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b	/ b	c	/ b	c	b	/ b	/ b	
c	/ ab	b	c	/ b	/ b	/ b	/ b	
d	/ a	d	/ d	/ ab	b	/ b	/ b	
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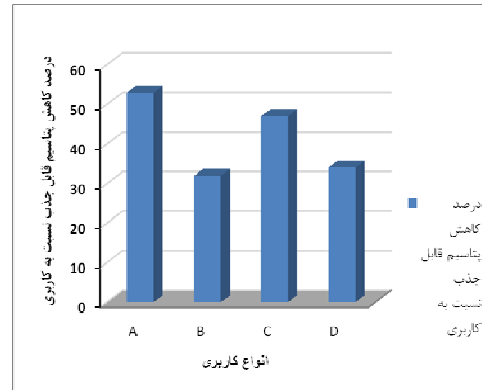
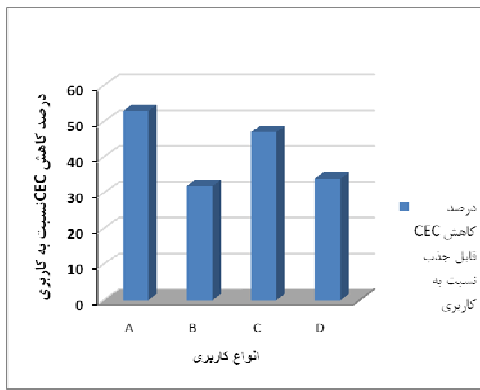
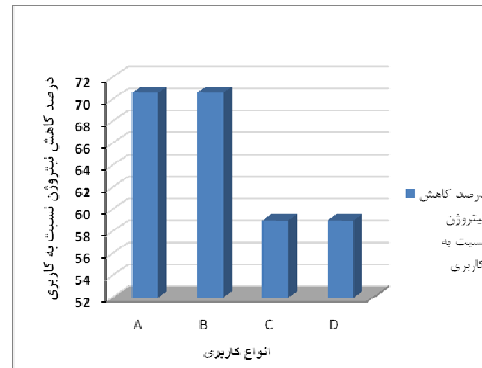
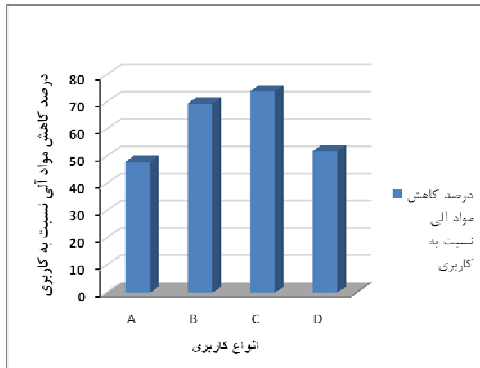
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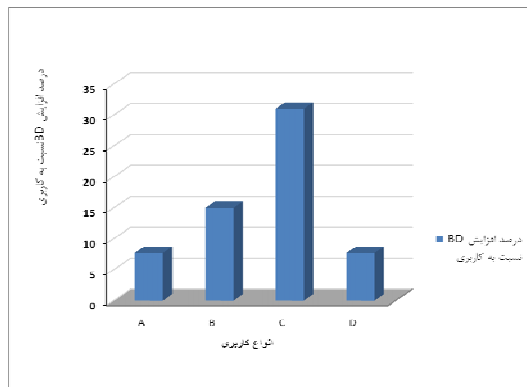
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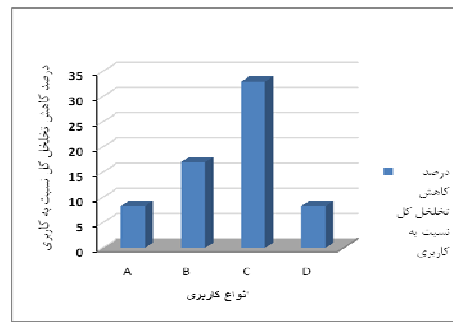
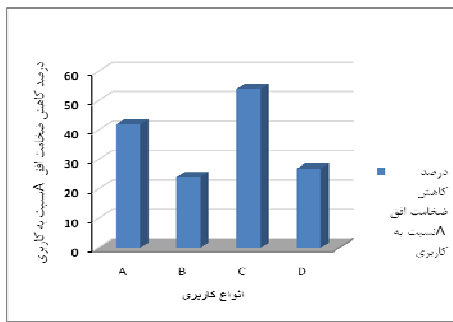
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## Studying the effects of land use change on soil physical and chemical quality indicators of surface horizons in rangelands of eastern Qazvin province

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### Abstract

Sustainable exploitation of land resources is directly affected by considering soil quality which finally will also conclude environmental protection. Therefore, assessing different soil quality aspects which are sensitive to various land management practices seems too important. In this study, some selected soil quality indicators have been compared in five land use systems including untouched rangelands, semi degraded rangelands due to grazing, rangelands that converted to rainfed agriculture, abandoned rainfed agriculture and an irrigated wheat farm in eastern Qazvin province, Iran. Samples were taken from the surface layer (A horizon) of soils in a completely randomized design with four replications. Statistical comparisons of the results revealed highest decrease in soil organic matter and total nitrogen owing to abandoned rainfed agriculture that showed 74% and 70% decline, respectively. Eventually the abandoned rainfed agriculture meets the sharpest slump in some soil properties such as cation exchange capacity (CEC), available phosphorous, total porosity and thickness of A horizon. Meantime the most increase in bulk density was also in recent land use. According to the results, the negative effects of inappropriate land use changes were led to soil productivity decline and will cause undesirable consequences in soil quality. So maintenance of soil quality is critical to environmental sustainability and this should be done on the basis of recognition all features that reduce its quality.

**Keywords:** Land use change, Soil quality, Rangelands, Land degradation, Qazvin