 1. Founders, those who became members before April 1, 1953; 2. Socios de numero, those who meet the requirements of membership and join after April 1, 1953; 3. Socios honorarios, those who are judged by the whole membership to be worthy of this distinction because of their special merits; 4. Socios protectores, those who because of special interest in forestry desire to contribute financially to the ends of the SDAT.

Two ISTF members are officers of SDAT -- L.R. Holdridge, President, and Gerardo Budowski, Secretary. Further information regarding dues or other details of membership may be obtained from the Secretary, Ing. Gerardo Budowski, Programa de Cooperacion Tecnica, Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agricolas, c/o Ministerio de Agricultura, Havana, Cuba.

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With the transfer of Pierre Terver to FAO Headquarters in Rome, where he is now Chief of Technical Assistance of the Forestry Division, S.F. von der Recke has taken over as chief of the FAO Latin American Forestry Office in Rio de Janeiro. Beginning with Letter No. 1 (July 1, 1953) Graf von der Recke has initiated a news notes series under the title of "Forestry News of Latin America." In the first letter he summarizes the highlights of his first forestry trip through Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, and describes the present forestry training in Chile. His intention is to have at least one forester from each Latin American country serve as correspondent for the Forestry News of Latin America.

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Elbert L. Little, Jr., is at present on leave from the U.S. Forest Service, and will spend the next year at the Universidad de los Andes, in Merida, Venezuela, teaching forest botany and making botanical studies of the area.

It is now expected that another Central American short course in tropical silviculture will be given next November under the auspices of the Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agricolas, probably in Puerto Rico, and with the collaboration of the U.S. Forest Service. It will be similar to the very successful course given in Honduras last November-December under the direction of Messrs. Holdridge and Tosi (ISTF notes No. 3, p. 2). Gerardo Budowski is in charge of organizing the new course.

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In addition to the above course, the Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agricolas is planning still another short course in tropical silviculture, this one for the Andean region, to be held in September under the direction of Joseph Tosi, Jr. Additional information will undoubtedly be available from the Instituto's Andean office, Aptdo. 478, Lima, Peru.

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Vol. 1, No. 1 (new series) of the Ceylon Forester, mentioned in News Notes No. 2, has now appeared. This periodical is edited by a member of the ISTF, K.O. Koelmeyer, and several members of the Society have contributed to this first issue: C.H. Holmes, "Moisture Relations in Forestry Practice"; R.A. de Rosayro, "The Field Characteristics of Trees of the Tropical Wet Evergreen Forests of Ceylon"; K.O. Koelmeyer, "Silvicultural Notes on Trees -- Halmilla"; and R. Maglagan Gorrie, review of THE SELECTION OF TREE SPECIES, by Mark Anderson.

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Many tropical foresters have shared with R.A. de Rosayro his desire for more practical methods of distinguishing tree species than are provided in the botanical books, where identification is based largely on flowering and fruiting material, which is not always available and is difficult to obtain in full-grown trees. To correct this situation, Mr. Rosayro has published two excellent articles, the first, referred to above, in the Ceylon Forester, and the second in Vol. 32, No. 2 (June 1953) of the Empire Forestry Review. The method he describes will not, of course, be an infallible method for the identification of all tree species, but it does present a very practical method for distinguishing many of the most important species. The system is based upon field characteristics of the bole (stem), such as presence of spines, presence of buttresses, external and internal characteristics of the bark, character of exudation from the bark, etc. It would seem that similar methods for tree identification might be equally applicable to the other tropical regions of the world, and would be most helpful to foresters.

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As a result of an item concerning quechua in the last issue of the news notes, we learn that this language is widely spoken by the Indians of Bolivia and Peru, and was in fact the official language of the ancient Incan Empire. This information comes to us from H.S. Kernan, a contributor of many forceful, well-written articles to forestry and conservation magazines. Mr. Kernan, incidentally, is also proficient in Latin, Greek, Persian, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and French. He is toying with the thought of mastering Russian next, during some quiet weekend.

Through the much appreciated courtesy of George T. Myers, the Society has been able to add samples of 28 woods of the African Gold Coast to its collection of woods. Included among the African samples are three which have the popular name Gold Coast African Mahogany (Khaya ivorensis A. Chev., K. Anthotheca C.DC, and K. grandifoliola C.DC.) Even for tropical species, these Gold Coast specimens have an exceedingly wide color variation, ranging from palest pink (Bediunua, Canarium schweinfurthii Engl.) through a yellow that is almost sulphur (Wonton, Morus mesozygia Stapf.), and mouse-gray (Mansonia, Mansonia altissima A. Chev.), to deepest chocolate (Ekki, Lophira procera A. Chev.).

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#### U.S. Federal Trade Commission Mahogany Hearings

Since some of our members have expressed an interest in the Federal Trade Commission's hearings on this subject, the following summary has been prepared:

In the summer and autumn of 1952, the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, following a recurrence of complaints from certain consumers, trade associations, etc., held open public hearings to re-examine the general subject of the use -- and alleged misuse -- of the term "mahogany" for various woods imported into the United States.

Earlier complaints, in 1925, had centered around the use of the name "Philippine mahogany" for Philippine woods (among them narra, apitong, almon, etc.) for woods not of the family Meliaceae. After an investigation, the Federal Trade Commission at that time issued cease and desist orders against the use of the term "Philippine Mahogany" for woods not derived from trees of the Meliaceae.

Some years later, in 1929, another series of cases involving the use of the term "Philippine mahogany" for Philippine non-Meliaceae woods was brought before the Commission, but these cases were dismissed, with an agreement that the word "mahogany" would not be used alone, but would be preceded by the modifying term "Philippine" in the marketing of the woods above described. With the dismissal of these cases, the decision in the 1925 case was modified accordingly, and the status of the use of the name "Philippine mahogany" has remained unchanged since the decision in the 1929 cases.

The Commission's 1952 hearings were not confined to "Philippine mahogany" -- in fact, its announcement of the hearing listed 40 different descriptions which have been used for mahogany, ranging alphabetically from Australian mahogany to White mahogany, and including Pink, Rose, Cherry, and Brown -- nor were they held as adversary proceedings. The aim, according to the announcement, was to elicit information leading to a comprehensive treatment of the use of the term "mahogany."

The Commission asked for all the information that could be volunteered on the following four points:

1. To what botanical family, genus, and species should the word "mahogany" be applied, with or without geographical or other qualifying words? And to what species should this name, with or without qualifying words, be proscribed as false or otherwise unfair?

2. In the marketing of wood and its products, should the designation "mahogany" be reserved only for the species Mahogani, genus Swietenia, of the Meliaceae family? Or should it be permissible, with or without geographical words of qualification, for the woods of other trees, and if so, what other trees?

3. To what extent, if any, does the present situation regarding use of the word "mahogany," with or without qualifying words, involve confusion or unfairness, and if there is confusion or unfairness, is it sufficient to involve substantial injury to the public interest?

4. Would the formulation and issuance of a Wood Name Guide for the proper commercial application of the word "mahogany" afford substantial assistance to buyers as a means of preventing misunderstanding and deception in the marketing of various woods?

Statements from botanists, wood anatomists, forest products experts, and many others are included in the 700-page record of the Commission's 1952 hearings. One fairly recent development, mentioned at the hearings, could add further confusion to the picture: With improvement of plastic substances and with advances in photography, it is now possible to superimpose a very tough plastic surface on a wood base, and, through a photo-finish, give the surface the appearance of mahogany of the finest grain and color. Should this material be called simply "mahogany-finished?"

It is expected that at some future date the Federal Trade Commission will make an announcement concerning these hearings. It will not be a decision or an order, as in the 1925 case, but may involve recommendations. In any event, whatever information becomes available will be included as an item in some future issue of these news notes.

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Several ISTF members will participate in the Eighth Pacific Science Congress, which meets in Quezon City, Philippines, November 16-28, 1953. Dean Florencio Tamesis is a member of the Organizing Committee for the Congress, and H.C. Keith is Chairman of the Standing Committee on Forest Resources, of which Messrs. H.B. Donaldson, Tom Gill, Paul Shank, and Raymond A. White are members. Dean Tamesis and Paul Bedard will serve as ISTF delegates to the Congress, and H.C.Keith has been asked to deliver a paper. Among the general symposia which will be part of the Congress meetings will be one on Plant Geography, one on Reforestation, and one on Pacific Conservation. Organizing Chairman for both the latter is Dean Tamesis.

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The Eighth International Congress of Botany will be held in Paris, July 2-14, 1954, and will be preceded and followed by excursions in France. One of the post-Congress excursions will include the Hyeres Islands, Corsica and Tropical Africa (Senegal and Mauritania), and Equatorial Africa (Ivory Coast and Guinea). Subject matter of the Congress will be organized in symposia, and those wishing details of the program may write to the Secretary General, 8th International Congress of Botany, 292, Rue St. Martin, Paris 3, France.

Sir Herbert Howard has recently returned to England upon completion of his forestry mission in Korea.

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Information wanted:

Eng. Laercio Osse is seeking to establish correspondence with members of the ISTF concerning charcoal: a) methods of production and shipping; b) investigations into the influence of species on quality; c) results of determination of its physical, chemical, and mechanical properties, together with methods for ascertaining such determinations. Eng. Osse's address is: J. Monlevade, MG, Brazil.

And does anyone know anything about the silviculture of the Kaneelhart of Surinam? As of 1942 this tree was thought to be Licaria canella (Meissn.) Kosterm., though admittedly the genus at that time was in need of further revision. It is said to be identical with the Waibaima of British Guiana, and information concerning further identification and silvicultural techniques would be of interest to James R. Angus, Conservator of Forests, Suva, Fiji.

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As a result of the second session of the FAO Forestry Commission for Asia and the Far East, held last December, three continuing committees have been set up under the Commission. These are: 1. Committee on Tropical Silviculture and Management, charged with following up recommendations of the second session, and with suggesting to the Director-General of FAO items that might be included in the agenda for the Fourth World Forestry Congress; 2. Committee on Aerial Survey and Mensuration, to deal with various aspects of aerial survey; 3. Committee on Sustained Yield and the National Conscience, to study needs of Asia and to create a national consciousness with the aim of sustained yield. E.J. Strugnell has been named Chairman of the Committee on Tropical Silviculture and Management, and Colin Marshall for the Committee on Sustained Yield and the National Conscience. Both are ISTF members.

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The Society wishes to extend a welcome to three new members whose applications were received too late for their names to be included in the enclosed list: S.F. v.d. Recke, Chief of the FAO Latin American Forestry Office, and his associates, H. Recart, and B. Clarke. Mailing address for all three is c/o FAO Latin American Forestry Office, 1008 Rua Jardim Botânico, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

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From the book jacket of THE TROPICAL RAIN FOREST, by P.W. Richards:

"The tropical rain forests include about half of the world's forest area. Until recently man had had little effect upon them; large areas have been either quite uninhabited, or visited only by food-gathering peoples with no more influence than any other animal inhabitants. Little is definitely known of their past history, but they have probably persisted

unchanged from the remotest times. In the last hundred years, however, widespread clearing has been occurring either for subsistence agriculture or for the cultivation of such crops as rubber, cocoa, and coffee, and the rate of destruction is so rapid that unless efforts are made to preserve it the tropical rain forest may well disappear within a lifetime, with serious biological and economic consequences."

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GRAZING AND FOREST ECONOMY. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome, Italy, 1953. 161 pp. Price, \$2.

This report, No. 4 of the FAO Forestry and Forest Products Studies, was drafted by T. Francois, Chief of FAO's Forest Policy and Conservation Branch, and is concerned with natural grazing lands, as distinct from permanent improved pasturelands. Five of the book's chapters deal with General Relations Between Grazing and Forest, and the three following chapters are devoted to regional situations: the temperate, tropical, and arid regions. Chapter VIII, The Tropical Region, covers 22 pages, and goes into some detail concerning the grazing problems of India and ways of treating them, and discusses other problems of tropical grazing lands, with chief emphasis on fire. The question is raised whether burning is really necessary in all cases, and whether sufficient effort has been made to use it wisely and methodically. This chapter also discusses the most dangerous consequence of grazing misuse in tropical regions -- loss of fertility and damage from erosion.

Among ISTF members whose works are cited in GRAZING AND FOREST ECONOMY are R. Maglagan Gorrie, C.H. Holmes, Sir Herbert Howard, and A.F.A. Lamb.

AMERICAN SYLVICULTURE AND TROPICAL FOREST PROBLEMS. Report by a Mission of Experts on the Overseas Territories (Technical Assistance Mission No. 18a). Organisation for European Economic Cooperation, 2 rue Andre-Pascal, Paris 15, France. 95 pp. Processed. 1952.

This report covers the study tour of a group of foresters, nearly all from tropical regions, who visited the USA in 1950 to study techniques of soil conservation and reafforestation which might specifically be of benefit to tropical regions. The tour covered the USA across the plains states to Ogden Utah, then down to southern California, returning via the south to Florida, then northward through the Piedmont section. The report is divided into five chapters: Improvement of Pastures in Relation to Erosion Control; Reafforestation with Conifers; Ecology and Silviculture of Pines in North Florida; Control of Erosion; Water consumption of Vegetation and General Watershed Hydrological Research. The group found that USA problems of erosion, water conservation, and reafforestation were not identical with those existing in tropical countries (the latter are much more serious and difficult to solve). Nor do tropical services enjoy the same elaborate resources of the U.S. Forest Service. But the team was able to make note of techniques applied in the USA, and of the guiding principles in certain lines of research which can be applied in tropical countries.