

## LAND AS RESOURCE

- The most important natural resource, upon which all human activity is based since time immemorial, is land.
- Land resource is our basic resource.
- Throughout history, we have drawn most of our sustenance and much of our fuel, clothing and shelter from the land.
- It is useful to us as a source of food, as a place to live, work and play. It is a productive economic factor in agriculture, forestry, grazing, fishing and mining.
- It is considered as a foundation of social prestige and is the basis of wealth and political power

## LAND DEGRADATION

- Man's progress towards development has, however, considerably damaged our land resource base, probably since the dawn of civilization.
- Out of the total land area, as many as 175 million hectares suffer from degradation.
- Land degradation is caused largely by soil erosion, but also by water logging and excessive salinity.
- The most serious threat to the land is posed by deforestation.

## CONTD...

- The exponentially growing population in the country has placed immense pressure on the dwindling land resources, endangering the very survival of the biome as a whole.
- The high degree of degradation of existing land resources, the changing climate and increasing diversion of land from agricultural to non-agricultural uses have aggravated the problem.
- Consequently, the productivity of land has suffered to a great extent, sometimes beyond repair and per capita arable land is also decreasing with the progress of time.
- India, being a large agrarian society, has, therefore, an enormous task to meet the growing demands for food, fuel, fiber together with environmental security for its people in the coming years.

**Land use change** simply refers to the conversion of a piece of **land's use** by humans, from one purpose to another. For example, **land** may be converted from cropland to grassland, or from wild **land** (e.g. tropical forests) to human-specific **land uses** (e.g. palm oil plantations).

Opportunities and constraints for new **land uses** are created by local as well as national markets and policies. Global forces become the main determinants of **land-use change**, as they amplify or attenuate local factors.

Population pressure, demand for fuel wood and construction material, agricultural expansion and policy and **tenure** insecurity were the **major** driving forces behind the **land use/cover change**.

There are many **types of land use** we need to consider when studying the topic. Those **types** include recreational, transport, agricultural, residential, and commercial.