

THIRD INTERIM REPORT ON THE ATLAS OF ECOLOGICALLY IMPORTANT PLANT SPECIES IN AFRICA

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Shortly after I began compiling the "maquette" of the new AETFAT/ UNESCO vegetation map of Africa, I became convinced that its usefulness would be greatly increased by the publication of an atlas showing the distributions of a selection of those ecologically important species which can be used to designate the main vegetation types shown on the map. Such an atlas would also facilitate the revision of future editions of the map. At our sixth plenary meeting in Uppsala, I suggested that AETFAT might officially sponsor the scheme and was asked to present a definite proposal at this Congress.

During the last two years a small unofficial committee consisting of those mentioned at the head of this paper has constituted itself, with the purpose of conducting a pilot scheme so that sound estimates of the work involved and likely cost can be prepared before the full scheme is embarked upon. Its members are prepared to continue as a steering committee which ultimately might become an editorial committee. To-date we have completed distribution maps of about 50 species in order to assess the amount of work involved. UNESCO has expressed interest in our project and may provide financial assistance to enable the work to be completed and published in book form if application is made when the pilot-scheme is completed. In the meantime, Monsieur F. DEMARET has kindly offered to publish the maps prepared for the pilot scheme in "Distributionses plantarum africanarum". The accuracy of these maps could then be tested by collaborators in the field and errors and omissions attended to before publication in the Atlas.

I would like to recommend that the unofficial committee should be recognised by AETFAT and that the Index of distribution maps of African species published since 1950, which is being compiled by BAMPS and LUCAS should be published if possible in a forthcoming AETFAT Bulletin.

All members are asked to send copies of, or references to, their own publications which include distribution maps to either BAMPS or LUCAS. These works will subsequently be included in the AETFAT library.

ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

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Artikel/Article: [Third interim report on the atlas of ecologically important plant species in africa 161](#)