

JOINT RELEASE BY INDIA'S ENVIRONMENTALISTS



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Information to knowledge to action



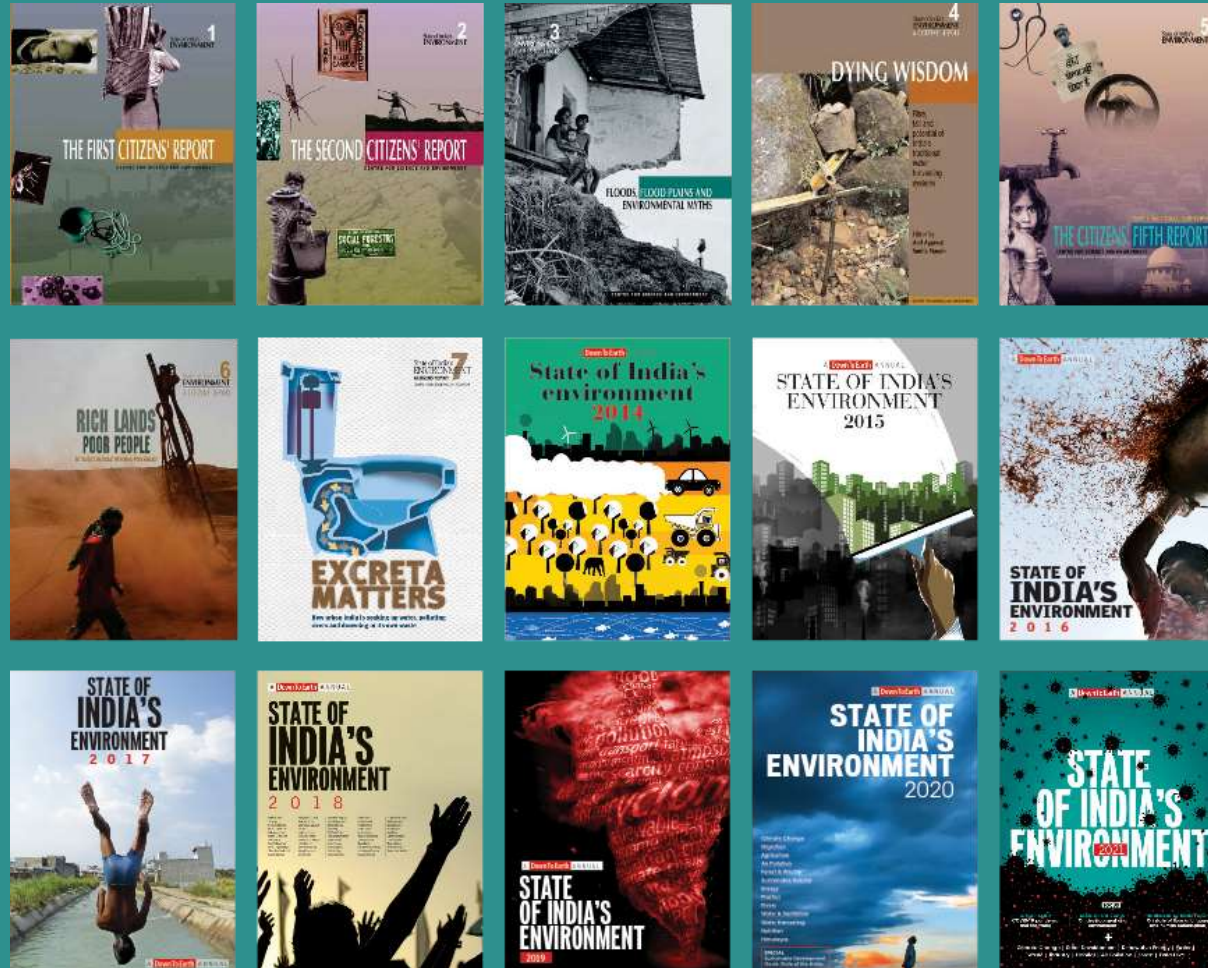
An annual report card on the state of our environment
What is happening on the ground; What is working; what needs to change

Understand the challenges; but also the need to explore new approaches so that
solutions for environmental management **are affordable and so sustainable**

Understand peoples action; without their participation cannot manage resources.
Environment is about development; **about building livelihoods and wellbeing**

THE SOE SAGA

State of India's Environment reports – over the years



2020

YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC

"This crisis has amplified the inequity and deep divisions in our world. The places where the disease is most likely to breed is where there are no urban services. Where settlements are overcrowded. Where water supply and sanitation is inadequate. And where people have no way to stay safe."

"We are as strong as our weakest link. We will not win this battle, unless we win it together. Similarly, climate change needs global leadership - if one country continues to emit, then all the actions taken by the rest would stand negated. But if we want all to act, then we must build a cooperative agreement. One in which the last person, in the last country, has a right to development."

SOE 2021: Assessment



- **Air and water quality is under stress and growing**; all trends show that pollution is increasing and this has massive impacts on our health.
- Even during the lockdown, river pollution did not reduce
- We are not getting our strategy for growth without pollution right
- At this rate we will increase toxification as we expand economy, unless we change the way we do business with the environment
- The challenge also is to **use the environment for development** so that in these climate risk times we can improve livelihood, nutrition security and build resilience of communities

POLLUTION UNABATED



Air, water and land get more polluted between 2009 and 2018

Of 88 industrial clusters evaluated
by CPCB...

35 show overall environmental degradation

33 indicate worsening air quality

45 have water that is more polluted

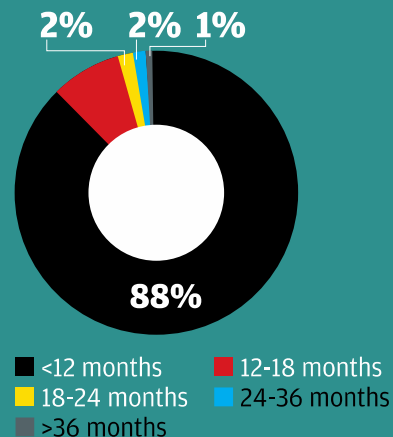
17 point to land pollution that
has become worse

CLEARANCE IS THE NORM



Industrial projects are rarely refused environmental clearance

It normally takes a year to get environmental clearance. In 2014-20, 88% projects were cleared in lesser time



GOOD TO GO

The government rarely refuses proposals made by the industry

Proposals submitted
3,200
July 2015 - August 2020

Proposals not
recommended
91 (2.8%)

Proposals
pending
145

Proposals granted EC
2,542
(79.4%)

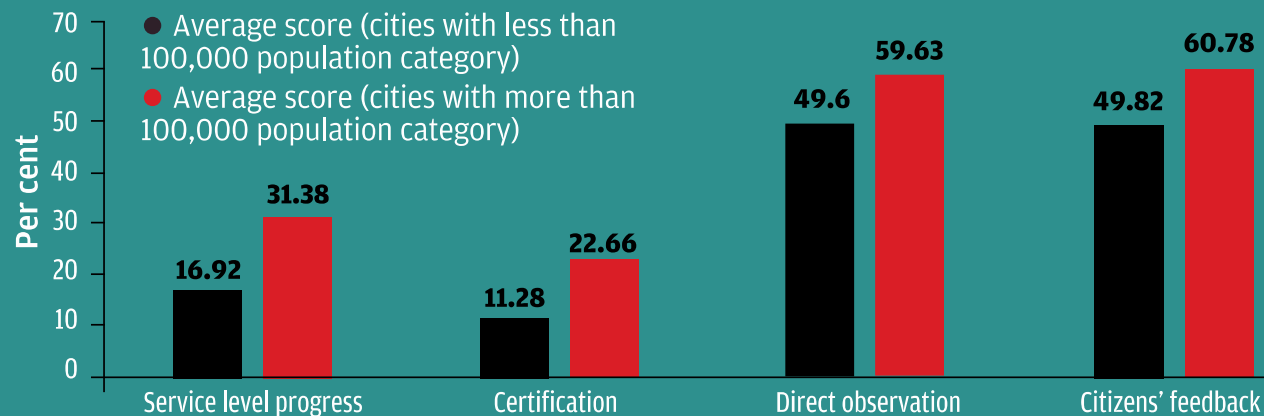
Proposals returned due
to shortcoming
422

NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE



Swachh Sarvekshan: A mirage?

Is Swachh Sarvekshan confusing visual cleanliness with sustainable waste management? It appears so: cities score high on visual parameters and not on waste processing and recycling





Multiple-crisis: running out of time

- **Climate change** is happening – from increasing intensity of hurricanes; tropical cyclones; extreme rains; extreme heat
- Exacerbates the environmental crisis we are creating
- Making millions more vulnerable. More marginalized
- Making the world more insecure

No time for procrastination. **Need to act now**

WARMEST



2020

The year was the warmest on record, despite the La Nina conditions in the Pacific Ocean which is supposed to cool down temperatures

RAIN RIOT



Extreme weather manifests

In 5 days in March, 222 of India's 683 meteorological districts received 60% more rain than normal; 265 got none at all – this meant large parts got too much rain or no rain. Holding rain is important in climate-stressed times

Practice needs **our** politics



The good news is that we are learning to do things differently. Cannot follow the trajectory for environmental management from already rich countries

Cannot first pollute and then clean up; or use technologies that are so capital intensive and so inequitable

- Sewage treatment differently; sanitation for all; reuse and recycle waste
- Mobility systems that move people and not cars
- Solid waste so that we do not waste; but process and recycle; **and minimise**

Bottomline sustainability not possible without inclusive and affordable growth