

Preface

At the Fifth International Congress of Ecology in Yokohama, Japan (23–30 August 1990), a symposium, “Vegetation Ecology of the Pacific Islands,” was organized to honor Dr. F. Raymond Fosberg for his numerous and significant contributions to the flora and vegetation of the Pacific Islands and his long-standing interest in the ecology and conservation of island vegetation. Ten papers were presented on the vegetation ecology of 10 different groups of islands. Although these relate only to scattered topics in the enormous realm of potentially critical and important areas that could have been developed under the symposium theme, they provide a start toward a more systematic and comprehensive overview of the ecology of island vegetation than now exists.

The initial concern in this symposium was with the documentation of vegetation pat-

terns, their floristic makeup, and their environmental relationships. Next will come research on dynamic aspects of vegetation ecology, which may range from historical and biogeographic studies to contemporary investigations of ecosystem and community dynamics and to plant population demography in an evolutionary context. All this should eventually contribute to a better understanding of what is special about the vegetation of islands and demonstrate urgent concerns to preserve and protect what remains. Many constructive activities are now under way in this direction. Dr. Fosberg’s life, portrayed briefly below, has contributed in great measure to this new development.

D. Mueller-Dombois and S. Itow
Organizers



Dr. F. Raymond Fosberg