

Green Schools Network

GobarTimes

ACTIVITY SHEET

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Why talk about the Green Tax?



It is unfortunate but now pretty apparent that concrete and tangible disincentives are required to curb pollution. Green Taxes are one of a variety of policy measures designed by the Government to control activities which affect the environment. The purpose of these environmental taxes is to reduce the extent of use or consumption of harmful substances or activities, or depletion of a resource. In simple terms, you can call it a penalty that is imposed for pollution that all economic sectors have a potential to pay for. For example, the Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) makes industries who set up projects on the coast to contribute to the Coast Conservation Fund. For this assignment, we are going to cite the latest on the policy front to prevent the use of private owned diesel vehicles. The Supreme Court of India has sought the Government's views on a plea seeking imposition of a Green Tax on new and existing private vehicles to check pollution in National Capital Region. Do you think imposition of this tax will be an effective measure? Let's explore!

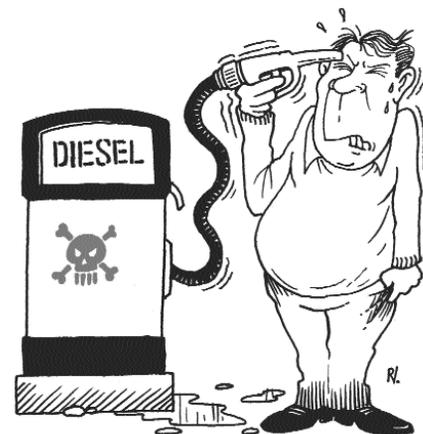
Name

School Name

Class Date

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The rate at which urban air pollution has grown across India is alarming. A vast majority of cities are caught in the toxic web as air quality fails to meet health-based standards. We all know that transport sector is the largest user of oil. In fact overall transport sector in India is estimated to emit about 15 percent of the Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions. But consider this – the total consumption of oil is responsible for 57 per cent of the CO₂ in the country today. And among all oil-consuming sectors, CO₂ emissions from transport are increasing at the fastest rate – at more than 6 per cent per annum. This is daunting for any national combat plan for climate and public health. How can we avoid increase in Green House Gases (GHG) if cars drive the trend?



Asian Development Bank projects that the total fuel consumption of on-road vehicles in India in 2035 can be six times over that of 2005 level.

Activity 1:

Currently, in India, air pollution is widespread in urban areas wherein vehicles are the major contributor. Let's understand the relation between rise in the vehicles and pollution levels in Indian cities by analysing and comparing data of two years. Below is the a table giving details of vehicle registration of 2009 and 2010.

City	Vehicles Registration (in thousands)-2009	Vehicles Registration (in thousands)-2010
Pune	1891	1900
Indore	1007	1181
Ahmedabad	1401	2000



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Go the Pollution Control Board website of the respective city/state and find out the levels of pollution in these cities. Analyse whether it shows rise or fall in the air pollution level. Take help of school librarian to search newspaper articles supporting your findings. You can also take help of your computer teacher to make an attractive chart showing the findings of your search. Share this finding with the help of charts with your classmates by putting it up on bulletin board. You may also script a small play on this and perform in your annual day function. Please remember for this you will have to find out data of vehicles registration and air pollution of your locality/city/State.

Atmospheric Particulate Matter also known as Particulates or Particulate Matter (PM) are tiny pieces of solid or liquid matter associated with Earth's Atmosphere. They are suspended in the atmosphere as particulate/air mixture. They can adversely affect human health and also have impacts on climate and precipitation.

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Now the key reasons in the rising toxicity are:

- (1) **Growing** number of **vehicles** every day - Delhi itself adds about 1400 new vehicles to its fleet-which is the more than double of what was added in the city in the pre-CNG period. Moreover, one-third of these are cars.
- (2) Growing number of **Diesel Vehicles** - There is an influx of diesel cars hitting the roads, because people prefer these so as to decrease their running costs. The grave danger we face from the rising number of diesel cars is that the diesel emission norms legally allow higher limits for Nitrogen Oxides (NOX) and particulate emissions as compared to a petrol car.

The International Agency on Cancer Research of the World Health Organisation (WHO), reclassified diesel exhaust as class I carcinogen like asbestos, arsenic and tobacco. Lung cancer risk in Delhi is reported to be high; the doctors of All India Institute of Medical Sciences have reported high and rising incidence of lung cancer among non-smokers.

Amicus curiae, Mr. Harish Salve, mooted a proposal in the Supreme Court which was based on a report from the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA). It calls for restraining the rapid increase in diesel cars with effective tax measures.

Amicus Curiae: a friend of the Court i.e. the one who advises the Court in various judicial matters but doesn't take part in them.

The Supreme Court on November 26, 2012 sought the Centre's response to a radical plea for collection of -

- Environment Compensation Charge: It is the 25 per cent of the cost of a diesel car or Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) sold in the National Capital Region as **Green Tax** at the time of **purchase to prevent people from buying more polluting personal vehicles and help fight the growing levels of pollution.**
- They also sought the Union Government's response to another suggestion — imposition of an annual levy of two per cent of cost of existing petrol cars and four per cent of **diesel cars to persuade people to rely more on public transport rather than buying cars.** As such, we all know that a developed country is not a place where the poor have cars. **It's where the rich use public transportation.** Higher taxes at the time of purchase as well as annual taxes as proposed can help neutralise the cheap running costs. This levy on diesel cars will make sure that the subsidy given on diesel goes to the rightful people i.e. the tractor and truck owners involved in agriculture and transportation respectively.



Activity 2:

A vast majority of cities are caught in the toxic web as air quality fails to meet health-based standards. The recent data from a Pollution Control Committee said that, the level of Suspended Particulate Matter* in the NCR was eight times higher than the prescribed limit while the level of Nitrogen Dioxide was 2.8 times more than the limit. Many States of India have already levied Green Tax (in various forms). Let's find out which states in India have been instrumental in controlling air pollution for betterment.

Name of the State	Details of Green Tax	Result	Benefit to the state
Maharashtra	"In August 2010, the Maharashtra government ratified a "green" tax, to be included in the Mumbai Motor Vehicle Tax Act of 1958.	The new tax effectively penalizes commercial vehicles over 8 year's old and private vehicles over 15 years old.	The government is expected to earn about US\$27m in revenue.
Himachal Pradesh			
Andhra Pradesh			
Karnataka			

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Air quality data generated by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for 2007 under the National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP) presents deadly facts about air pollution levels in Indian cities. Transportation sector caused the release of over half of the carbon monoxide, over a third of the nitrogen oxides, and almost a quarter of the hydrocarbons in our atmosphere in 2006. With the number of vehicles on the road and the number of vehicle miles travelled escalating rapidly, we are on the fast lane to smoggy skies and dirty air. It is becoming even politically difficult to equalize the taxes for petrol and diesel. If the government can't do THAT, they should tax the diesel car more so as to fully neutralize the incentive the car owners enjoy from cheaper fuel. Therefore, we need a car taxation policy for sure to save the greens, the already degrading environment and to check the increasing levels of air pollution. It should be noted that this taxation policy known as the green tax and the annual environment compensation tax are planned to be introduced because of increasing pollution.

A compressed air car uses motor powered by compressed air. This compressed air is stored in a tank at high pressure. These cars use the expansion of compressed air, in a manner similar to the expansion of steam in a steam engine. These cars are emission free at exhaust.

India was the fifth from the top in the Top Ten Countries with most CNG vehicles in 2011 with 1.1 million CNG vehicles!.

Activity 3:

Conduct a survey in the neighbourhood to find out what will be their choice between paying Green Tax or buying environment friendly cars like CNG operated cars. Try to interview atleast 40 car owners. You will have to make sure that 20 out of 40 people should have diesel car. In this survey we should also try to find out the reasons which motivate them to stick to their choices. Inform the respondents about the benefits of CNG as a fuel and how the increase in the number of the diesel cars on road is neutralising the effect of the switch over to CNG. If possible, find out the percentage of the people who are willing to make a switch. You may wish to add more questions to the questionnaire given below.

Name of the Respondent: _____

Name of the Car and model No.: _____

Manufacturing Company and Year of Purchase

How much mileage does the car give? _____

How much do is spent on maintenance of the car?

Is the respondent aware of the Green Tax that Government of India is considering to levy? If yes – what is their opinion about it? _____

What will be their plan of action if Green Tax gets imposed? _____

Will it help in curbing air pollution? _____



Don't take CSE's word as gospel. Now if you are convinced that diesel is destroying the city's air quality, do this survey. Go to the potential buyer of a car and find out what motivates them to buy a car. Is it the initial buying cost or the annual maintenance of the car? Do write to us about your findings of survey and your opinion on the same at eeu@cseindia.org.



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