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FOREWORD

Already a year after the memorable 17th International Phytogeographical Excursion (IPE) to northern Argentina, the opportunity arose, thanks to the generous offer of Prof. Dr. Drs. h.c. Akira Miyawaki, for an 18th IPE to Honshu (Japan). This excursion, as also the 17th, was conducted together with the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS).

Before the excursion a guide book was published (A. Miyawaki and O. Shigetoshi, 1984: Handbook for the International Excursion. August 1-16, 1984. Dept. Veget. Sci., Inst. Environm. Techn., Yokohama Univ., Yokohama [with lists of species]). The course of the journey, the grand impressions of the country and its people, and of the vegetation and cultivated land have been recorded with great interest and in a masterly manner in an excursion report by Mrs. Charlotte Ellenberg, to which no addition is necessary (see p. 12 in this publication).

The excellent and liberal organization of the trip, the diversity of the sights and experiences, the many contacts with political authorities and organizations, the efforts of the Japanese to reduce the environmental stress and re-green the industrial landscape with natural vegetation, characterized this excursion. Especially our symbolic collaboration in the creation of "home forests", a particularly successfully realized concern of our excursion leader (A. Miyawaki), remains a noteworthy remembrance. Several participants in the excursion regretted that active fieldwork and direct contact with the vegetation and flora were not as intensive as they had expected. The large number of participants, the extremely strict rules for the protection of nature and the many-sided but concentrated, well-filled programme arranged with expert knowledge only allowed limited work and contact with the vegetation.

In spite of the concentrated programme, various participants found time to incorporate their observations comparatively into their scientific experience and to combine them in original work. These contributions are compiled in chapters 3 and 4 of this volume. Chapter 2 contains a review of the vegetation and flora of Japan including maps of the potential and actual vegetation (generously given by Prof. Miyawaki for the supplementary appendix).

This volume should provide interested visitors to Japan with a review of

the vegetation and encourage them to draw comparisons with their own scientific experiences of vegetation. With the aid of this volume the participants in this striking excursion will be able to relive all the events and make full use of the rich experience gained. The perfect organization, prepared to the smallest detail, and the successful execution of the excursion are due to the efforts of Prof. Dr. A. Miyawaki. We thank him and his many collaborators for the possibility of this great scientific and personal experience. We are also grateful to the many Japanese colleagues who put their scientific knowledge at our disposal in the preparation and execution of the excursion. We especially thank the president and vice-president of the symposium, Prof. Dr. M. Numata and Director M. Ito. The excursion was supported by the following institutions and organizations: International Association for Vegetation Science, International Phytogeographic Excursion, Ecological Society of Japan, The Asahi Shimbun, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Environmental Agency, Prefectural Governments of Tokyo, Kanawaga, Shizuoka, Nagano, Toyama, Shiga, Nara, Hyogo, Yamagata, Fukushima, Tochigi, Gunma and Chiba, Cities of Yokohama, Kawasaki, Fujisawa, Fuji, Toyama, Kobe, Sakata and Numata, Takahata Town, Forestry Culture Association, Asahi Evening News, The Kanagawa Shimbun, Sanwa Greenery Fund, The Tokyo Electric Power Co., Inc., The Kansai Electric Power Co., Inc., The Chubu Electric Power Co., Inc., Nippon Steel Corporation, Mitsui Real Estate Development Co., Ltd., Mitsui Mutual Life Insurance Co., Mitsui-No-Mori. We are very grateful to them, their presidents, representatives, and collaborators.

Prof. Dr. H. Ellenberg, at the time president of the International Association for Vegetation Science, worked intensively for the success of the excursion. With many humorous speeches and competent discussions with political and economic institutions, he stood in for the excursion. Our best thanks also to him.

Elias Landolt