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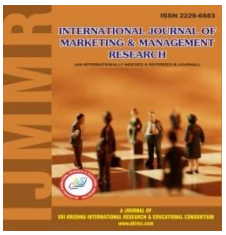

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF AGRICULTURE CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

Diversion of land from agriculture to non- agriculture uses adversely affects the growth in agriculture sector. Even the available land is subjected to soil-erosion of varying degrees and degradation problems of different magnitudes. Land being the major non-renewable natural resource is inelastic in nature. There is lot of pressure on land due to increasing population from the agricultural, industrial and housing sector. Land is subjected to soil erosion and land degradation problem due to rain or wind action and faulty cultivation practices resulting in loss of topsoil, which is the place where all nutrients are available. Water conservation and rainwater harvesting is most effective when taken up as part of watershed management. As one of the world's largest agrarian, India has a monsoon-dependent farming system, with large areas receiving inadequate rainfall. Moreover, much of this rainfall is restricted temporarily to few months while the rest of the year predominantly dries. Watershed development structures play a significant role in groundwater recharge. These structures enhance soil moisture regime, enrich soil fertility and thereby promote ecological balance through conservation of eco system. The watershed management approach requires every piece of land located in watershed to be treated with appropriate soil and water conservation measures.