
EVALUATION OF URBAN AIR POLLUTION COST: A CASE STUDY IN THE COLOMBO CITY

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Air pollution is arguably the most important, in terms of economics cost, of the various types of pollution caused by transport and industrial activities and its effects have been widely studied in other countries. However, direct studies have not been undertaken to measure the economics cost of air pollution in Sri Lanka.

Concern for air pollution in Sri Lanka is focused mainly in Colombo. Although Colombo air pollution level is less than many Asian countries, recent monitoring results show that air pollution from particulate matter and Sulfur is well above the WHO recommended level.

The contingent valuation method was used to estimate the air pollution cost and data was collected from a contingent valuation survey carried out in the Fort and Pettah areas. Respondents' willingness to pay values were obtained for a hypothetical market presented. The results were consistent with the economic theory. Aggregated cost of air pollution for the country was Rs.55 million per year. This value may help cost benefit analysis of air quality management programmes and other related development policy and programs in Sri Lanka.