



98.8% COIMBATORE CITIZENS FEEL THAT GLOBAL WARMING IS OCCURING, SAYS TERI SURVEY

Coimbatore, June 3, 2014: The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) has released the findings of its 2014 Environmental Survey, which was initiated to gauge the perception, awareness, opinion and behavior of people towards environment in India. This year, the survey covered eight cities, including Delhi, Mumbai, Guwahati, Indore, Jamshedpur, Kanpur and Pune. The focus of the survey was on the general environment, and in particular, water and waste related issues. The total sample size of the Survey was 11,214 and the respondents were distributed across different age groups, occupation, educational background and income levels.

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 and Director, Earth Science and Climate Change, 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".



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Majority of respondents felt that waste management as well as the quality and availability of surface water had improved over the last five years.
- ✓ Nearly all respondents felt that climate change is occurring; temperatures had risen and rainfall had decreased in recent years.
- ✓ Almost all respondents felt that environmental protection and development went hand-in-hand.
- ✓ 44 per cent of the total respondents felt that policies to address air pollution existed and were well implemented, whereas, 37 per cent felt that policies existed, but were either inadequate or not well implemented.
- ✓ In terms of efforts to improve environment, almost equal number of people assigned first rank to government, consumers and not-for-profit organizations.
- ✓ Majority of the respondents felt that water was not being wasted.
- ✓ Generating less waste was the best strategy to address the problem of waste management
- ✓ Over 70 per cent respondents were willing to segregate waste before disposing.
- ✓ Nearly all respondents were in favor of a ban on plastic bags in the city.

OVERALL ENVIRONMENT

Majority of the respondents perceived that specific environment indicators have improved in the city. Nearly 70 per cent of the respondents felt that surface water quality and availability has improved, while 64 per cent indicated that waste and waste management has improved. Interestingly, the survey revealed that almost all respondents (98.8 per cent) irrespective of their age, gender, education or occupation, felt that climate change was occurring; 87 per cent felt that rainfall has decreased and 74 per cent reported that temperature has increased.

Almost 44 per cent of the total respondents felt that policies to address air pollution existed and were being well implemented, while 37 per cent felt that policies existed, but were either inadequate or not well implemented.

According to the Survey, television (92 per cent) and local newspapers (89 per cent) were ranked as the two most important sources for environment related information. In terms of efforts to improve environment, almost equal number of people assigned first rank to government, consumers and not-for-profit organizations.

Fifty eight per cent respondents identified poor water quality as the most important factor behind health problems, while 41 per cent respondents identified air quality.



Environment and Development

According to the Survey, 97 per cent respondents felt that environmental protection is not against the objectives of development, and the two goes hand- in- hand.

Water

The survey revealed that 79 per cent of respondents felt that water was not being wasted at all. However, 13 per cent of the respondents reported that leakage from taps/faucets in houses was the main reason behind water wastage.

Nearly 68 per cent of those who were aware of subsidized water supply felt that users should not be charged the actual cost of water. However, 61 per cent of respondents identified fixed charges as the ideal billing mechanism, while 36 per cent preferred metered consumption and billing mechanism.

The survey highlighted that municipal supply was the major source of drinking water (93 per cent) of the respondents. However, 59 per cent of the respondents undertook some treatment on water supply to make it safer to drink. The most common way of purifying water was found to be boiling (65 per cent) followed by the use of Aquaguard /RO.

About 65 per cent of the respondents perceived improving water treatment as being a 'very important' water conservation measure, while 30 per cent perceived it to be 'important'. Over 70 per cent of the respondents felt that creating awareness, residential water conservation and rainwater harvesting were important measures towards water conservation.

Respondents were asked to rate stakeholders based on how well they fulfilled their responsibilities towards water conservation. The state government was given a poor rating by 33 per cent of the respondents. About 18 per cent of the respondents rated the central government as 'poor', while 51 per cent rated it as having performed 'moderately well'.

Waste

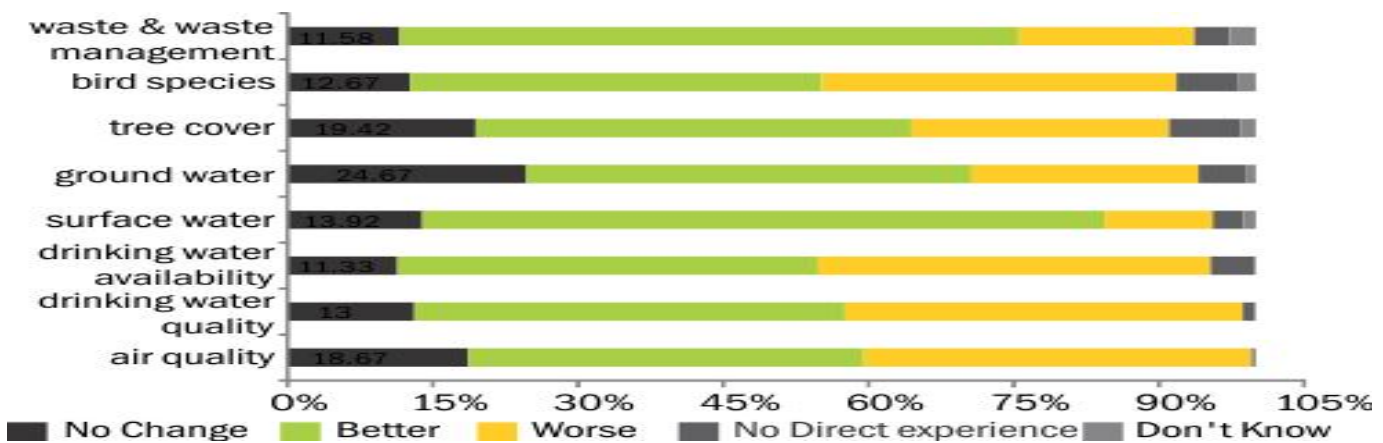
Almost all respondents in Coimbatore felt that the impact of improper solid waste management on human health was severe.

According to the respondents, the best strategy to manage waste was to generate less waste at the household level (80 per cent). While, 18 per cent respondents felt that segregation could help in managing solid waste. About 73 per cent respondents expressed their willingness to segregate wastes before disposal. The reasons are as follows: positive impact on the environment (51 per cent), followed by bio-degradable wastes to make compost (25 per cent). The following reasons were cited for unwilling to segregate waste: cumbersome nature of the task (61 per cent), followed by lack of space (33 per cent).



Regarding waste management charges, 62 per cent of the survey respondents felt that the same fees should be charged to all households irrespective of the amount of waste produced, while 38 per cent suggested that the fees should vary with the amount of waste generated. Forty three per cent reported that it was mainly metallic items which are sent for recycling/reuse, followed by paper and magazines (31 per cent), glass items (15 per cent) and cardboard including tetra-packs (12 per cent). The reasons identified for recycling are as follows: recycling for generating money (57 per cent), and responsibility to conserve resources and environmental management (41 per cent)

Respondents felt that the greatest responsibility for disposing of city's solid waste and garbage lies with the local municipality or other government agencies (70 per cent). While, 25 per cent respondents thought that all stakeholders including individual citizens/households, private companies along with government agencies should take the responsibility.



Perceived changes in the state of environment over the 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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