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FOREST TREE PLANTING IN ARID ZONES

By

A. Y. GOOR AND C. W. BARNEY

Ronald Press. 1968

Pp. 409, price unknown

This is not a book of broad popular appeal. It is probably not even a book of broad professional appeal. But if one were interested in growing trees in low-moisture situations anywhere in the world, he would do well to consult this new manual of planting and cultural operations. The appeal of the book, in other words, is a highly specialized one; but for its purpose, I suspect it is invaluable.

Owing much to Goor's earlier publication for the FAO entitled *Tree Planting Practices for Arid Zones*, the new work summarizes much recent research in silviculture, ecology, soil science, tree physiology, nursery practices, and plantation protection. Bibliographies are supplied at the end of each major section of the book. French, Russian, Spanish, German, and English literature have been reviewed.

The straightforward matter-of-factness of the title is carried throughout the book's first five sections. The first section is entitled "Arid Zones," and describes the ecology and forests of the arid zones of the world. "Collecting and Handling Tree Seed" is also a nonsense section dealing with genetics, provenance, extraction, testing, and storage. "Forest-Tree Nurseries" considers such matters as selecting and developing a nursery site, production and care of planting stock, and costs and records. Perhaps the technological heart of the book is the section on "Afforestation". This section deals with how-to-do-it information: site selection and preparation, spacing, seasons, seeding, field planting, cultivation and weeding, protection measures, tools, and costs. There are even three sensible paragraphs under a subheading "Construction of Roads and Paths." The fifth major section entitled "Special Plantations" is an interesting recapitulation of empirical work done throughout the world. A good treatment of irrigated plantations is contained in the discussion of production plantations. Protection and amenity plantations are treated as well.

The sixth and final section alone is reason enough for the book to be published. Entitled "Species for Arid-Zone Afforestation," it is a catalog of the silvical characteristics of several hundred trees suitable for arid zone plantations. Information is provided for each tree as to its natural range, its associated species, the soil and clima-

tological conditions of its native site, peculiar characteristics of its artificial regeneration and subsequent growth, and its commercial and domestic uses.

Finally, four excellent appendices are included. One is a table of conversion factors, and the other three summarize in tabular form the techniques and recommendations of seed handling, nursery practices, and site requirements.

Overall, the book is a prosaic synthesis of factual information and rule-of-thumb practices. It is not fun to read, but neither is it intended to be. It is decently manufactured, though many of the photographs are poor. One suspects photos have been taken of other photos and subsequently reproduced. For professional foresters in technical aid programs, for Peace Corps foresters, and for domestic foresters in countries with the need for such information, *Forest Tree Planting in Arid Zones* will be a useful and welcomed volume.

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