

II - PLENARY DISCUSSION AND VOTES

The chairman, *A.S. George*, pointed out that there seems to be a fundamental difference of opinion in the recommended format of the *Flora Malesiana*. Either people favoured a monographic format or they favoured a more concise format which they believed would speed production.

S.H. Sohmer — Group 1 did not wish to adulterate the scientific quality of *Flora Malesiana*. This would lead to a dilemma, i. e.:

- 1) It would take too long to finish *Flora Malesiana*.
- 2) How to maintain the scientific quality and value to the local areas yet complete *Flora Malesiana*?

Compare the summary of Group 4 which presents a different plan to that of Group 1.

Chairman — If there is to be a reasonable time-scale then the only way is to adopt a more concise format and not spend time solving deeper problems. The current state of taxonomic knowledge of plant families in the *Flora Malesiana* region should be assessed. The easy taxa should be done first and the harder ones later. The schedule should be spread over time to accommodate easy and difficult groups of plants.

B.A. Barlow — It seems that the present aim of *Flora Malesiana* is to proceed from zero knowledge to a monographic Flora in one step. This is difficult. A step-wise development is more realistic. There needs to be immediate development of an intermediate level, based on existing available information.

I agree with Sohmer that *Flora Malesiana* treatments should not be adulterated. I argue for the development of a concise Flora in parallel with the *Flora Malesiana*.

Chairman — It would be preferable to appoint a new team to work on *Flora Malesiana*; the team should be relatively autonomous with only one objective, i. e. to work on *Flora Malesiana*.

S.H. Sohmer — The major scientific value of *Flora Malesiana* is that it has a regional 'integrative approach' rather than a 'local approach'. The question is how do we maintain the integrative approach?

E. Soepadmo — In the Malesian area *Flora Malesiana* is 'The Green Bible'. It is the only regional guide. How can we keep the academic quality of *Flora Malesiana*? One suggestion is that the Flora Malesiana Foundation be internationalised. Even 10–11 botanists in the Rijksherbarium would be insufficient.

A more concise format by reducing species entries from a full page to a half page would not necessarily increase productivity.

R. Kiew — *Flora Malesiana* should be a solid and permanent contribution. There is some confusion between finishing the project in a short time and format. For many plant groups there are no precursor works. Many people do not want the *Flora Malesiana* watered down. We should not have an open-ended Flora, we can have *Flora Malesiana* in its present format if there is more management and funding.

D.G. Frodin — We need more management to identify the problems.

C.E. Ridsdale — We need rapid feedback between the *Flora Malesiana* project and the man in the field. Problems cannot be solved only in the herbarium or only in the field.

N. Wirawan — 75% of the users of *Flora Malesiana* are in Indonesia and most of these do not speak English. Thus, language is a problem. Photographs and maps should be included.

S.H. Sohmer — Most photographs used in *Flora Malesiana* have little value. The kind of format useful in Indonesia may not be of value at the local level. If we agree that *Flora Malesiana* should have a regional approach therefore this sets a format which can then flow-over to local projects.

Chairman — This will be voted on this afternoon. We need to add an extra item to the results of Group 1, that is: Local or popular works should be regarded as spin-offs, not to be undertaken by the primary Flora writing team.

N. Wirawan — In Indonesia there are no local projects. The only effort is the entire *Flora Malesiana* project.

D.G. Frodin — An example of a local project are the ancillary projects related to the *Flora of Australia*. For example the handbook to the Mangroves of Australia.

C.E. Ridsdale — The Australian approach will not necessarily work in Indonesia. Most Indonesian institutions cannot even afford to buy *Flora Malesiana*.

E. Soepadmo — Group 1 discussed the production of cheap editions which could be bought by most people in the region. In the case of *Flora Malesiana*, there would need to be a very significant cost reduction in Southeast Asia.

P.F. Stevens — It is not clear that there is an intermediate level of taxonomic work which, if adopted, will save time.

Plant collections are generally very good except for some geographic lacunae.

A monographic approach is therefore equal to a pseudomonographic approach. As Francis Ng says we agonize over difficult problems to be agonizingly precise. There is something to be said for an intermediate approach but how much faster will this be? The length of plant descriptions is a trivial matter.

S.H. Sohmer — Peter (Stevens), is it a choice of a concise Flora or a larger Flora, or is it a management problem?

P.F. Stevens — If management can be improved we are still looking at a long time.

J.F. Veldkamp — How did the people at Kew do the Flora of West Africa? They even have a second edition.

We need to look at the format adopted by Bentham. If we adopt this then we may be able to finish *Flora Malesiana* in a reasonable time. Management means money.

R.M. Polhill — There is a clear distinction between time-consuming monographic studies which will not produce a Flora and those studies which will. There is need for an assessment by a management committee to pin-point target groups. For example, the Dipterocarps. If we can divorce those taxonomic areas where detailed studies are needed and concentrate on where progress can be made, there can be a compromise. It is a question of management which can lead to a 'blue/green bible'.

P.S. Ashton — A local Flora can annotate the taxonomic problems needing further attention. We need to do this. As Peter Stevens said, we don't have the collections to make lasting decisions. We need to be honest with ourselves to save time.

Chairman — Bentham in *Flora Australiensis* presented discussions highlighting taxonomic problems.

D.E. Symon — This point is mentioned by Group 2 in its 4th recommendation.

P.F. Stevens — Can we put this together?

C. Kalkman — *Flora Malesiana* is not really a monographic series. It is usually considered monographic in the sense that the authors study all available material and try to make a complete treatment. *Flora Malesiana* is not monographic in the sense that all work on anatomy, phytochemistry, etc. is done by the taxonomist. This latter work is done by others and added to the descriptions.

Flora Malesiana at present can only be made more concise, firstly, by reduction in time of taxonomic research itself and, secondly, having more persons to do more taxonomic research. The size of the species descriptions makes no difference. We need to find more workers. Other things are only marginal and will not significantly reduce the overall production time.

It is agreed that *Flora Malesiana* is too expensive for many Indonesians. The Dutch publisher and Indonesian Government gives 200 free copies for Institutes in Indonesia. It should be pointed out that Indonesia is the only Government which contributes financially to *Flora Malesiana*.

Chairman — The length of descriptions being a half page or a full page is an important point. Firstly there is the amount of writing effort required; secondly, the volume of editing; and thirdly, there are differences in publication costs. Editing is largely comprised of checking format and cutting down descriptions to size. In a large project this adds up to a significant amount of time.

Should we now vote to have a feel of the meeting regarding a recommendation that *Flora Malesiana* continues to be monographic or be a concise Flora?

S.H. Sohmer — That is 'a more complete' or a 'less complete Flora'.

A concise Flora means a basic Flora prepared from existing specimen collections and with a more precise format than that currently used in *Flora Malesiana*. A concise Flora is intended to be built-on later. The *Flora of Australia* is relatively concise and provides the information Australian users need. The text can be prepared relatively quickly. A management committee should prepare a plan to complete an entire Flora.

M.M.J. van Balgooy — Does concise mean that we will have no more monographs?

Chairman — No, it would mean there would still be monographic research but time would not be wasted, for example, by searching for all synonyms.

E. Soepadmo — Will a concise Flora contain a complete list of synonyms? We definitely need such a list.

Chairman — It is useful to put in all synonyms of all names from the primary literature. This would be up to the *Flora Malesiana* committee.

S.H. Sohmer — There is only a relative difference between a Flora which is more complete compared to one which is less complete. My group was not talking about a full monographic approach. The product we are suggesting will differ only in relative terms.

P.F. Stevens — It is not simply a matter of what format is adopted; it is the time taken to do what we adopt.

E.F. de Vogel — A model is that of Seidenfaden where there are no descriptions included, only a key, line drawings, and full synonymy.

E. Hennipman — If we are aiming at a monograph approach then we need to have freedom. Workers can come up with new questions on subjects such as species concept. Also a time date should be set, e.g. the project to be completed by the year 2000 or 2050, then plan the manpower. That is, we need organization and management.

M.J.E. Coode — Should we have the concise *Flora Malesiana* called *Flora Malesiana*?

Chairman — There are different opinions on this.

P.S. Ashton — *Flora Malesiana* is not a series of monographs, it is a series of monographs written in a semi-monographic way.

M.M.J. van Balgooy — *Flora Malesiana* is not monographic.

B.A. Barlow — Can we have an indication of the number of participants who favour the 'less complete' approach and those who favour the 'complete approach'?

C. Kalkman — We should not use the terms 'complete' and 'incomplete' or 'less complete' with respect to approach.

**A vote on this was then taken and carried convincingly, i.e.,
in favour of a more concise *Flora Malesiana*.**

Chairman (after lunch break) — Now we will have a vote on the issues raised. There is some duplication in the points raised by the different groups. Even so, this will only serve to reinforce those for which votes are to be cast. Voting is to be by show of hands. Before we begin, the group leaders may need to answer some questions to clarify certain points.

C. Kalkman — A clarification of the meaning of Recommendation 2.2 is required.

F.S.P. Ng — We need different kinds of Floras with different formats going on at different times.

C.M.H. Lapré — It must be remembered that there is a broad array of users.

Chairman — Spin-off publications need to be encouraged but these should be undertaken by persons other than the Flora team.

For the results of the voting, see below.

Chairman (at the end of the session) — There are many agencies we can all use to further plant taxonomy. We should always be ready to publicise our activities, always keeping our consumers in mind. Where we can, we should encourage specialist groups, e.g. the Banksia Atlas project of Australia. We should aim to boost our image.

Professor Kalkman — I wish to thank all the participants for their contribution and point out that what has been done in the past has value, but we must plan to do better in the future.

VOTING RESULTS

Recommendation	1-1	for: 18	against: 1	abstentions: > 30
	1-2	for: 22	against: 1	abstentions: > 20
	1-3	for: > 40	against: 1	abstentions: 0
	1-4	for: > 40	against: 1	abstentions: 1
Recommendation	2-1	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 2
	2-2	for: > 40	against: 1	abstentions: 5
	2-3	for: > 40	against: 1	abstentions: 1
	2-4	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 3
	2-5	for: > 40	against: 3	abstentions: 0
	2-6	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 1
Recommendation	3-1	deleted, considered as 1-3		
	3-2	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 3
	3-3	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 0
	3-4	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 0
	3-5	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 1
	3-6	for: > 40	against: 9	abstentions: 5
Recommendation	4-1	already voted on this morning		
	4-2	for: > 40	against: 2	abstentions: 1
	4-3	for: > 40	against: 3	abstentions: 1
	4-4	not voted upon; refers to 4-5 and 4-6		
	4-5	deleted		
	4-6	already considered as 1-4		
Recommendation	5-1	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 0
	5-2	regarded as a statement, not a recommendation		
	5-3	for: > 40	against: 1	abstentions: 4
	5-4	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 3
	5-5	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 2
	5-6	for: > 40	against: 2	abstentions: 0
	5-7	for: > 40	against: 1	abstentions: 2
Recommendation	6-1a	for: > 40	against: 5	abstentions: 1
	6-1b	for: > 40	against: 1	abstentions: 4
	6-2	together with 6-3 and 6-4 taken as a whole:		
		for: > 40	against: 3	abstentions: 0
	6-5	for: > 40	against: 5	abstentions: 1
6-6	not voted upon			
Recommendation	7-1	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 1
	7-2	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 0
	7-3	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 3
	7-4	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 0
	7-5	for: > 40	against: 0	abstentions: 0