

ASSESSMENT OF CHANGE IN LAND USE PATTERN OF KANTHALLOR PANCHAYATH, IDUKKI, KERALA

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Abstract: Kerala is highly vulnerable to climate change effects due to its high dependency of climate sensitive agriculture, fisheries, forest, and water resource and health sectors. Climate together with soil, natural resources, human resources and economic considerations, determines land use patterns. The present study examined the changes in cropping pattern in Kanthallor Panchayath from 2010-2018. The land use change over a period from 2010 to 2018 was tabulated from the available Land use maps by Kerala State Land Use Board and the land use map generated using Google Earth Pro by creating *kml* file. It was found that total forest area including all kinds of forest has been reduced from 77.28 sq.km to 72.61 sq.km. It can also be seen that the area under Eucalyptus has increased from 7.70 Km² to 9.96 Km². But the area under Sandal wood remains unchanged as there are legal restrictions and the entire area is under government control. There was a drastic increase in area under vegetables from 2.36Km² to 10.15Km² within a span of eight years which indicate that the main livelihood option is annual cool season vegetables and there is a good market support from the Agricultural Department. The traditional food grain crops cultivated in the panchayath were Rice, Wheat and Millets which were now replaced by vegetables and sugarcane.

Keywords: Kerala, Kanthallor panchayath, Land use pattern, Land use map

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