

Project title	Conversion of Paddy Land in Kerala
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Year	1994

Abstract

During the agricultural year 1992-93 only 58 percent of the land classified as 'Nilam' (Paddy land) was under paddy cultivation. The gross area under paddy during the year was accounted by 42 per cent of the area in autumn, 44 per cent of the area in winter and the remaining 14 per cent in summer.

Nearly 24 per cent of Nilam was cultivated with perennial crops. A district-wise analysis showed that more than half the area classified as Nilam was converted for perennial crops and non-agricultural uses. In 11 out of the 14 districts, more than 25 per cent of the paddy land was converted for perennial crop /non-agricultural uses. The rate of conversion of paddy lands to perennial crops/non-agricultural uses in the state was very high and was on the increase. Hence suitable measures were to be taken by Government to restrict the conversion of paddy lands. The measures suggested as an outcome of the study are given below:

1. Restriction of Conversion of paddy land for the following reasons.
 - a. For the upkeep of environment and to prevent water logging in low lying areas.
 - b. Rice being the staple food of the people in the state production of paddy and hence area under paddy should not decrease.
2. To provide proper and adequate incentives for paddy cultivation so that the gross area can be increased as suggested below.
 - a. Increase the net area under paddy cultivation from 3.33 hectares to 3.82 lakhs. Thus, the double crop paddy area could be increased from 2.12 lakh to 3.00 lakh hectares.
 - b. By providing irrigation facilities and special incentives, increase the area under triple crop from 13000 hectares to 40000 hectares.
3. In the state, the resurvey of land was in progress and when completed survey number-wise area under current paddy land in each taluk would be available. To get reliable taluk-wise estimate, a complete enumeration of paddy lands in every taluk was suggested to be taken up as and when the resurvey was completed in a taluk. Since the conversion of paddy land was a continuing phenomenon, the extent of conversion of paddy land should be assessed at intervals of ten years.

