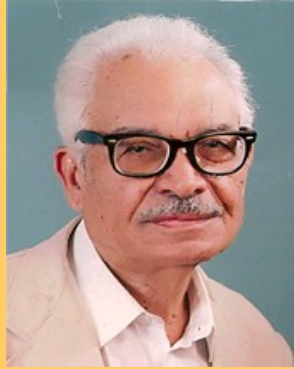


Mohamed Kassas: A Lifetime of Study and Research



Mohamed Kassas, emeritus professor of Botany, University of Cairo, was born on July 6, 1921, obtained his B. Sc. (Hons.) in 1944 and M. Sc. in 1947 from the University of Cairo, and Ph. D. in 1950 from the University of Cambridge (U.K.).

In Egypt, he is member of the Egyptian Academy of Science and the Institut d'Egypte. Internationally, he is past President (1978-1984) of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), fellow of the Indian National Academy of Science, the World Academy of Art and Science, and member of the Club of Rome.

His principal research interests during the last 60 years are in plant ecology, especiallu in arid land. He and his students surveyed plant life in the deserts and coastal lands of Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq, and contributed to the basic understanding of the ecology and conservation of the desert vegetation. He was among the pioneers who warned the world against hazards of desertification and contributed to the UNESCO Arid Lands Research Programme (1950-1960, including the ecological maps of the Mediterranean Basin) and to the scientific preparation for the United Nations Conference on Desertification (1977). He has been on the panel of Senior Advisors to the United Nations Enviroment Programme (UNEP) between 1973 and 1992. He is on the editorial boards of several international journals in fields of ecology and environmental sciences.

Professor Kassas received the following national honours: The First Order of Sciences and Arts (1959), The Order of the Republic (1978), The First Order of Merit (1981), The State Science Prize (1982), was appointed member of the Shura Council (second house of the Egyptian Parliament), (1981-2001), and Honorary Doctorate, University Assiut, Egypt (1994), International honours include: Golden Order for Education (Sudan, 1978), United Nations Prize for Environment (1978), the Arab League Educational, cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) Gold Medal (1978), Commander in the Order of the Golden Ark (the Netherlands, 1981), Honorary Doctorate from the Swedish Agricultural University, Upssala (1985), Honorary Doctorate from the American University in Cairo (1986), IUCN-J.Philip Medal (1991), Commander: The Swedish Royal Order of the Polar Star (1998), and the Zayed (UAE) International Prize for Environment (2001), Honorary Doctorate, University of Khartoum (Sudan), 2003.

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