

1179. **Samra, J.S. and Sikka, A.K. 1998.** Participatory watershed management in India. Selected Paper, 9th ISCO Conf. "Towards Sustainable Land Use: Furthering Cooperation between People and Institutions". In: *Advances in Geoecology* 31, Vol. II. (Eds.) H.R.Blume, H.Eger, E.Fleischhauer, A.Hebbel, C.Reij, K.G.Steiner, Catena Verlag GMBH, 35447, Reiskirchen, Germany: 1145-1150.

Sustainability, replicability and equity in the management of environmental resources through people's participation has engaged attention of researchers, NGOs and international donor agencies for quite some time. Limited initial financial investments and community organization inputs were made to create common use resources and to improve common as well as private property resources of a village. Participatory watershed management programmes through local level institutions increased income from the common as well as private property resources and provided livelihood gathering opportunities for the rural people. Voluntary social fencing against uncontrolled grazing and felling of trees improved biomass production and biodiversity of the community owned forest land. Harvesting of runoff rain from community land, its storage and equitable use increased productivity of private farm lands severalfolds. Many environmentally-positive benefits associated with reduced soil erosion in the catchment and storage of runoff were also realized. Encouraging results of the watershed management programme suggest the adoption of an incentive-based and community driven 'bottom-up approach' for managing degraded watersheds on a sustainable basis. The payback period of financial investments made in participatory approaches varies from 5 to 7 years.