


ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX

The Indian Scenario



The goal is to understand the stakes of India in the EPI for a more environmentally sustainable world with equitable and optimal living standards, health, and productivity.

EPI 2022 is a composite analysis of the state of sustainable development worldwide. Yale University and Columbia University in collaboration with the World Economic Forum published a report that deciphers the score of 180 countries, using 40 performance indicators across 11 categories on climate change performance, ecosystem vitality, and environmental health. The overall EPI ranking shows which country addresses environmental conservation challenges optimally.



CRITERION OF EPI

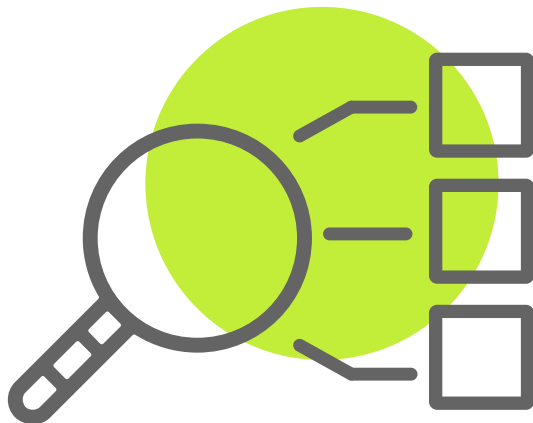
As a composite index, EPI combines and analyses data in this format:

40 sustainability indicators → 11 broad issue categories → three policy objectives → overall EPI score and rank for each country.



The 2022-EPI issue categories are as follows:

- Climate change mitigation
- Sanitation and drinking water
- Air quality
- Heavy metals
- Acid rain
- Waste management
- Biodiversity and habitats
- Ecosystem services
- Agriculture
- Fisheries
- Water resources



TOP 5 SCORERS OF EPI 2022

Denmark (77.90), United Kingdom (77.70), Finland (76.50), Malta (75.20) and Sweden (72.70)



WHERE INDIA STANDS



India clinched the last rank in EPI 2022 (180th rank). “Rapidly rising Greenhouse gas emissions and deteriorating air quality is a major drawback in the country's performance,” says the EPI report. India scored the minimal in-

- Biodiversity
- Air quality
- Ozone
- Ecosystem vitality
- Health

Taking into account the EPI projections, by 2050 China, India, US, and Russia will be responsible for 50% of residual global greenhouse gas emissions.

A commendable progress is seen in the expansion of renewable energy, sanitation of drinking water, and waste management in the EPI projection of India.

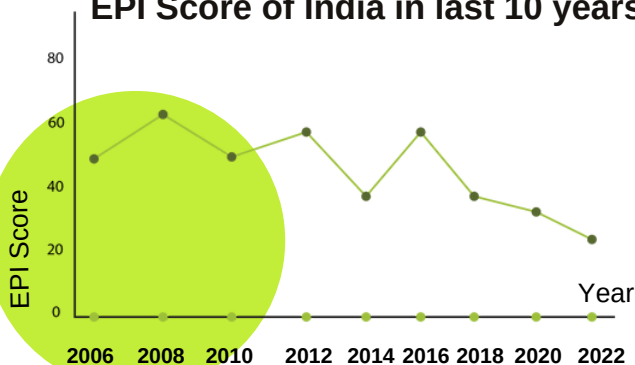
- Environmental Performance Index, <https://epi.yale.edu/>
- Perna Priti, “Taking a closer look at India’s environmental performance score”, June 23, 2022, The Hindu



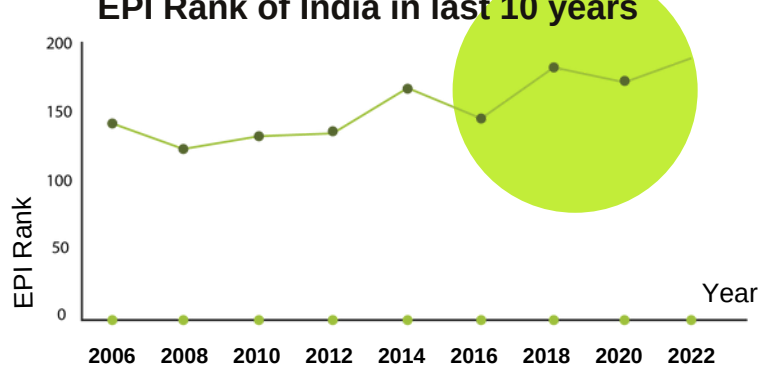
TRENDS OF INDIA’S EPI AND HDI RANKING AND SCORES

As India lags behind in the EPI, the scores get worse in the past decade and so do the ranks. Perhaps greater attention to the clutching environmental issues is urgently required.

EPI Score of India in last 10 years



EPI Rank of India in last 10 years

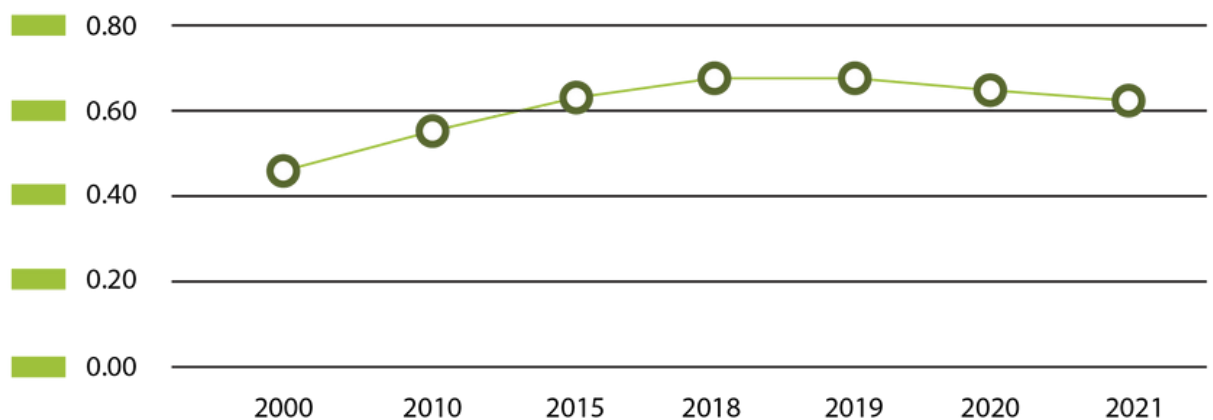


*The EPI scores are inversely proportional to ranks.
Source of Data: Environmental Performance Index, <https://epi.yale.edu/>



India has shown an upward trend in the Human Development Index (HDI) in the last 20 years, implying that the country is not entirely lagging in prioritising human resource development over economic development — rather India works with a socio-economic approach.

HDI Score of India since 2000



Source of Data: Human Development Reports, <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/documentation-and-downloads>

INDIA'S RESPONSE TO THE 2022 EPI SCORE

India vehemently opposes the low ranking in EPI 2022 claiming that the judgement parameters are unscientific and biased. “The Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2022 released recently has many indicators based on unfounded assumptions. Some of these indicators used for assessing performance are extrapolated and based on surmises and unscientific methods”, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India told the Economic Times, on June 8th, 2022.



“Forests and wetlands of the country are crucial carbon sinks but have not been factored in while computing the projected Greenhouse gas emissions trajectory up to 2050 given by EPI 2022. Historical data on the lowest emission trajectory has been ignored in the computation”, claimed the ministry while rejecting the analysis.

India’s low ranking can be seen as a call to action for improving sustainability trends in the country with the help of the country’s policymakers, researchers, and media.

HOW TO IMPROVE INDIA’S RANKING

India needs to shed light on the rising concerns towards environmental conservation and motivate policymakers, government, and stakeholders to adopt a holistic approach towards implementation by:

- Recognising areas that require maximum work
- Positive approach towards EPI disposition
- Proper allocation of funds in annual budgets toward sustainability
- Stringent application of environmental developmental plans and projects



WAY FORWARD

- Availability of financial resources for environmental conservation and sustainable development
- Prioritising good governance, public awareness, and implementation of sustainability policies
- India needs to rethink & redouble national sustainability efforts on all fronts
- India needs to focus on a wide range of sustainability issues, prioritising critical issues, such as air quality, biodiversity, and climate change.

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SwitchON Foundation is a leading, award-winning not-for-profit, established in 2008 with a focus on Environment Sustainability and Equal Opportunities. Presently working in 10 states across India, the organisation spearheads and supports interventions on Clean Energy Access, Sustainable Agriculture, Skilling - Education, and Wellbeing. SwitchON's core competencies lie in testing innovative technologies and business models, communication for advocacy and awareness, capacity building through skilling and training, and implementing / supporting field operations.



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