



## 87 PER CENT OF DIBRUGARH RESPONDENTS HOLD HUMAN ACTIVITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE: TERI SURVEY

- 99.6 per cent of Dibrugarh respondents feel an increase in temperature in the last five years.
- 87 per cent of Dibrugarh respondents identified human activity as an important factor for climate change.
- 52 per cent of Dibrugarh respondents felt that environmental protection and development go hand in hand.

**Dibrugarh: June 3, 2015:** The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) released the findings of the TERI Environmental Survey 2015 today. The survey aimed to gauge the perception, awareness, opinion and behavior of people towards environment in Indian cities.

This year's survey covered seven river cities in the country, namely: Delhi on River Yamuna, Varanasi on River Ganga, Cuttack on River Mahanadi, Surat on River Tapti, Jabalpur on River Narmada, Vijayawada on River Krishna, Dibrugarh on River Brahmaputra. The survey had three focus areas, - overall environment, health and environment, and environment in river cities.

The total sample size of the Dibrugarh Survey was 2038, and the respondents were distributed across different age groups, occupation, and educational background and income levels.

**Dr Leena Srivastava, Acting Director-General, TERI** said "*People's perceptions may or may not reflect reality; but they do reflect their confidence levels in governments, their engagement with common cause issues and their daily fears*".

**Mr Shri Prakash, Distinguished Fellow, TERI** said "*The report clearly brings out the deep concern of people for saving environment irrespective of age, income level and educational standard. Also, the successive annual environmental surveys indicate a growing majority of the people who believe that the development and environment protection should be given equal emphasis and not pitted against each other*".

### Key highlights from Dibrugarh

- 57 per cent of the respondents perceive the quality of river Brahmaputra to be 'fair', while 34 per cent perceive the river quality as 'poor'.
- 78 per cent of the respondents believe that individual citizens were responsible for the current quality.
- 78 per cent respondents perceived an increase in the amount of industrial effluents being dumped into the river in the last one year.
- 52 per cent of the respondents believed that both environment protection and development went hand in hand. However, 31 per cent of respondents prioritized environmental protection over development.
- 90 per cent of the respondents were optimistic about the success of "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" in improving the quality of the river in their city.

The launch of the survey was accompanied by a panel discussion on 'Citizen's Perception, Opinion, Behavior and Awareness about Rivers in Indian cities'. Panelists included Dr. Sejal Worah, Programme Director, WWF-India; Mr. Vimlendu Jha, Executive Director, SWECHHA and Dr Shyamala Mani, Professor, NIUA.

### **Environment in River Cities**

The survey assessed the perception of the people about the overall quality of river water. 57 per cent of the respondents perceived the quality of river water to be fair but 34 per cent perceived the same to be poor. While only 25 per cent of the casual/daily wage workers perceived the quality of river to be poor, 45 per cent of the student group perceived the same.

When questioned on the changing condition of the river in the last five years, majority of the respondents perceived that each indicator worsened during the period; for example, water color (by 60 per cent of the respondents ) and greenery along the banks of the river (by 96 per cent of the respondents). While 28 per cent respondents perceived no change in the water color, 10 per cent perceived an improvement. 86 per cent of the respondents informed that it is not safe to drink the water from the river without any treatment.

78 per cent of the respondents believe that the individual citizens are most responsible for maintaining the current quality and hygiene of the river while 20 per cent place the onus on local governments/Municipal Corporation.

### **Overall Environment**

More than 60 per cent of the sample perceived worsening of overall environmental indicators such as worsening of air quality (by 65 per cent of the respondents), surface water quality (by 62 per cent of the respondents) and surface water availability (by 60 per cent of the respondents).

94 per cent of the respondents observe worsening of green cover in Dibrugarh and 95 per cent observe the same for bird and insect species.

59 per cent respondents believe there is no government policy for climate change. Respondents who were aware of the existence of government policies for environmental concerns varied from 31 per cent in case of ground-water usage to 86 per cent in case of waste management. Respondents who perceived that government policy existed but were inadequate were 46 per cent for waste management, and 41 per cent for forest conservation.

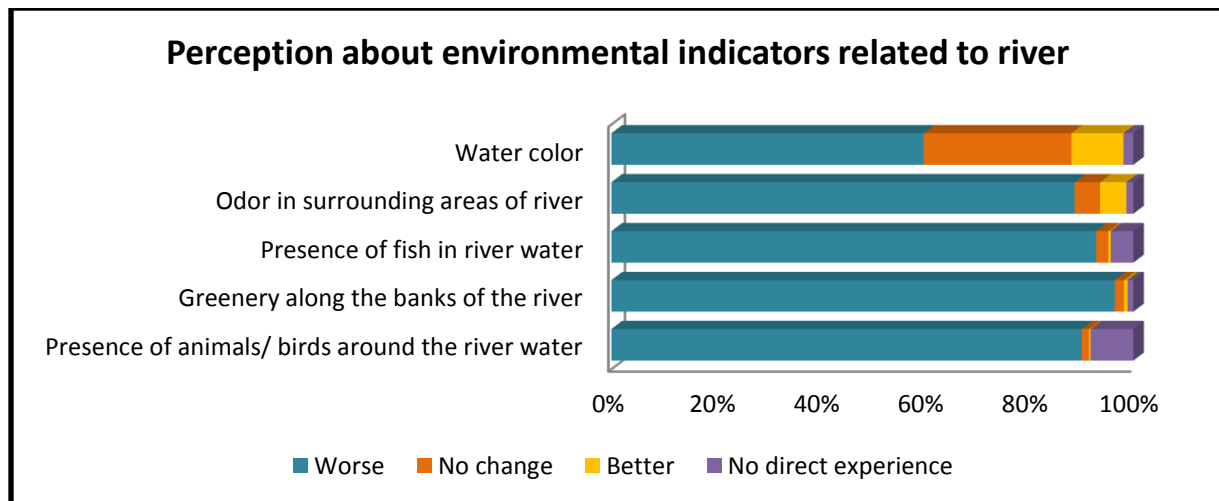
90 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan will improve the quality of river in the city. 'People's overwhelming support' was identified as the most important factor behind its success by these respondents. 30 per cent of the respondents who were not positive of the initiative, considered it to be a temporary program and felt that unless the initiative is of a longer duration, it cannot achieve its target.

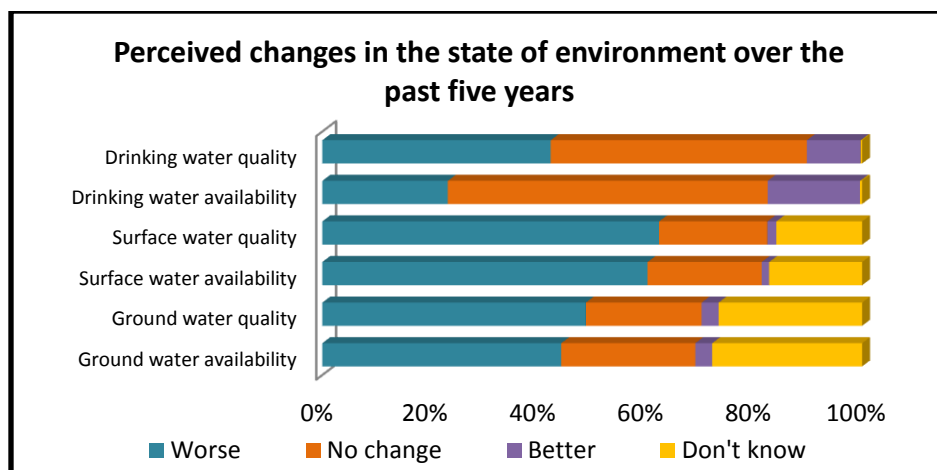
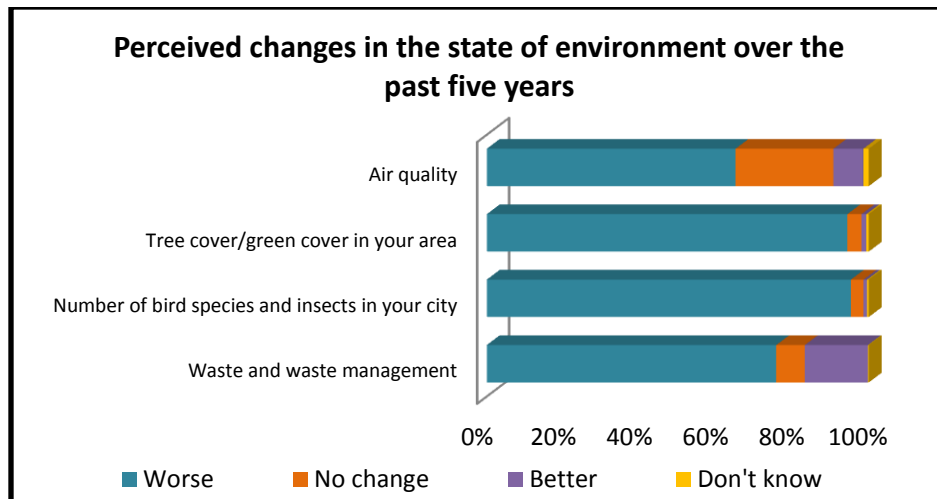
The respondents were asked to rank different stakeholders on the basis of their current efforts to help improve the environment. Rank one was given to local governments (by 40 per cent of the respondents), consumers (by 38 per cent of the respondents) and central/state government (by 17 per cent of the respondents). Rank 6 was given to non-profit organizations by 33 per cent respondents and the business/corporate sector by 29 per cent respondents.

### Health and Environment

99.6 per cent of the respondents in Dibrugarh felt that the quality of the environment had an immediate impact on human health. About 46 per cent of these respondents perceived that waste had the most visible impact on health followed by water quality (37 per cent) and air quality (17 per cent). When asked to identify the nature of health problem attributed to poor environmental quality, 70 per cent identified water-borne disease, 46 per cent identified skin diseases, and 33 per cent identified respiratory illnesses.

Television was identified as the most important source of information on issues related to environment, while national newspapers were identified as the second most important source of information by the survey respondents.





For detailed findings of the report, please click: <http://www.teriin.org/environmentalsurvey/>

**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 political leaders, policy makers, corporate entities as well as the civil society at large.

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