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A REVIEW

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Natural resource management and their conservation: Critical issues for nutritional security by hill agriculture

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Natural resources of an area are the gifts of nature that support all development activities. Soils, water resources and the natural biota comprise the basic primary natural resources that influence agriculture. These days, underutilization of natural resources is the case only when technological limitations restrict resource use. In most of the cases, where technology has been developed, natural resources have been exploited to the extent of creating severe environmental concerns. This is because the ever increasing population and increasing per capita consumption of natural resources with development which has created a situation where every bit of available resources are being exploited subject to technological and infrastructural feasibility. As technologies get upgraded, or newer technologies come into existence and infrastructural limitations are overcome, more and more natural resources become utilizable and susceptible to be overexploited. The objective of this composition is to

highlight the critical issues in intermediate zone hill agriculture in Jammu and Kashmir that are of significance for conservation and management of natural resources.

Issue I: Rainfed agriculture :

Less than 10 per cent of the cultivated area in intermediate zone of J&K is irrigated (Anonymous, 2011). Hence, the abundance and distribution of rainfall is of utmost importance for agriculture. The distribution of mean annual rainfall in Rajouri is presented in Fig.1, which indicates that annually there are two crests in the mean distribution curve coinciding with the *Kharif* (larger crest) and *Rabi* (smaller crest) seasons, respectively. Thus, the rainfall distribution pattern is very suitable for growing both the *Rabi* and *Kharif* crops. The mean annual rainfall for the period 2004-2014 in Rajouri was 902 mm of which average rainfall during the *Kharif* months (April to October) was 624 mm and during *Rabi* months (November to March) was 278 mm. However, as evident from Fig. 1, the actual distribution of rainfall during various years is erratic with non-uniform period of drought and rains in various months. At the same time, we see that there is no season with a complete drought as rains do occur at some point of time during the crop

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