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The future of the Flora Europaea Organization¹

V. H. HEYWOOD

The completion of Flora Europaea

The target dates for sending the volumes to press are as follows:

Vol. 3: end of 1970
Vol. 4: end of 1972
Vol. 5: end of 1973

The dates for finishing work on Vol. 5 (proofs, indexes, etc.) will be the end of 1975.

The current grant from the British Science Research Council, which has supported the project since 1959, will end in 1972 and funds will have to be found to keep the organization going until 1975 to enable the Flora to be completed. The assistance of all members of the organization will be needed in seeking the necessary finance. Even though the source of finance for the organization may become international, the Editorial Committee must remain in effective control of the project.

The continuation of the organization after the completion of the Flora

There is an evident need for a definite objective if the organization is to remain meaningful after the completion of the first edition of Flora Europaea. The Editorial Committee has always avoided, up till now, becoming too involved in peripheral activities. Possible lines on which the organization might continue include:

- production of a second edition;
- production of supplements;
- AELLEN's suggestion of a "Flora Europaea Advena";
- production of a check-list on the lines of NYMAN;
- reconstitution of the organization on the lines of a branch of IOPB;
- sponsoring of associated projects such as chromosome or ecological lists.

¹ Brief report and discussions at the closing session of the 6th Flora Europaea Symposium.

Many of these possibilities would require some change in the present methods of control of the organization, but it is of prime importance to realize that the organization does now provide an effective, ready-made mechanism for the collection and exchange of information.

DISCUSSION

Second edition and supplements

LAWALRÉE asks whether the accumulated corrections to the published volumes could be published. HEYWOOD points out that before doing so they would need to go through the same editing process as the original manuscripts; he observes that many of the suggested corrections contradict each other.

GUINOCHEZ says that supplements would be extremely useful. GAUSSEN observes that they would be much the easier, as the production of a second edition would be a very onerous task.

SAUVAGE asks that a second edition should include the whole Mediterranean region. The resolution of Mediterranean problems in taxonomy is one of the most urgent needs: it will in many cases, completely alter our concept of various taxa. A separate Mediterranean Flora would be very useful. GUINOCHEZ suggests that a Mediterranean Flora could form a parallel organization.

Flora Europaea Advena

VALENTINE welcomes AELLEN's proposal of a "Flora Europaea Advena" as a very valuable idea; he suggests that a subcommittee be set up (citing the Mapping Subcommittee as a model) to discuss the idea, and that it too could form a separate but related organization.

GAUSSEN comments on the difficulties of defining the limits of such a Flora, and feels that it might include even all species that can grow in the European climate.

Check-list

MONNIER says that a most important aspect of NYMAN is his synonymy, and that any proposed European check-list should place a similar emphasis on synonyms.

HEYWOOD suggests that a check-list could be especially useful if it contained all the synonyms (as well as literature references, etc.) in the text, not just in the index as in the published Flora.

Branch of IOPB

HEYWOOD points out that the Flora Europaea Organization has no legal status, and that if it did acquire such status considerable problems might arise.

VALENTINE says that the organization should not become a branch of IOPB, which is a non-systematic organization, but that it could well become linked with IAPT (and connected with IOPB in this way).

MOORE recalls a suggestion of BÖCHER's that Flora Europaea or some similar organization might sponsor work on critical groups for which international collaboration is necessary. This was the origin of the suggestion that the Flora Europaea Organization might become linked with IOPB, as in biosystematic circles it is only IOPB which attempts such international collaboration.

Chromosome and ecological lists

MOORE emphasizes that any list of chromosome numbers would be a documentation of the numbers already published in the Flora; it would not be a complete list of all the numbers known from plants of known wild origin. He repeats that most of the numbers given in the Flora have already been published.

PICHI-SERMOLLI states that a chromosome list of world-wide scope is being prepared, and will be published in 4 or 5 years. GUINOCHEZ observes that a Russian list of this scope has already been published.

BÖCHER discusses the problems of ecological lists and emphasizes the difficulties involved. So many species in the Flora consist of different ecological races that it might be impossibly difficult to prepare such lists at present.

SAUVAGE asks if there could be a special discussion of ecological information at the next symposium since the subject is so complex. HEYWOOD welcomes this suggestion and says that a session could certainly be devoted to this; the subject in fact merits an organization of its own.

General

GREUTER comments that some of these projects, such as supplements, a second edition, or a check list, are much more closely related to the present activities of the organization, and are therefore more suitable for future work. He says that the sponsoring of monographic work, with circulation of manuscripts among experts, would be a very valuable extension of the organization's activities. Another project that could be considered is the publication of the location of types and the typification of the names of all European species (especially as so much of this must already have been done during work on the Flora, and not published); this information could be incorporated in a check-list and thus give it a new element of value.

