1.1 INTRODUCTION

History of mankind has been closely related with natural resource. The dependence of development of mankind's progress on land resources is greater than that of any organism, his restless pursuit of comfort and security has resulted in increased stress on land resource. To meet the demands of large population means the need for more food production, energy, water requirement, better civic amenities for maintaining quality of life. This creates significant changes in existing landuse pattern in geographical locale.

Landuse refers to man's activities and various uses, which are carried on land (such as agriculture, settlements, industry etc.). Much of the concern about rapid population increase in developing countries reflects fears of converting of natural landscape into cultural landscape to a large extent which created the problem of degradation of natural land resource (Lee et al., 1988). Despite the discussion based on simplistic notions regarding the relationship between population growth and its consequences for landuse (Uitto, 1995). Most representatives argument that population pressure might drive farmers to innovate new land use practices and mitigate resource degradation (Boserup, 1965). Furthermore, various factors such as the physical environment, commercialization, social organization, institution change, and subsistence level, will be expected to influence the effects of population pressure on land use changes (Ohtsuka et al., 1998). An increasing population creates demands for food and better economic infrastructure which ultimately pressurized the existing land. Currently 75 percent of the earth's population lives on only 20 percent of the land (Harrison and Pearce, 2001). Thus, analysis of changes in landscape pattern may prove to be a practical and efficient approach to understanding human impacts on different landscapes.

The environment is essentially neutral, its role dependent on the stage of technology, type of culture and other characteristics of a changing society. For most of the earth's history, physical forces were the only agents of change; however a new agent of change is emerged in the form of human beings some four to five million years ago. Man is no longer product of his environment; he is