

**Environment, Ecological and Socio-economic Impact of
Introduced Crops in Western Himalaya:
A Case Study of Kullu Valley**

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KEYWORDS Western Himalaya. Traditional Subsistence Farming. Transition Phase. Horticulture. Sustainable Development

ABSTRACT This paper describes and analyses the impact of introduction of high yielding varieties of food crops and fruit bearing trees in the area of once traditionally operated land use system in Kullu district of Western Himalaya. It has been found that indigenous agricultural practices that have evolved locally and have been inherited for generations are now gradually being replaced with the introduction of new on-farm technologies and subsequently has left the system in 'transition phase'. The introduction of apple, in particular, has imposed an adverse impact over the system. It has not only accelerated the immense pressure over the forest but has tremendously reduced the crop and animal diversity: some of the crops have already disappeared from the area. The study also suggests that commensuration with the environmental and ecological imbalances as widely caused by apply introduction, the traditional on-farm based sustainable development approach should find the highest priority in village level development planning and for overall ecological and sound economical development of the area. Farmers also want the subsidy as provided by government agency to continue, as subsidy over some items has presently been withdrawn. Farmers perceived that improvement in infrastructural facilities, market and storage facilities and value added technological innovation in the area would certainly increase sustainability. About thirty-four percent farmers feel that people participatory approach is urgently required to heal the damage caused to the traditional system because of introduction of apple in the area.