STUDY OF IMPACT OF SOIL AND LAND USE CHANGES ON HYDROLOGIC REGIME USING SHE MODEL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A mathematical model is a set of mathematical and logical expressions representing the behaviour of a system. In the area of hydrology, these models are used for a number of applications like rainfall runoff modelling, flood forecasting, reservoir operation and ground water exploitation. Distributed models, which form an important class of models of land phase of hydrological processes in a catchment, are based on detailed description of these processes. The SHE is one such model. The detailed description of the SHE model is available in model documentation, DHI(1989).

Beven (1985) mentions four major areas which offer the greatest potential for application of the distributed models. One of these areas is forecasting the effects of land-use changes on hydrological regime of a catchment. The SHE model was used in this context of study of land use changes for a hypothetical catchment and the results of this study are described in the following.

1.1 Strategy Adopted

The strategy adopted in this study was to simulate the behaviour of a microscale catchment under different conditions in terms of the soil hydraulic properties, soil depth, land use, and surface roughness for overland flow. The results of this study can be easily applied to predict the impacts of land use change in a big catchment since such catchment can be visualized to be composed of several small elemental areas. Several simulation runs were taken in which the parameters of model response were different. The results of those runs in which only one parameter was different were intercompared to determine the effect of the individual changes.

The changes in the physical characteristics of a catchment lead to changes in the associated parameters of the catchment. In practice, seldom there is a change in only one parameter; a change in one parameter triggers changes in a number of associated parameters. For example, the change in land use leads to change in the amount of interception of input precipitation, the evapotranspiration losses, ground surface roughness for overland flow, and the soil hydraulic conductivity etc.

2.0 DETAILS OF STUDY AREA

For the purpose of this investigation, the study area consisted of a single square shaped grid with a river flowing along one of the sides. The grid square, which also represents a single soil column in a SHE setup, was assumed to be surrounded by impervious boundaries. The schematic representation of this catchment area is shown in Fig. 2.1 and 2.2. The dimensions of the grid square were 2km * 2km.

2.1 Scenarios Studied

The various combinations of soil type, soil depth and land use as used in the simulation of Kolar subbasin, Narmada basin, Jain (1990), are shown in Table 2.1. A percentage sign (%) in a particular column indicates that there was no grid square falling in that particular combination. As seen from this table, there are a total of sixteen combinations of soil depth, soil hydraulic properties, vegetation type and Strickler's roughness coefficient available. Each of these scenario was individually simulated in the present study. The results corresponding to those runs where only one parameter was different were analyzed to determine the effect of a particular parameter.
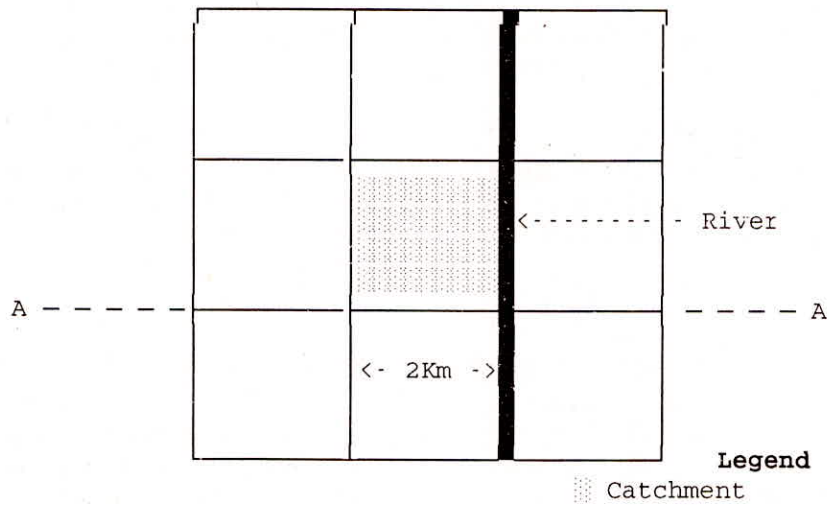

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Fig. 2.1   Schematic representation of single
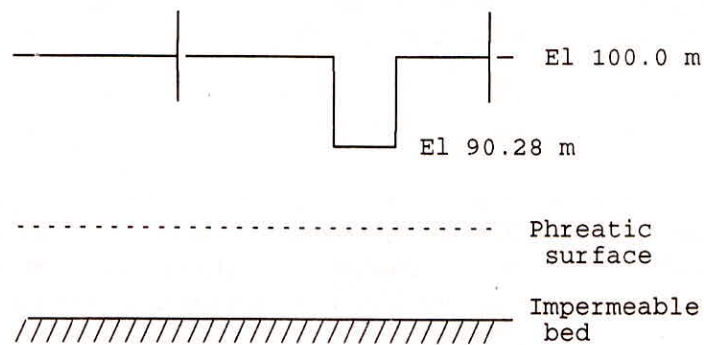column catchment

Fig. 2.2   Section along A-A

In Table 2.1, the numbers given in the square brackets refer to the simulation run using the corresponding scenario parameters. In the subsequent discussion, R followed by this number, is used to refer to the particular run, e.g., R1, or R12

2.2   Input Data Used

In addition to alternate basin representation scenarios, the time series data pertaining to Kolar basin was used. The hourly rainfall data for a SRRG station was used. The pan evaporation data for a station near the basin was used. The parameters of soils are also same as used in Kolar basin simulation, some important parameters are given in Table 2.2. The detailed description simulation of Kolar basin is available in Jain(1990).

The data for the three year period 1986-88 was used in the present analysis. During these years, the volume of rainfall during the monsoon season was 1491 mm, 983 mm, and 1168 mm respectively. During 1986, rainfall was a mixture of few big isolated events and a number of events of low intensity rainfall spread over time. In 1987, the rainfall occurred mostly in the form of isolated events of short duration intense storms. The year 1988 consisted of low intensity long duration events with a few events of intense rainfall.

The starting date of simulation runs was 01 January 1986. The initial soil moisture profile was field capacity. The results of first year of simulation (1986) are, therefore affected by the initial conditions.

3.0 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The results of simulation were analyzed to determine the impact of soil depth, soil hydraulic properties, land use, and the surface roughness characteristics on the hydrologic regime of a catchment. The variables representing output from the catchment which were monitored in the present study were discharge in the river, moisture content in the unsaturated zone, and actual evapotranspiration losses from the catchment. A summary of the results is given in Table 3.1.

3.1 Impact of Soil Depth on Hydrologic Regime

The soil depth along with soil properties determines the moisture storage capacity of the sub-surface zone in a catchment. This along with the soil conductivity affects the water available for runoff as well as that available to meet evapotranspiration requirements.

In the run nos. R9, R10, R12, and R14, all parameters except the soil depth were same. The summary results of these runs are given in Table 3.2.

Table 2.1: Combination o Simulation Parameters

	Black Soil	Yellow Soil	Red Soil	
WASTE LAND				
1. Run Reference No	[01]	%	[02]	
2. Soil Depth [m]	0.2		0.2	
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]	2.0		20.0	
4. Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]	7.0		7.0	
OPEN FOREST				
1. Run Reference No	%	%	[03]	[04]
2. Soil Depth [m]			0.5	0.7
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]			50.	50.
4.Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]			5.	5.
MEDIUM DENSE FOREST				
1. Run Reference No	%	[05]	[06]	[07]
2. Soil Depth [m]		0.5	0.5	0.7
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]		40.0	50.	50.
4. Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]		3.	3.	3.
DENSE FOREST				
1. Run Reference No	[17]*	%	[08]	%
2. Soil Depth [m]	8.0		0.5	
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]	4.0		50.	
4. Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]	7.0		4.	
AGRICULTURE				
1. Run Reference No	[09]	%	%	
2. Soil Depth [m]	8.0			
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]	4.0			
4. Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]	7.0			
AGRICULTURE				
1. Run Reference No	[10]	%	[11]	
2. Soil Depth [m]	4.0		4.0	
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]	4.0		40.0	
4. Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]	7.0		7.0	
AGRICULTURE				
1. Run Reference No	[12]	%	[13]	
2. Soil Depth [m]	2.5		2.5	
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]	4.0		40.0	
4. Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]	7.0		7.0	
AGRICULTURE				
1. Run Reference No	[14]	[15]	[16]	
2. Soil Depth [m]	1.0	1.0	1.0	
3. Ks {UZ} [mm/h]	4.0	20.0	40.0	
4. Kstr {OC} [m 1/3/s]	7.0	7.0	7.0	

* This is a hypothetical scenario.

Table 3.1 : Summary Results of Simulation - River Flows

Run No.	Run Parameters SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R1	0.2/ 2.0/ 7.	1253	605	785
R2	0.2/20. /7.	1250	591	816
R3	0.5/50. /5.	1174	510	684
R4	0.7/50./ 3.	1122	458	631
R5	0.5/40. /3.	1167	506	680
R6	0.5/50. /3.	1172	508	684
R7	0.7/50. /3.	1120	457	631
R8	0.5/50. /4.	1175	508	684
R9	8.0/ 4./ 7.	813	79	171
R10	4.0/ 4./ 7.	847	70	242
R11	4.0/40./ 7.	803	109	299
R12	2.5/ 4./ 7.	874	151	323
R13	2.5/40./ 7.	859	174	367
R14	1.0/ 4./ 7.	1098	450	611
R15	1.0/20./ 7.	1100	455	615
R16	1.0/40./ 7.	1099	455	615
R17	8.0/ 4./ 7.	766	73	128
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

Table 3.2 : Summary Results of Simulations - Impact of soil depth

Run No.	Run Parameters *SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R9	8.0/ 4./ 7.	813	79	171
R10	4.0/ 4./ 7.	847	70	242
R12	2.5/ 4./ 7.	874	151	323
R14	1.0/ 4./ 7.	1098	450	611
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

Note : * SD represents soil depth.

A comparison of the results of these runs shows that lesser soil depth produces more runoff because lesser moisture can be stored in the soil. In the run R14, the soil depth was 1.0 m and the soil got completely saturated several times during the simulation in this case. In this case, there was about 10 mm of standing water in the column in the year 1987. In case of run R9, the runoff volume for the three monsoon seasons was 813 mm, 79 mm, and 171 mm while in case of run R14, this volume was 1098 mm, 450 mm, and 611 mm. From the results, it was also seen that many small peaks corresponding to run R14 do not show in run R9. Thus there is a significant difference in the runoff, of the order of 500%, in the two cases where the soil depth was 8.0 m and 1.0 m respectively. The increased soil depth gave lesser runoff coefficient.

The results of the runs R10 and R12, soil depth 4.0 m and 2.5 m respectively, also support these observations (Table 3.3). Here because of less variation in soil depth, the variation in the discharge was also less. Further, as a consequence of less soil depth, the actual evapotranspiration loss was less. This was because lesser water was available to meet the ET demands.

Table 3.3 : Summary Results of Simulations - Impact of soil depth

Run No.	Run Parameters SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R10	4.0/ 4./ 7.	847	70	242
R12	2.5/ 4./ 7.	874	151	323
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

Similar effect of soil depth is seen for the red soil (permeable) while examining the results of the runs R11, R13, and R16, as given in Table 3.4. A comparison of results of R11 (soil depth 4.0 m) and R16 (soil depth 1.0 m), a four fold reduction in soil depth gave about 37% increase in discharge during monsoon of 1986, more than 4 times increase in 1987 and about twice big in 1988. The reduction in soil depth also gives increased flashiness in the basin response. This is because in this case the soil storage acts as a reservoir whose function is to give a delayed yield.

Table 3.4 : Summary Results of Simulations - Impact of soil depth

Run No.	Run Parameters SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R11	4.0/40./ 7.	803	109	299
R13	2.5/40./ 7.	859	174	367
R16	1.0/40./ 7.	1099	455	615
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

This analysis brings out the likely consequences of soil erosion on the catchment yield. The changes of such a large order as studied here will, if at all, take place over a very big time span. Nevertheless the bottom line is that the changes in yield volume from a big area can not be overlooked.

3.2   Impact of Soil Properties on Hydrologic Regime

In the runs R1 and R2, all parameters except the soil properties was same. An intercomparison of the results shows that the difference between the results is not significant. Similarly, in the runs R10 and R11, only soil properties were different but the response of the basin is significantly different in the two cases. It is seen that, in general, the runoff in case of R10 (in which soil conductivity was smaller) is higher than R11 (in which

Table 3.5 : Summary Results of Simulations - Impact of soil properties

Run No.	Run Parameters SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R1	0.2/ 2.0/ 7.	1253	605	785
R2	0.2/20. /7.	1250	591	816
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

soil conductivity was larger) in the initial months of the wet period while it is vice versa in the later months of the wet period. Overall, the discharge volume in run R10 was higher than R11 in 1986 and was lower in 1987 and 1988. The soil moisture deficit in case of R11 was higher by about 10% in 1987 and 1988 and about 20% higher in 1986. The moisture storage capacity of R10 soil is higher as compared with R11 and hence less runoff is produced. The results of 1986 seem to be affected by initial conditions. The shape of hydrograph was spiky in R10 and smooth in R11. This can be attributed due to UZ conductivity.

While comparing the results of the runs R12 and R13 and the runs R14, R15, R16 (Table 3.6), not much difference is observed. It appears that in case the soil depth is small, the soil properties do not play a significant role in determining the basin response.

Table 3.6 : Summary Results of Simulations - Impact of soil properties

Run No.	Run Parameters SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R12	2.5/ 4./ 7.	874	151	323
R13	2.5/40./ 7.	859	174	367
R14	1.0/ 4./ 7.	1098	450	611
R15	1.0/20./ 7.	1100	455	615
R16	1.0/40./ 7.	1099	455	615
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

3.3   Impact of Surface Roughness on Hydrologic Regime

The results of runs R3, R6, and R8 can be compared to determine the effect of the surface roughness characteristics on the basin response. The summary results are given in Table 3.7. In these runs only the Strickler roughness coefficient was different; its values were 5.0, 3.0, and 4.0 respectively. An examination of the results shows that this coefficient does not have a significant influence on the long term water balance -- of the order of several hours or more (depending on the catchment size) -- of the basin. This factor, however, is very important in determining the shape of the hydrograph during the flood season or the flashiness of the basin response.

Table 3.7 : Summary Results - Impact of surface roughness

Run No.	Run Parameters SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R3	0.5/50. /5.	1174	510	684
R6	0.5/50. /3.	1172	508	684
R8	0.5/50. /4.	1175	508	684
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

3.4   Impact of Vegetation on Hydrologic Regime

The results on run R9 (agriculture) and R17 (forest), Table 3.8, can be used to determine the impact of vegetation changes on the hydrologic regime of the catchment. It may be mentioned that the run R17 was a hypothetical run in the sense that this combination of parameters was not found in the Kolar basin. This run was, however, taken with a view to examine this influence.

Table 3.8 : Summary Results - Impact of vegetation

Run No.	Run Parameters SD/Kuz/Kstr	Outflow volume during monsoon (mm)		
		1986	1987	1988
R9	8.0/ 4./ 7.	813	79	171
R17	8.0/ 4./ 7.	766	73	128
Monsoon Rainfall		1491	983	1168

It is seen from the results that less runoff was produced in R17 as compared with R9. The reason was that in case of R17, soil was more dry when the monsoon rains arrived. There was high loss of moisture due to evapotranspiration. However, it is not possible to generalize the results based on this analysis because the response depends on the properties of vegetation regarding interception of input precipitation and the water requirements of the vegetation. In case of agriculture, the behaviour will very much depend upon the type of crop.

Furthermore, the vegetation type is likely to influence the soil hydraulic properties so that the hydraulic conductivity would be high for forest than for agriculture areas having the same soil types. This effect is not taken into account here.

3.5   Impact of Land Use on Hydrologic Regime

As mentioned earlier, the change in land use will lead to change in a host of associated parameters. The sum total effect of the changes will be the cumulative effect of the individual influences.

4.0   CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings arrived at above, the following conclusions can be made regarding the effects of soil properties and land use change on the hydrologic regime of a micro catchment.

a) Soil Depth -- Reduction of soil depth will lead to higher yield from the catchment and more flashy response (higher peaks). In case of shallow soils, the soil properties do not have significant effect on basin response.

b) Soil Properties -- Higher soil conductivity leads to less runoff and less spiky hydrograph. Shape of soil moisture retention curve mainly affects the response during early part of wet season. The degree of effect depends on the shape of the curve.

c) Change in vegetation -- the amount of ET losses will change -- it will increase or decrease depending on the related crop characteristics, viz., leaf area index (higher losses with higher index and vice versa), depth and size of roots, and the growth characteristics. Further, vegetation change may affect potential evapotranspiration and soil hydraulic properties, but this effect has not been analyzed in this study.

d) Change in surface roughness characteristics -- This will lead to change in degree of flashiness of catchment response.

The composite effect of various changes for a real catchment will be combination of all individual effects along with their interaction for various elemental units. It would therefore, be desirable to carry out studies on similar lines for real catchments. Furthermore, it would be desirable to carry out studies of the hydrological effects of land use change on catchments with adequate data representing both the "pre" and the "post" land use conditions so that the model predictions could be validated against field data.

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