Bookreview

J. Michalko at al.

GEOBOTANICKÁ MAPA ČSSR
SLOVENSKÁ SOCIALISTICKÁ REPUBLIKA

[Geobotanical map of Czechoslovakia, Slovak Socialist Republic]
Veda, Vydavatelstvo Slovenskej akadémie vied, Bratislava 1986, 165 pp., 57 Figs, under separated cover 12 maps (color.), price Kčs 92.

The second part of the vegetation map of Czechoslovakia covering the territory of Slovakia appears about 15 years later than the Czech part, but it represents a map of a new generation. Nevertheless, the basic conception, methods of field research and synthesis of the map have not been changed. The map of Slovakia profits by the intensive development of systematic vegetation science, synecology and forest typology, the experience acquired during the vegetation mapping in Bohemia and Moravia and the intensive collaboration of the most adept experts from all over Czechoslovakia. Therefore, the number of differentiated mapping units could be raised from 19 in the Czech part to 41 in Slovakia. The conception of the vegetation reconstruction is the same in the both maps. The mapping units represent the reconstructed natural vegetation corresponding to present climatic conditions. The environmental changes caused by man during the historical period, such as drainage of alluvial soils, desiccation of cultivated or dense settled territories have been omitted.

The explanatory text contains concise information about the development of vegetation mapping in Slovakia, the conception and methods used, value and utilization of the map in science, education and practice. A brief chapter is devoted to abiotic natural conditions such as topography, geology, climate and soils of Slovakia. The development of vegetation in the postglacial period and the most important human impacts are summarised in the last chapter of the general part.

The mapping units are broadly described in the special part of the explanatory text. Each mapping unit is described from the floristic, phytosociological, ecological and chorological point of view. In addition to the description of the natural vegetation the most important substitute communities, land use, ecological value of biotopes are characterized. A new syntaxonomical division is proposed for oak-hornbeam, thermophilous oak forests etc. Unfortunately relevant synoptic tables or references which could confirm the new concept and make new published syntaxa valid are lacking. The explanatory text represents not only a well-arranged survey of natural vegetation but also its current syntaxonomical status. Brief summaries in Russian and German close the commentary.

Twelve sheets of vegetation maps on the scale 1 : 200 000 represent the most important part of the reviewed work. Each sheet is complete with a legend (in Slovak, English and Latin) to the mapping units and marginal maps of generalized hypsography (protected areas are also outlined on this map), climatic situation (types according to temperature and precipitation), a chart of pedology and geology. The most important descriptions are also presented in English. The maps of medium scale afford on the one hand a very objective survey of such basic phenomena as zonality, altitudinal belts, azonal communities etc., on the other hand they make it possible to follow details in natural vegetation pattern (even important units occurring in the area of 10 ha are distinguished). The high quality of print and proper choice of colours must be praised.

Nevertheless, it is not possible to compile such a demanding work without omissions which a specialist can find. In comparison with current vegetation maps the new map of Slovakia stands very high. This work, which belongs to the most important results of European vegetation cartography, represents very well the high standard of Slovak vegetation science and culture.

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