

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Erosion in Trinidad is very extensive - both potentially and actually (Hardy 1942) (Cater (1939)). The problems it presents has to be tackled rapidly and thoroughly if future generations of Trinidadians are not going to be left with a very poor heritage and insufficient productive land for their growing needs, not to mention the question of water which is intimately tied up with it.

Quoting from Hardy's article on Erosion in Trinidad, with reference more especially to the Central Range area:

"Sheet erosion affects the steeper slopes of the poorer grades of clay soil, but the most conspicuous manifestation of earth movements is land creep (including soil creep, earth flow and occasional debris slide). Movement is greatly enhanced during periods of heavy rain, during the wet season. The presence of gypsum outcrops often lubricates the slopes and instances are known in the Central Range cacao growing areas of parts of fields moving downhill, piling the cacao trees into valleys or roads. The gypsum sub-soil thus exposed is useless for cacao growing: it is generally planted with fodder grasses, bamboo or some tree crops such as Teak". (Hardy 1942).

The Agricultural Department being fully aware of the problem is laying out a series of projects designed to investigate the extent of erosion in different localities and how it can best be combatted.