

PREFACE

The study of land use with special reference to the agriculture is one of the important areas in the field of land use study. Out of the various type of land use, agricultural use has occupied more prominent position in the hilly area like South District

The South District of Sikkim occupies a unique position in the land utilization especially in terms of agricultural practice. The district is smallest amongst the four districts of the state, but has the second highest density of population. But the pace of infrastructural development has encroaches the good agricultural land and converted for other uses. In reality in the state 7000 hectares of agricultural and culturable land has been converted for the infrastructural development and urbanization process. The consumption of better agricultural land for purpose of urbanization is, thus, a great danger to the farmers; because the land withdrawn from agricultural use is either never returned to the farmers or even returned, it is so done only after a long lapse of time (Stapledon, 1940). This situation leads to the decreasing of agricultural land.

The scope of the present study to find out the underlying problems of the land use in relation to the conversion of good agricultural land to other use, which determined by the social needs and cultural advancement of the people of the district. The districts economy is entirely base on the agriculture. In the district good agricultural land is losing due to the infrastructural development on one hand and the changing to organic farming on the other influence the land use pattern and productivity of the land, which adversely affect to the economy of the district. These arises the need of appropriate remedial measures which can solved the underlying problems, otherwise the importance of agriculture will end as a mainstay of the economy of the district.

The work commence with the first chapter, which deals with the physical back ground of the study area. As the agricultural practice is control by host of physical factors such as, geology, relief, drainage, drainage

density, climate, soil and vegetation. This chapter deals with all the physical aspects of the study area.

The second chapter deals with demographic characteristics of the study area i.e. the population number, their growth, density of population, composition, workers participation in agriculture, literacy, age-sex structure and dependency ratio as all these directly and indirectly affect to the development of agricultural utilization of land.

The third chapter deals with general land use pattern, net sown area, cultivated land, culturable waste land, fallow land, forest cover, pasture land, area not available for cultivation, build up area, irrigated area and trend of their changes for the last fifteen years.

The fourth chapter deals with the changes of total crop area and its changes. Out of the total crops cultivated in the district ten crops i.e. maize, rice, wheat, pulse, oilseed, potato, ginger, cardamom, horticulture and vegetables crop area and their changes are studied for and their impact on agricultural development

The fifth chapter deals with the cropping pattern, crop concentration, crop combination, diversification, efficiency, productivity level and feature prospects of suitable combination were discuss.

The sixth chapter deals with the availability of infrastructural facilities for the agricultural development in the district viz. educational facility, health care facility, transport and communication, market, rural development, co-operative societies, financial institutions, and agricultural inputs are discuss in the chapter.

The seventh chapter deals with the identification of major problem for agricultural development in the district. The problems can be divided into three types, firstly physical problems mainly deals with topography, soil fertility and erosion, deforestation, rainfall sun shine, secondly institutional problems deals with land right and ownership, size of holding, land tenure, labour, mechanization, irrigation and financial inputs etc. The third socio-cultural problems deal with the constraints arising from the changes of socio-cultural outlook of the farmers.

The eight chapter deals with the review of the earlier, present and future strategy introduce for the agricultural development and their pitfall etc.

And finally the ninth chapter comprise of the problem based development strategy, suggestion and conclusion.

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