



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
**RIVERS FOR
FUTURE**

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A CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR STREAMS AND WATERSHEDS IN RIVERS OF KERALA FOR EFFECTIVE WATERSHED AND RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY IN CHALAKKUDY RIVER

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The paradigm shift natural resource management had been shifted to Watershed Based in early 1970s in Kerala but the conceptual and ecological shift for an integrated management assimilating the concept is still ambiguous. The Watershed atlas and classification of the 44 rivers into small watershed of 500ha i.e. Microwatersheds is the main document used. It is imperative that the area alone is not determine the property of a watershed but are determined the factors such as topography, slope, rainfall etc ultimately into the drainage density. A microwatershed in a flood plain is entirely different from a watershed with same area in hilly terrain. The streams were mapped for the Chalakkudy River and categorised into its orders (1st order, 2nd order etc.) All the tributaries were numbered clockwise manner and each streams were classified with letter indicating order and numbered. Hence properties of stream can be obtained form the code indicating the stream order and number. This is proposed as an addition to the classification of each microwatershed in the river basin for an effective landscape – river basin – watershed level resource management. This could be adapted to other river basins as well and can contribute to effective communication and standardisation of river subunits in a restoration process.

Keywords: Western Ghats, Stream classification, Ecology, Tropical