

PROGRAM

Intensive Drainage Basin Studies

The study of drainage basins as ecosystems offers possibilities for integrated research which have been neglected or viewed too narrowly, despite their relevance to man's use of his environment. We have recommended, therefore, that much of the effort of the Terrestrial and Freshwater Productivity Sections of the IBP be focused on intensive, multidisciplinary analyses of ecosystems. Study areas will be selected in which the interrelationships of terrestrial and aquatic communities can be investigated. The site should include both undisturbed communities and communities highly modified by human use.

We recommend that concentrated efforts be made in a limited number of sites representing the following ecosystems: deciduous forests, western coniferous forests, grasslands, deserts, arctic tundra, and tropical forests (in cooperation with Latin American groups). Scientists with a wide range of interests should collaborate in these centers for intensive study. Additional contributions can be made through less comprehensive investigations on related communities at other locations.

Limited ecosystem studies are already in progress at a number of locations, including several in the eastern deciduous and western coniferous forests, in the southwestern desert, and in the Arctic. Hydrologic data and other basic information have been gathered at a number of other locations. Any area considered particularly appropriate for comprehensive ecosystem study, either by virtue of the landscape and biological components or by virtue of the background studies completed or in progress there, should be brought to the attention of the Chairman of the PT or PF subcommittee.

Final selection of major sites should be made by a task force, which