

ชื่อเรื่อง

Grasses in Soil Conservation in India (Focus on Vetiver)

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Abstract

India has made major investments in soil and water conservation in arable lands, in watershed management in hilly areas, and in interface forestry programme. These activities were initiated with the start of the First Five Year Plan (1951-56). India has supported these programmes with Research and Development activities by establishing a large network of Resource Management Institutes and their numerous Regional Research Centres in different agro-climatic zones. In these activities grasses have played a very important role.

With the “rediscovery” of vetiver and its vigorous promotion, vetiver has been adopted and included as a biological control measure in some large-scale development programmes. The paper would attempt to describe India’s experience with this grass.

While one could easily agree that it is a very useful grass for soil conservation, one has to be careful not to oversell it. In this context one may recollect the high pressure selling of a “Miracle Multipurpose Nitrogen Fixing Tree” *Leucaena leucocephala*, in the very recent past, and the disastrous flop it proved to be. It is hoped that a suggestion to avoid using the word “Miracle” may be accepted as a contribution towards correct evaluation of an otherwise useful practice.