



Over 90% Delhiites feel climate change is for real: TERI survey

New Delhi, June 3: The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) has released the findings of its Environmental Survey 2014, which was initiated to gauge the perception, awareness, opinion and behaviour of people towards environment in India. This year, the survey covered eight cities, including Delhi, Mumbai, Coimbatore, Guwahati, Indore, Jamshedpur, Kanpur and Pune. The focus of the survey was on the general environment, and in particular, water and waste related issues.

In his video message on the occasion, Dr R K Pachauri, Director General, TERI, said: “This time, we have focused on cities which normally don’t get the kind of attention they deserve. If we want to bring about improvement in environmental quality, then the foundation on which any such effort would rest, would be on the awareness of the public. I hope through this survey we are able to bring about the level of awareness that really lays the foundation for action in the right direction. If we don’t, then we would all be taken over by urban blight.”

Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Distinguished Fellow, TERI, said: “TERI’s Environmental Survey 2014 of residents of eight major cities of the country provides usual insights into the attitude and perceptions regarding India’s environment. Urban respondents felt government and consumers played a positive role for improving the environment. The survey will be of immense value to policymakers in identifying areas where sound environment management policy can play a significant role, and where greater efforts of outreach and awareness building are necessary.”

The findings from Delhi

Over 90 per cent of the respondents stated that climatic changes were occurring; 95 per cent felt that temperature was increasing and 64 per cent stated that rainfall was declining. The response on wind patterns were mixed with 39 per cent stating a decline and 36 per cent stating extreme patterns. A large percentage of respondents stated that they did not see any change or expressed their ignorance on the intensity and

frequency of extreme events in the city. Only 15 per cent citizens viewed that there was no conflict between the objectives of environmental protections and development. Over 50 per cent favored prioritizing environment over development. Air quality, however, was stated to have worsened by over 50 per cent of the respondents.

Water

Almost 95 per cent of the respondents felt that water was being wasted and only five per cent viewed otherwise. Among reasons for wastage, 70 per cent stated that the pattern of usage by the citizens caused wastage as people use more than what was actually required. Leakages from the taps/faucets at home were identified as a reason by 60 per cent of the respondents whereas leakages during distribution were cited as the cause of wastage by more than 50 per cent of the respondents.

The respondents were asked questions about subsidy on water tariff, pricing and billing mechanism of water to assess their perceptions and views on such issues. Around 99 per cent of the respondents stated that they were aware of such a provision by the government. However, when asked whether they should pay the actual cost of water that reflected the scarcity value of water, 76 per cent of the respondents replied in negative. Only 17 per cent expressed their willingness to pay the actual cost of water and seven per cent did not have any opinion on this.

Waste Management

As far as the pattern of household waste disposal is concerned, a large percentage of respondents (87 per cent) stated that garbage was being collected from their homes and the remaining 13 per cent took it to a central point. When asked about their opinion on the best strategy to manage waste in the city, 75 per cent of the respondents selected generating less waste and 14 per cent favored improving waste recycling capacity. However, only six per cent thought segregating of waste could help, whereas the remaining five per cent felt levying a user charge could be the best strategy to manage waste in the city.

The survey suggest that 88 per cent of the respondents felt improper waste management had severe health impacts with another nine per cent stating the impact to be moderate. The survey attempted to understand the willingness of the citizens to segregate their household waste into bio-degradable and non-biodegradable categories before disposing it. It was found that only 35 per cent of the respondents were willing segregate waste.

The survey included questions on the behavioural responses towards recycling or reuse of waste. Paper, magazines and newspapers were the most commonly sold products as indicated by the respondents (95 per cent). Glass items, metallic items and cardboard

including tetra packs were other major products usually sold/sent for recycling/reuse by their households as stated by 85 per cent, 82 per cent and 66 per cent of the respondents respectively. About 19 and 12 per cent of the respondents sold or sent electronic waste and broken furniture, respectively for recycling.

Air Pollution

Interestingly, general awareness about the government policies on various aspects of environment was found to be fairly high in the city with a significant percentage of the respondents having some or other opinion on policies. However, the opinion on adequacy of the policies or their implementation was divided and varied across the sectors. On policies concerning air pollution, 40 per cent of the respondents felt that the policies were not implemented and 30 per cent stated that policies were well implemented, whereas 14 per cent found the policy inadequate.

Environment and Development

The responses varied across different socio-economic categories. A higher percentage of respondents from middle income localities (41 per cent) when compared to high and low income localities (24 per cent and 26 per cent respectively) stated that development should be prioritized over environment. Only four per cent of respondents from middle income localities stated that environmental protection and development could go hand in hand, whereas 13 per cent and 21 per cent for the respondents from low income and high income localities respectively has similar views. With regard to education, more than 57 per cent of the primary educated respondents reported that government should prioritize environment over development.

Health

Almost 99 per cent of the respondents agreed that the quality of environment had an immediate impact on health. When asked about the environmental problem having the most visible impact on people's health in city, 79 per cent of the respondents pointed towards air quality, 13 per cent stated water quality and remaining eight per cent selected waste.

Source of Information

Television was the most important source of information for the surveyed citizens on environmental issues as stated by 76 per cent of the respondents followed by national newspapers (41 per cent) and regional newspapers (22 per cent). Internet and informal conversations were chosen by 18 per cent and 16 per cent respondents respectively as the most important sources of information on environmental issues. Only four per cent

of the respondents indicated magazines as a source of information on environmental issues.

The survey comprised a sample of 11,214 citizens spread across the selected urban agglomerates of India. The urban agglomeration of Delhi includes cities from its neighbouring states – Noida and Ghaziabad from Uttar Pradesh and Gurgaon and Faridabad from Haryana, and has a total population of 21.6 million. The estimated per-capita income in Delhi for the year 2012-13 at current prices is Rs 2.01 lakh, which is the highest in the country and is three times the national average.

Perceptions from Delhi

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Over **50 per cent** favored prioritizing environment over development.

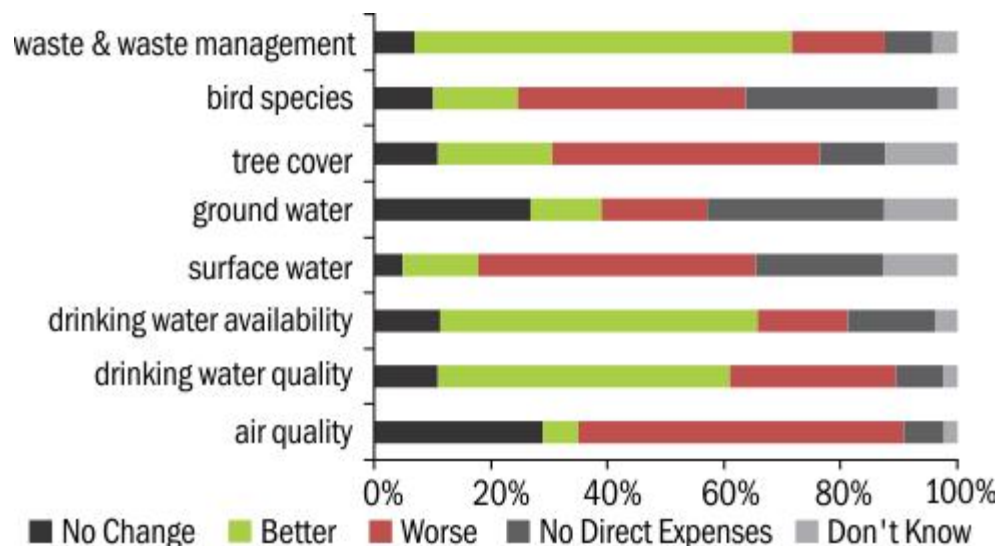
40 per cent felt that the air pollution control policies were not implemented

99 per cent of the respondents agreed that the quality of environment had an immediate impact on health

Only **17 per cent** expressed their willingness to pay the actual cost of water

97 per cent of the respondents were in favor of a ban on use of polythene bags

Perception about changes in the state of environment in Delhi over past five years



For detailed findings of the report, please click:

http://www.teriin.org/pdf/environmental_survey-report-14.pdf

About TERI

TERI is an independent, not-for-profit research institute focused on energy, environment, and sustainable development and devoted to efficient and sustainable use of natural resources.

Since its inception in 1974, TERI has emerged as an institution of excellence for its path-breaking research, and is a global brand widely respected by the political leaders, policy makers, corporate entities as well as the civil society at large.

For more details, please click: <http://www.teriin.org/index.php>

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