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ijonstnsro@gmail.com,editorijons@gmail.com-www.tnsroindia.org.in

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Editorial



Every year 75 billion tons of fertile soil is lost to land degradation. Similarly 12 million hectares of land are lost every year to desertification and drought alone. This is an area that could produce 20 million tons of grain. Desertification and land degradation cause USD 42 billion in lost

earnings each year. There is no direct cause and effect in the process of land degradation in the drylands. The drivers of desertification interact in complex ways. They change over time and vary by location. Direct drivers are climatic, especially low soil moisture, rainfall patterns and evaporation. Indirect drivers are mostly human derived, and include poverty, technology used, global and local market trends and sociopolitical dynamics. Poverty is both a cause and consequence of land degradation.

Applying sustainable land management practices to combat desertification and to recover and rehabilitate land; soil, water and vegetation Sustainable land management refers to the multi-functional use of land, and is



contrasted to mono-functional land uses. The application of SLM has been shown to increase yields by between 30-170%.

The United Nations General Assembly declared the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification, which runs from January 2010 to December 2020 to promote action that will protect the drylands. The Decade is an opportunity to make critical changes to secure the long-term ability of drylands to provide value for humanity's well-being. The goals and objectives of the Decade flow directly from the General Assembly's resolution A/RES/64/201. The motivation for this resolution was the Parties' concern about the deteriorating situation of desertification in all regions, which has far-reaching implications for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the eradication of poverty and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Vijikumar Sahadevan
Editor in Chief

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