



A REVIEW

Strategies and research issues for soil and water conservation in India: A comprehensive review

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Abstract : Despite years of study and substantial investment in remediation and prevention, soil erosion continues to be a major environmental problem with regard to land use in India and elsewhere around the world. Furthermore, changing climate and/or weather patterns are exacerbating the problem. Our objective was to review past and current soil conservation programmes in India to better understand how production-, environmental-, social-, economic- and policy-related issues have affected soil and water conservation and the incentives needed to address the most critical problems. We found that to achieve success in soil and water conservation policies, institutions and operations must be co-ordinated using a holistic approach. Watershed programmes have been shown to be one of the most effective strategies for bringing socio-economic change to different parts of India. Within both dryland and rainfed areas, watershed management has quietly revolutionized agriculture by aligning various sectors through technological soil and water conservation interventions and land-use diversification. Significant results associated with various watershed-scale soil and water conservation programmes and interventions that were effective for reducing land degradation and improving productivity in different parts of the country are discussed. It has been demonstrated that one of the best methods for bringing socio-economic change to various regions of India is through watershed programming. By bringing together multiple sectors through technological soil and water conservation treatments and land-use diversification in both dryland and rainfed areas, watershed management has subtly revolutionised agriculture. Significant outcomes related to numerous watershed-scale soil and water conservation interventions and programmes that were successful in decreasing land degradation and boosting productivity in various regions of the nation are discussed.

Key Words : Control of soil erosion, Cover cropping, Conservation agriculture, Environmental, Economic, Social issues

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