BOOK REVIEWS


This is a translation of a book written by one German and one French author. Published in 1970, it reviews and describes fertilizer trials and use in forests, up to about 1965. Despite the claim that the authors have evaluated the international literature, this is a book on European — particularly German and French — practice. Only 40 of the 650 or 700 references are from outside Europe. Except for one reference to phosphate in Australia, there is no account of the work done in Australia and New Zealand on deficiencies of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, boron, zinc and copper. New Zealand is mentioned only in relation to aerial topdressing in farming, and it is implied that (quite contrary to our experience) uniform distribution of fertilizers over forests can easily be achieved.

Pinus radiata is not mentioned, but pines are described as having “a remarkable requirement for potash”, and Douglas fir has a “very high” potassium requirement. These sound strange in a country where known potassium responses in forest trees are confined to such peculiar areas as the “pakihi” soils of Westland and the “mineral belt” soils of Nelson. It seems that the authors have confused the potassium requirements of trees with the requirements of their potassium-deficient soils to grow trees successfully.

This is certainly not a handbook for the New Zealand forest manager as it has no direct, and little indirect, application to New Zealand forestry. It is, however, a well-produced book with excellent illustrations: the 45 colour prints are first class. It will be of considerable interest to those engaged in fertilizer research in countries outside Europe as it provides a good appreciation of European forest soils and fertilizer research — a basis against which to assess their own.

G. M. Will


This soft-covered, ring-bound book is described as “an up-to-date register on who is doing what in the fields of forestry and forest products” in the member countries of the Asian and Pacific Council (ASPAC) — that is, Australia, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and the Republic of Vietnam (with Laos as an observer). ASPAC was set up in
1966 to promote closer co-operation between member countries in the political, economic, social and cultural fields. The Registry of Scientific and Technical Services in Canberra is but one of several projects established in centres in the member countries to assist those worthy objectives: its chief aims are to gather and publish information about the activities of scientific and technical groups working in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, engineering, mining, industry and other fields closely associated with development. Registers are being produced for each of these major activities, and they are to be updated annually.

So much for the background to this publication, as given in the foreword. A large amount of research is being carried out in forestry, forest products and the forest industries in the ASPAC countries and the 1971 register is a first attempt to list groups having particular expertise in these fields. A "group" is a working unit carrying on research on a homogeneous subject with projects covering a fairly limited field. The primary arrangement of the main text is by countries, and within countries by type of organization (i.e., government; universities; private sector). Organizations are arranged alphabetically within those divisions, and "groups" alphabetically within their organization. Within a country, each group is given a unique code number, and information about it is presented in standard format — name of parent organization, name of administrative leader to whom the group is responsible, and group name (usually reflecting its administrative organization), with addresses in each case; source of finance; links with overseas groups (as to staff, material, research results); any formal training programmes conducted; staffing (number of professional workers, and total staff); vehicles of publication used; source of the record; background notes (administrative details, group history and affiliations, other pertinent facts); a description of projects; and finally a series of terms used for classifying projects in the indexes.

There are four indexes. The first shows the hierarchical relationship of groups to their organizations. Then follow a subject index; a separate and shorter subject category index, using broader headings for the purpose of general search; and an index of those organizations which undertake training activities for students, graduates, technicians or administrators.

To facilitate the assembly, storage and retrieval of its information the registry bases its work on a computer, and the book is typeset directly from the computer printout. There is therefore some rigidity in the way the data are presented, and much repetition, as for example in describing the various groups of a single large research organization. One benefit, however, is that each group entry is complete within itself and can be read or abstracted in isolation from the others. The descriptions of current projects and the background information are commendably full, and in this respect the New Zealand entries, which extend to the activities of private companies and certain consultant firms, are at least as good as any others. Curiously, the New Zealand section lacks any reference to the School of Forestry at the University of Canterbury,
an omission which will no doubt be remedied in the next edition. Personal names, telephone numbers, postal addresses and even project entries will need frequent revision, so the registry is assured of a permanent task in its proposed annual republications. Much information has still to be added, particularly for some countries such as Japan, and running corrections and amendments are also sought. This book breaks new ground in making freely available, in published form, this type of ephemeral information for the region and countries it serves. Successive editions should greatly assist scientists, administrators, librarians, businessmen and government officials, not only in the ASPAC countries but also around the world, in both their official and personal intercommunications.

G. C. Weston