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BOOK REVIEW

LEMON, E. R. (ed.): CO_2 AND PLANTS. The Responses of Plants to Rising Levels of Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide. AAAS Selected Symposium 84. — Westview Press, Inc., Boulder 1983. 280 pp. US $ 32.50.

To predict how higher levels of CO_2 may affect global climate, photosynthesizing plants, and thus agriculture and the whole biosphere becomes nowadays increasingly important. The biosphere as well as lithosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere of the Earth are in dynamic equilibrium. It is now understood that atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations due to human activities increase every year and that the acceptable levels of CO_2 should not be more than 850 cm m^{-3}, *i.e.* no more than 1.5 to 2.5 times the natural CO_2 concentration.

This volume arose out of the Workshop held at Annapolis, MD, April 2—6, 1979. The topic was the Environmental and Societal Consequences of a Rising Level of Atmospheric CO_2. Following the Annapolis Workshop a meeting was held in Athens, Georgia, May 23—28, 1982, under the title "Rising Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide and Plant Productivity: An International Conference". The reviewed book contains the proceedings of this meeting. It includes eight chapters compiled by the chairmen and the co-chairmen of the respective panels. The book focusses on the influence of higher level of CO_2 on carbon metabolism of plants, on photosynthetic rate and photosynthetic response of representative C_3, C_4 and CAM plants, on plant growth and development, soil microbial activity, nitrogen fixation and mycorrhizal activities, on nitrogen-fixing, nitrifying and denitrifying bacteria, mycorrhizal fungi and plant pathogens. Responses of terrestrial plant communities, as well as aquatic plants to elevated concentrations of atmospheric CO_2 are also included. Interpretive Summary was placed at the beginning of the book and Sumnary and Recommendations section at the head of each chapter, which allows the reader to grasp the essence of the chapter at the start. This arrangement allowed the editor to unify a large amount of information and experience of a number of contributors. The only disadvantage is the absence of any index. In spite of that, the result is an excellent manual welcome by plant scientists engaged directly or indirectly in the studies of plant growth and functioning in increased CO_2 concentrations.

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