

This study looks at the current situation of water resources in selected meso-scale catchments of the HHH in a biophysical and socioeconomic context. It focuses primarily on the Jhikhu Khola catchment in Kabhrepalanchok District in the middle mountains of Nepal and compares the results with those in the Yarsha Khola catchment in Dolakha District in Nepal as well as catchments in China, India, and Pakistan. The study showed that water resources are not actually scarce in the selected catchments, but a combination of water management issues and marked seasonality has led to perceptions of water scarcity. Land cultivation was beneficial and supported the reduction of minor to medium flood events. Major events are natural phenomena, and their effects could be managed by effective downstream planning. Soil erosion on agricultural land is often seen as a major issue in the middle mountains, but was of only minor concern to the farmers in the study areas. High sediment loads at the catchment outlet were mainly caused by stream bank erosion, unstable road alignment and severely degraded areas.

The publication is intended to contribute to increased understanding of water resources and water-related processes such as soil erosion and land degradation, and will help those working on integrated catchment development that focuses on reducing water-induced land degradation and the degradation of water resources.

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