

State of Environment Report by CSE

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Source: PIB, Down To Earth & Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)

The State of India's Environment report is an **annual compilation done by Down To Earth, the fortnightly which Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) helps publish.** The 2019 report is an extensively researched document covering a wide range of subjects – water and sanitation, waste, health, air pollution, the commons, forests and wildlife, elections, climate change, urbanization, renewable energy, and agriculture.

Key Highlights & environmental parameters of the Report

- **State of air:** The report mentions that Air pollution is responsible for 12.5 percent of all deaths in India. Its impact on children is equally worrying. It also mentions that over 100,000 children below the age of five die due to bad air in the country.
- **State of development:** The report states that Climate change poses the biggest economic threat in the world today and features prominently in the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030. With just 10 years to go, India is yet to identify indicators to track its climate change preparedness. Of the 13 SDGs the country is tracking, indicators exist for only a handful of the targets.
- **State of Water:** It reports that both surface and groundwater in the country are under stress. 86 water bodies are critically polluted. The bulk of the polluted water bodies are in Karnataka, Telangana, and Kerala. One of the reasons is the substantial increase (136

percent) in the number of grossly polluting industries between 2011 and 2018. Groundwater is also reeling under overexploitation, which is running 94.5 percent of all minor irrigation schemes in the country. There has been an unsustainable increase in the number of deep tube wells that have gone up by 80 percent between 2006-07 and 2013-14.

- **State of land and agriculture:** It mentions that the input costs for major crops are rising, the average farmland size is shrinking. Even the share of the insured cropped area stands at a dismal 26 percent.
- **State of Health:** According to the report India's rural health infrastructure is ailing. There is a **35 percent shortfall in the number of 24x7 public health centres**, where 26 percent of the positions for medical officers are lying vacant. In fact, **Kerala does not have a single 24x7 public health centre**. It also reports that the **number of new doctors qualifying every year in the country has decreased by 60 percent between 2013 and 2017**.
- **State of cities:** As per the report by 2050, India is projected to add 416 million urban dwellers to the world's urban population and will be home to about 58 percent of the total global population. India has 2,613 towns with slums. Of them, **57 percent are in Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra**.
- **State of waste:** The report mentions that 79 major protests against unsanitary landfills and dump yards have been recorded in 22 states in the past three years. **Maharashtra, which registered 16 major protests, leaves 43 percent of its waste unprocessed**. While India claims to process 96 percent of its biomedical waste, eight states and UTs have defaulting hospitals. **The country has also recorded a 56 percent increase in the number of hazardous-waste generating industries between 2009 and 2016-17**. At the same time, most of these industries are

not properly maintaining their waste inventory, as mandated by the law.

- **State of energy:** As per the report India's natural gas and hydro-based power plants are in shambles. Gas-based plants are running at 24 percent of their capacity due to the **acute shortage of domestic natural gas**. Hydropower projects, on the other hand, are running at just 19 percent of their capacity and their share in total installed capacity has consistently declined since 1962. The country's progress in renewable energy in 2018-19 has also been dismal. In wind, the country met only 6.3 percent of the target this year. In solar, it met 5.86 percent.
- **State of the climate:** according to the report there has been a **22 percent increase in India's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions between 2010 and 2014**. This has been fuelled by the **energy sector, which is responsible for 73 percent of the total GHG emissions**. In 2018, 11 states recorded major extreme weather events that claimed 1,425 lives.
- **State of forests:** The report also mentions that India has recently shifted to a powerful forest fire monitoring and alert system, SNPP-VIIRS, which can capture forest fires with better accuracy and precision. In April 2019, the new technology recorded 69,523 forest fires, which was 9.5 times more than that recorded by the earlier technology.
- **State of wildlife:** As per this report 37 species were poached or seized in 2018. Of these, 13, including lion, marked an increase over the last year; 161 wild animals were also killed due to road and train accidents
- **State of employment:** It mentions that India has witnessed a 1.9 times increase in the unemployment rate in the past two years. This has especially affected the youth and the educated. The unemployment rate among people with at least a graduate degree was 13.17 percent in September-December 2018, up from 10.39 percent in

May-August 2017.