Chapter 6: Resources and Development

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Exercise 6.1 — Multiple Choice Questions

Q1 Which one of the following is the main cause of land degradation in Punjab? (a) Intensive cultivation (b) Deforestation (c) Over irrigation (d) Overgrazing

SOLUTION

In the states of Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, over irrigation is responsible for land degradation.

Excess irrigation causes water logging, which increases the salinity and alkalinity in the soil, damaging its fertility.

Answer: (c) Over irrigation

Q2 In which one of the following states is terrace cultivation practised? (a) Punjab (b) Plains of Uttar Pradesh (c) Haryana (d) Uttarakhand

SOLUTION

In terrace cultivation, steps are cut out on the slopes to make terraces, and terrace cultivation restricts erosion.

The western and central Himalayas have well developed terrace farming, so among the given options it is practised in the hilly state of Uttarakhand.

Answer: (d) Uttarakhand

Q3 In which of the following states black soil is predominantly found? (a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Rajasthan (d) Jharkhand

SOLUTION

Black soil is typical of the Deccan trap (Basalt) region and covers the plateaus of Maharashtra, Saurashtra, Malwa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

Among the given options, it is predominantly found in Maharashtra.

Answer: (b) Maharashtra

Exercise 6.2 — Answer the following questions in about 30 words

Q1 Name three states having black soil and the crop which is mainly grown in it.

SOLUTION

Black soil, also known as regur soil, covers the plateaus of Maharashtra, Saurashtra, Malwa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

Three states having black soil are Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Black soil is ideal for growing cotton, which is why it is also known as black cotton soil.

Answer: Three states: Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. The crop mainly grown in it is cotton.

Q2 What type of soil is found in the river deltas of the eastern coast? Give three main features of this type of soil.

SOLUTION

Alluvial soil is found in the eastern coastal plains, particularly in the deltas of the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krishna and the Kaveri rivers.

Three main features: (1) It consists of various proportions of sand, silt and clay. (2) It contains adequate proportions of potash, phosphoric acid and lime, which are ideal for the growth of sugarcane, paddy, wheat and other cereal and pulse crops. (3) Being very fertile, regions of alluvial soil are intensively cultivated and densely populated.

Answer: Alluvial soil. Features: made of sand, silt and clay; rich in potash, phosphoric acid and lime; very fertile and ideal for sugarcane, paddy and wheat.

Q3 What steps can be taken to control soil erosion in the hilly areas?

SOLUTION

Soil erosion in hilly areas can be controlled by contour ploughing — ploughing along the contour lines to decelerate the flow of water down the slopes.

Steps can be cut out on the slopes to make terraces; terrace cultivation restricts erosion, and the western and central Himalayas have well developed terrace farming.

Large fields can be divided into strips, with strips of grass left to grow between the

crops to break the force of the wind (strip cropping), and rows of trees called shelter belts can be planted to create shelter.

Answer: Contour ploughing, terrace cultivation, strip cropping and planting shelter belts of trees.

Exercise 6.3 — Answer the following questions in about 120 words

Q1 Explain land use pattern in India and why has the land under forest not increased much since 1960-61?

SOLUTION

Land resources in India are used for the following purposes: forests; land not available for cultivation (barren and waste land, and land put to non-agricultural uses such as buildings, roads and factories); other uncultivated land excluding fallow land (permanent pastures and grazing land, land under miscellaneous tree crops and groves, and culturable waste land); fallow lands (current fallow, and other than current fallow); and net sown area, which is the physical extent of land on which crops are sown and harvested.

The use of land is determined both by physical factors such as topography, climate and soil types, and by human factors such as population density, technological capability, culture and traditions.

The land under forest has not increased much since 1960-61 because the forest area is far lower than the desired 33 per cent of geographical area outlined in the National Forest Policy (1952). Growing population and the demand for land for agriculture, settlements, roads, industry and other non-agricultural uses have prevented any significant increase in the forest cover.

Answer: Land is used for forests, non-agricultural uses, pastures, fallow land and net sown area; forest land has barely increased since 1960-61 as it stays far below the desired 33 per cent target due to rising demand for land for agriculture and non-agricultural uses.

Q2 How have technical and economic development led to more consumption of resources?

SOLUTION

Resources are a function of human activities. Human beings transform material available in the environment into resources using technology, and a higher level of technological development enables people to exploit and use resources on a much larger scale.

The history of colonisation reveals that the higher level of technological development of the colonising countries helped them exploit the resources of

other regions and establish their supremacy over the colonies — showing how technology drives greater resource consumption.

It was believed that resources are free gifts of nature, so human beings used them indiscriminately. This has led to major problems: depletion of resources for satisfying the greed of a few individuals, accumulation of resources in few hands dividing society into haves and have-nots, and global ecological crises such as global warming, ozone layer depletion, environmental pollution and land degradation. Thus technical and economic development together have accelerated the consumption of resources.

Answer: Better technology lets humans exploit resources on a larger scale, and development raises needs and living standards; together they cause indiscriminate, greater consumption — leading to depletion, unequal accumulation and ecological crises.