Le passage de la végétation méditerranéenne à la
végétation saharienne sur les revers méridional du
Haut Atlas oriental (Maroc)

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avec 2 figures et 16 tableaux

Abstract. In this study, the authors analyze the syntaxonomic structures of vegetation
which colonize the south-eastern face of the High Atlas, including the eastern Anti-Atlas
and the valleys between these two mountains. They thus particularly define nine new asso­
ciations and one new alliance, respectively related to the mediterranean biome and to the
saharian biome, the former characterized by pre-steppic forests and structures of matorrals
and steppes, the latter by desert steppes or tree and shrub steppes with Acacia raddiana.
This analysis makes it possible to investigate the stability of the boundaries between the
mediterranean region and the Sahara, which very likely have shifted during the last decades
and nearly exactly fit with the 150 mm isohyet and not with the 100 mm one. The effects of
man action on the vegetation are everywhere very obvious. In the mediterranean region,
they are dramatic for the presteppic forests or the matorrals and, on the contrary, respons­
ible for the spreading of the Artemisia steppes maintained by an intensive, but not yet
excessive, grazing. The desertification process due to the action of man and his cattle must
be taken into consideration, at least since the Holocene. The extremely unstable climatic
and biological equilibr iums which are presently setting in the Sahara and on its boundaries,
make of this region an outstanding observatory for the study of possible global climatic
changes on the surface of our planet.

Keywords: south-eastern Morocco, syntaxonomy, mediterranean and saharian vegetation.