

SOIL FORMATION PROCESSES

MINERALISATION



- ↳ **Definition:** process where organic matter in the soil is broken down by microorganisms into mineral nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (Turnover: organic matter → inorganic)
 - ↳ **Microorganisms:** Tiny organisms such as bacteria and fungi break the organic matter → simple mineral (inorganic) compounds.
 - ↳ **Nutrients:** Organic matter → converted to mineral nutrients + taken up by plants + growth and development
- Decomposer (nitrates, phosphates & sulphates) - carbon, hydrogen + oxygen → inorganic - CO₂ & H₂O
- ↳ **Environmental requirements:** suitable temperature, humidity, and a pH balance favourable for the activity of microorganisms.
 - ↳ **Importance for Plants:** nutrient release - soil fertility + healthy plant growth.

HUMIFICATION



- ↳ **Definition:** transformation - plant + animal residues → humus
- ↳ **Organic matter deposition:** Dead plants, animals and microorganisms + into the soil, retaining organic matter in the upper layers of the soil.
- ↳ **Decomposition:** Microorganisms such as bacteria and fungi break down the organic matter by decomposition processes (① simple - sugars + starch; ② proteins + cellulose; ③ tannin)
- ↳ **Formation of humus:** decomposition → organic matter (breakdown of organic compounds) + humus + dark-coloured, rich substances (not easily decomposed)
- ↳ **Humification:** accumulation of humus in the soil bearing + improves soil fertility + 1 water retention and nutrients.
- ↳ **Depth distribution:** Humification occurs in the **topsoil**, which extends deep into the horizons of the soil.

LEACHING

- ↳ **Definition:** movement of soil particles through water passing through the soil (freely - downward)
- ↳ **Requirements for Leaching:** Presence of water that can pass through the soil - freely (e.g. rainfall or irrigation) + Soil structure - water permeability (sand - large pores)
- ↳ **Factors That Promote Leaching:**
 - Poor or no vegetation cover that promotes erosion.
 - Steep slopes that allow water to drain down quickly.
 - Loose soil structure that is easily moved by water.
- ↳ **Impacts of Leaching:**
 - Loss of fertile topsoil + plinthite formation.
 - Clogging of rivers and streams with mud.
 - Reduction in water quality & nutrients (metal ions+)
 - Dissolved materials - deep groundwater / surface water



PLINTHITE formation

- ↳ **Definition:** movement of the groundwater table up and down over the seasons → groundwater table rises during wet seasons and decreases during dry seasons (hot, humid drafts - tropical climate)
- ↳ **Influence:**
 - wet seasons + increase rainfall the groundwater table + deeper lying soil layers + water (waterlogged) + chemical changes (iron → ferri)
 - dry season - lower table (iron → ferri)
- ↳ **Formation of Plinth layers:** Repeated movements of the groundwater table + deposits of soil particles and minerals at different depths + plinth layers → succession of different soil textures and colours
- ↳ **Plinthite** - oxidized iron horizon + red colour (aluminium - + iron bands left behind after leaching of silicates from **surface soil**)
- ↳ **Leach** - silicate (silicon) + leached downwards - potassium, calcium + magnesium ions easily leached
- ↳ **Physical Properties of Soil** water retention, drainage, and air space between soil particles

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Scientific and Technical Personnel in Industry United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1969 **Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics**, 1960 Scientific and Technical Personnel in American Industry, 1959 Federal Register, 2001-11 *Advancement in life, health and agriculture science volume -II* Dr. Mahesh K Seth, Dr. Udaybhan A. Yadav, Ms. Prapti Sudan, 2025-02-22 **Objective Agricultural science** Brajendra, Kailash Chand Verma, 2012-07-04 The number of objective questions representing from vast canvas of agriculture runs into thousands thus covering a wide spectrum of subject matter The book begins with general agriculture and almost covers exhaustive outlines of all the important facts Any specific interest for furthering the knowledge is facilitated by twenty different sub subjects of agricultural sciences namely Agriculture General Ecology Plant Genetics Resources Agricultural Meteorology Farm Machinery Engineering Soil Science Agricultural Extension Genetics Soil Water Conservation Engineering Agricultural Economics ICT Remote Sensing in Agriculture Statistics Agronomy Microbiology Watershed Engineering Biotechnology Nematology Model and IARI Sample Papers Breeding Pathology Entomology Physiology Environmental Science The questions in the specific chapters range chapters from basics to some in depth conceptual questions The questions have been further facilitated with answers being given at the same place Finally there are model test papers to particularly address the concerns of examinees The book is exhaustive and covers the entire gamut of examination pattern in agriculture and will

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