

EDITORIAL

Soils constitute the foundation of food supply system and form an important basis for human existence. There is close relation between the level of management of basic resources of soil and water and the growth of human civilization. Various issues relating to management of soil resources, their conservation and development are of crucial importance. Balanced ecosystem comprising of soil, water, plant environment, human and animal population is essential for the welfare and survival of mankind. With the increasing pressures of growing population and man's activities in harnessing water resources, there is corresponding increase and over exploitation of ecosystem. The problem of sedimentation of reservoirs and valley lands, rise in river bed levels due to aggradation, river bed erosion due to degradation etc. are some of the manifestations of imbalance and improper management of ecosystem.

India has shown awareness of conservation of land, water and plant resources since the dawn of civilization as evinced by hymns to earth, water, and trees in vedas. Sustainable use, the cardinal principle of watershed management was implied in the ancient practices and way of life. However, the need to satisfy demands for human population exceeding 880 million and animal population exceeding 450 million has resulted in an unbearable pressure on our land resources. India supports today nearly 16 per cent of the world population on 2.45 per cent of the world area. Various parts of the country are facing the problems of soil erosion and land degradation. Useful live storage capacities in the reservoirs are also threatened with sedimentation problems.

The severity of the problem and immediate need for appropriate soil water conservation measures have been the focus of attention of all concerned with land and water resources development. This issue of "Jalvigyan Sameeksha" has been devoted to the theme of "Erosion & Sedimentation". Important aspects covering soil erosion, sediment yield, use of remote sensing techniques, sediment transport and reservoir sedimentation have been covered by different authors. It is hoped that the ideas, technology and information provided would be useful for all concerned.

S. M. SETH