PREFACE
Shifting agriculture (locally called jhum) is the chief land use system of the tribals of the north-eastern hill region of India. This is a land use system still prevalent in the humid tropics all over the world. With rapid deterioration in this land use practice with shortening of the shifting agriculture cycle (length of the fallow phase between two successive croppings on the same site), there is need, not only to look at possibilities of redeveloping this system through agricultural inputs and through diversion to other land use practices such as valley cultivation which depends upon nutrient wash-out from the hill slopes and therefore is self sustainable. Diversification to plantation/cash crop systems is another possibility. During the present study, therefore, all these land use systems have been evaluated considering shifting agriculture of the hill Miris, highly sophisticated wet rice cultivation of the Apatanis and the Government sponsored Plantation/cash crop cultivation introduced for the Khasi tribe in north-east India.

The thesis starts with a General Introduction surveying the literature pertaining to the work. The results are presented in the subsequent six chapters, two
dealing with ecology of plantation/cash crops of the khasis of Meghalaya. The next three chapters deal with the ecology of wet rice cultivation of the Apatanis and the one following deals with the shifting agriculture system of the hill Miris, both of Arunanchal Pradesh.

Though the key element in all the six chapters is the land use system, it was most appropriate to link it with the functions of animal husbandry and domestic sector of the village. Each of these six chapters has its own Discussion of results followed by summing up done in a following chapter on General Discussion. The literature cited is all presented towards the end.