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Assessment of Impact of grazing by small ruminants on natural resources

Dehra Dun 16 May 2013. Dr P. K. Mishra (Director, CSWCR&TI) inaugurated a two-day National Workshop on 'Assessment of impact of grazing by small ruminants on natural resources and surrounding environment of pasture/rangelands located in different agro-climatic regions', organized by the Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute on 15 May 2013. He emphasized that while satisfying increasing and changing demands for animal food products, and at the same time sustaining the natural resource base (soil, water, and plant biodiversity) and environment are major challenges being faced by world agriculture now-a-days. Livestock grazing can result in impacts on commons, and with degradation of common grazing lands the animals are unable to meet their requirement from grazing alone, the situation worsen in event of drought which is a common phenomenon in this part of the world. Therefore, a well-managed grazing provides greater amounts of nutrients to the livestock with low environmental impacts.

The draft project proposal with objectives– Assessment of the productivity and plant diversity of grazing land, evaluation of grazing induced changes in soil properties, quantification of runoff and soil loss from grazing land, study of the grazing behaviour, preferences for plant biota and productivity of small ruminants under varying grazing pressure on grassland/ pasture and nutrient budgeting of grazing land under different grazing management options– was developed. On the successful completion the scientific and technical outcome of the project will be useful in developing strategies for developing well-managed rangelands and pastures. Such rangelands and pastures will be able to support small ruminants and generate higher income to livestock farmers on sustainable basis and at the same time maintain healthy watersheds, increased carbon sequestration and greater plant biodiversity.

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