

News Release

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**Contact: Rob Kerr, Envionics International Ltd., Toronto: 416-920-9010
rob.kerr@EnvionicsInternational.com**

People in World's Poor Cities Concerned about Health Impacts of Pollution

Results from the 2000 International Environmental Monitor survey, the largest public opinion survey on the environment ever conducted, show that residents of large cities in poor countries are far more likely than their urban counterparts in wealthier countries to think that their health is being greatly affected by pollution. Furthermore, residents of large cities in poor countries are especially likely to feel that their local environments are bad.

As part of this comprehensive survey on environmental and natural resource issues, Envionics International and its research partners asked people in cities with populations of over one million around the world their perceptions of pollution's impacts on human health and of local environmental quality.

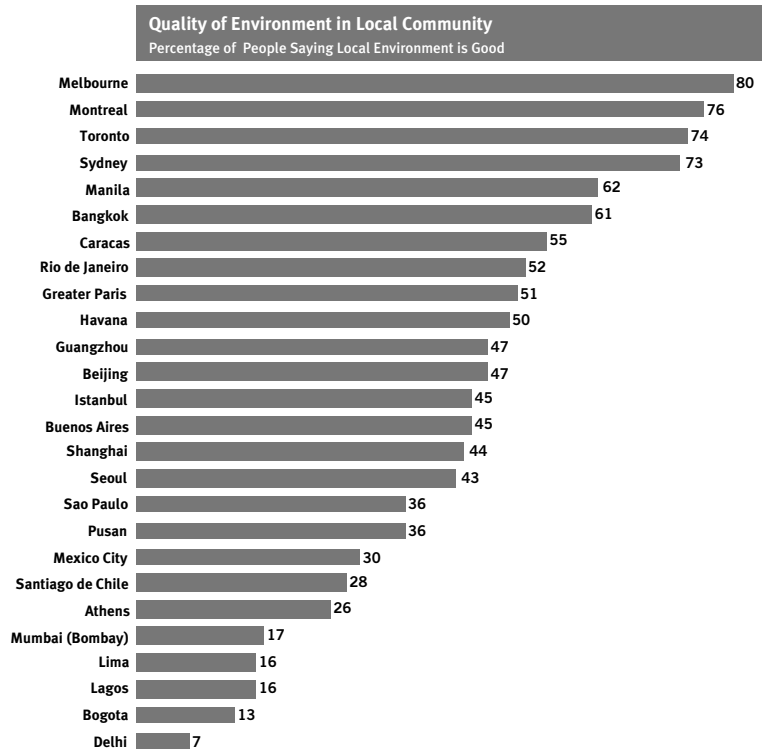
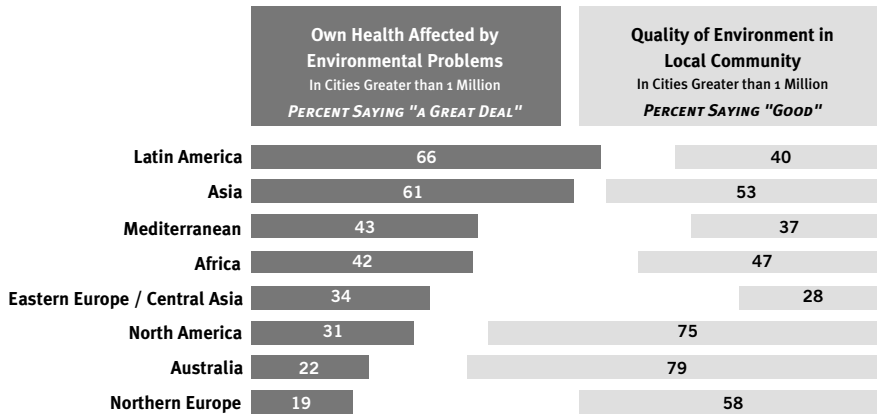
As shown on the attached chart, survey data indicate that people in large Latin American and Asian cities are at least twice as likely as urbanites in Northern Europe, North America and Australia to believe that environmental problems affect their health a great deal. For example, two-thirds of people in large Latin American cities think that pollution greatly affects their health, while only one in five people in Northern European cities feel this way. Big-city residents who say that their local environmental quality is good are generally far less likely than others to believe that pollution greatly affects their health.

Cities with the worst perceived environments are concentrated in poorer countries and include Delhi, Bogota, Lagos, Lima, Mumbai (formerly Bombay), Athens, Santiago (Chile), Mexico City, and Pusan (South Korea). Conversely, cities receiving the best environmental ratings from their residents tend to be in wealthier countries and include Melbourne, Montreal, Toronto, and Sydney. A table showing cities in descending order of perceived environmental quality is attached*. Data from 1992 (taken from the "Health of the Planet" survey conducted by the Gallup International Institute) indicate that perceived local environmental quality has declined significantly in a number of countries in Asia and Latin America, while perceptions have improved in Europe and parts of North America.

According to Doug Miller, president of Envionics International, "people in the poorer countries of Latin America and Asia are not only becoming more concerned about pollution's impacts on human health; in many cases they are feeling very frustrated by a lack of ability to do anything about it."

* Certain large cities in the USA and Europe are not included in this analysis because of small sample size.

The findings are based on Environics International's Environmental Monitor survey of 35,162 citizens in 34 countries around the world. The survey was carried out by face-to-face or telephone interviews with representative samples of about 1,000 citizens in each country.



Source: The 2000 International Environmental Monitor survey.

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