PRODUCTION OF HALOPHYTE SHRUBS ON DEGRADED ARID LANDS IN PAKISTAN

Sadaqat Hayat Hanjra, Muhammad Abdullah**, Muhammad Akram Kahlown*** and Nazar Hussain Khilji*****

ABSTRACT

Atriplex (salt bushes) and Maireana (blue bushes) species were grown on saline as well as degraded lands in a series of adaptation trials conducted from 1988 to 1993 in two phases at 8 sites in Pakistan. The overall trials revealed that the Atriplex genotypes were more productive than Maireana genotypes. The most promising species was A. lentiformis, exhibiting excellent forage and firewood production. Other species with great promise were A. amnicola, A. undulata, A. bunburyana and A. halimus. The biomass produced from these bushes was extensively tested for acceptability and palatability both in small and large ruminants. The results indicated that the salt bushes have high merit for replacing green fodder up to 50% and were particularly suitable for feeding during crunch periods.

Keywords: Arid lands, Degraded land, Halophyte shrub, Forage, Fuel wood.