

## Bookreview

GERT MICHAEL STEINER et al.

## ÖSTERREICHISCHER MOORSCHUTZKATALOG

Bundesministerium für Gesundheit und Umweltschutz, Wien 1982, 289 pp., 64 colour photographs, 1 map.

The Austrian Ministry of Health and Environmental Control has recently published the main results of an inventory and evaluation of Austrian mires. Within a very short period of several years, a team of scientists of the Department of Vegetation Sciences and Plant Sociology, University of Vienna, in collaboration with some other experts prepared a list of over 1,000 mire localities from the whole country. The authors characterize each mire from the point of view of its typology, geomorphology and geology and also classify it according to its scientific and cultural value into one of four categories (mires of local, regional, national, and international importance). Because of this, the Austrian catalogue is probably the first complete list of mires in the world which does not regard mires in an utilitarian way (above all, as possible sources of energy), but which prefers and underlines their non-economic functions and values.

G. M. STEINER, who was responsible for the field work and who is also the principal author of the book, opens the catalogue with some general information concerning the mire terminology used, the origin and ecology of mires, the present state of their protection in Austria and the history of mire investigations in that country. Special chapters are devoted to the distribution of mires in Austria and to the typology of mires; there the author presents his own version of Succow typological classification used in the following sections.

The list of mires itself is arranged according to the sheets of the Austrian national map system (1 : 50,000), the cartographic basis of the whole work. For each locality the name, cadastre, altitude above sea level, climatic, hydrologic, vegetational and geomorphological types, bedrock, evaluation of scientific and cultural importance (see above), kind of optimum utilization and proposed status of protection are presented. For 114 mire localities of international value, full catalogue cards are reprinted, presenting some additional data concerning local flora and vegetation, geomorphology, origin and development of the deposit, etc. Unfortunately, the comments on flora and vegetation are of general character only: they usually include the main trees and dominants or common species, while the occurrence of rare plants and unusual vegetation types is mentioned in very few cases only. Potentially useful data on the principal publications or the basic bibliography concerning individual localities, are also missing. The catalogue includes a set of perfect and very impressive colour photographs of the most important mires and a map of Austria (1 : 500,000) showing the network of the 1 : 50,000 sheets and the positions of the localities.

Austrian colleagues may be congratulated upon preparing this small but very useful book. Simultaneously, the possibility to publish, at least in this form, the main results of their valuable work arouses our envy, as the documentation of the Czechoslovak mire survey, finished some 20 years ago, is still in the archives.

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