

THE MAURITANIAN DATE PALM GROVE: EVALUATION, IDENTIFICATION AND VARIABILITY OF CULTIVARS BASED ON MORPHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

M.H. Sedra¹, C. Ould Naha² and S. Ould El-Abbas²

**Laboratoire de Phytopathologie, Génétique et Lutte microbiologique,¹
Center Régional du Haouz-Présahara, INRA, BP. 533, 40000
Marrakech, Morocco.**

**Project 'Développement Oasis', Ministère de développement Rural et²
de l' Environnement, BP. 2911, Nouakchott, Mauritania.**

The Mauritanian date palm grove is composed of 1.87 Million trees distributed on 217 oases. The morphological study covered 22 main cultivars in three important regions.: Adrar, Tagante and Laassaba. The data of 34 quantitative and 27 qualitative characters were analyzed by a computer program. The correlation between these characters was evaluated and several discriminating criteria were selected. The grouping association of cultivars was identified by cluster analysis. Some cultivars like Ahma Janca and Tijib constitute small separated group according to the analyzed criteria. All studied cultivars were identified and the variability was evaluated. It was advised to preserve this material and to improve it by mass selection and breeding programs in order to select new date palm cultivars of better production quality and wider adaptability.