

Content

1	INTRODUCTION	5
2	KEY TERMS.....	8
3	MAJOR BIOMES OF THE WORD	15
3.1	Introduction.....	15
3.2	Tropical rain forests.....	16
3.3	Savannas and tropical seasonal forests	20
3.4	Semideserts, deserts and halobiomes	22
3.5	Mediterranean sclerophyllous forests.....	24
3.6	Steppes and continental deserts	26
3.7	Deciduous broad-leaved forests	29
3.8	Coniferous forests, taiga	32
3.9	Tundra and alpine meadows.....	34
4	FOREST ECOSYSTEM	37
4.1	Forest ecosystem structure	37
4.1.1	Introduction	37
4.1.2	Species structure	37
4.1.3	Functional structure	37
4.1.4	Spatial structure.....	38
4.2	Forest ecosystem functions – ecosystem services	40
4.3	Primeval forest development.....	40
4.3.1	Basic terms	40
4.3.2	Development of the forest since the last glacial period	42
4.3.3	Development cycle of natural (primeval) forests	47
4.3.4	Development and structure of primeval forests in altitudinal vegetation zones.....	50
5	FOREST AND ABIOTIC COMPONENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT.....	54
5.1	Introduction.....	54
5.2	Radiation.....	54
5.3	Temperature.....	57
5.4	Air humidity	59
5.5	Wind	60
5.6	Water	62
5.6.1	Water cycle	62
5.6.2	Forest and precipitation	64
5.6.3	Total evaporation.....	66
5.6.4	Runoff	69
5.6.5	Water content in soil; water and plant.....	71
5.7	Forest and soil.....	73
5.7.1	Soil environment.....	73

5.7.2	Nutrient uptake.....	74
5.7.3	Forest litter influence.....	77
5.7.4	Production of substances specifically affecting pedogenesis.....	78
5.7.5	Silvicultural measures' impact on soil conditions	78
5.8	Ecological and environmental forest functions.....	79
6	PRIMARY PRODUCTION	81
6.1	Basic terms	81
6.2	Abiotic factors of primary production.....	83
6.2.1	Limiting factors	83
6.2.2	Composition of the atmosphere.....	84
6.2.3	Light as a production factor.....	85
6.2.4	Heat as a production factor.....	87
6.2.5	Water as a production factor	89
6.2.6	Soil condition as a production factor	91
6.2.7	Biomass and primary production of forest ecosystems.....	95
7	SECONDARY PRODUCTION	99
7.1	Basic terms	99
8	NUTRIENT CYCLES	107
8.1	Introduction.....	107
8.2	Geochemical cycles.....	110
8.3	Biogeochemical cycles.....	112
8.3.1	Reserve and flows	112
8.3.2	Reserve of elements	113
8.3.3	Element flows in ecosystems.....	114
8.4	Biochemical cycles	124
9	CYCLES OF PARTICULAR NUTRIENTS	125
9.1	Carbon cycle.....	125
9.2	Nitrogen cycle.....	126
9.3	Phosphorus cycle.....	132
9.4	Potassium cycle.....	134
9.5	Calcium and magnesium cycle.....	135
9.6	Sulphur cycle.....	135
10	LITERATURE.....	137
