

SOIL EROSION AND CONSERVATION IN UTTAR
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Soil erosion in Uttar Pradesh

Soil erosion is a natural process. It refers to wearing away of a field's top soil by the natural physical forces of water, wind and human activities, like farming and deforestation. Soil erosion has become a serious problem in Uttar Pradesh, as a large tract of land has lost its fertility because the top soil of this land has been washed away due to erosion. Thus, only hard soil with Kankar has been left on this land. Gully erosion occurs when water is channeled across unprotected land and washes away the soil along the drainage lines. Under natural conditions, runoff is moderated by vegetation which generally holds the soil together, protecting it from excessive runoff and direct rainfall. In Uttar Pradesh, the worst affected districts are Agra, Etawah and Jalaun.

In Uttar Pradesh the erosion is done by wind in desert

region, by waterlogging in Terai region and by deforestation in vegetative regions. For the agricultural point of view, soil erosion needs to be checked as soil is formed in thousands of years which is a very long time. Due to soil erosion the fertile soil and important elements get damaged. The Chambal and Yamuna rivers are responsible for ravine erosion. Ravine erosion is most common in Etawah district. Wind erosion is more frequent in summer season as soils dry up in this season and become more prone to wind erosion. The Western region of Uttar Pradesh including Agra, Mathura and Etawah are the most prone regions of wind erosion.

Soil Conservation

Soil conservation is very important in order to stop soil depletion or erosion as soil is very essential to sustain life. *In order to check soil erosion following steps should be taken:*

- Afforestation should be done in such places which are devoid of vegetation cover.
- Terraced cultivation should be done.
- Certain farming practices like no-till farming and contour ploughing should be done which help prevent loosening of soil.

- Crop rotation should be done in which a series of dissimilar crops are grown in an area, to help in the improvement of soil.
- Constructing dams in such areas where flooding is very common as flooding of rivers had been the major cause of soil erosion in Uttar Pradesh.