



From Georgia McCafferty
Communications Manager Asia Pacific
Phone +852 2837 8277
georgia.mccafferty@synovate.com

Date 31 January 2005

Air pollution adversely affecting 98% of residents

HONG KONG – 98% of residents in Manila are affected by air pollution and 50% want to move to a less polluted place, according to the latest results released from an Asian air pollution survey by global market research company, Synovate.

The study, involving over 4,500 respondents across major cities in China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, examined residents' perceptions of air pollution and their environmental concerns.

Managing Director of Synovate Philippines, Carole Sarthou, said the results of the survey demonstrated that residents believe air pollution is having a significant impact on their lives and that the problem was not improving.

“With 98% of residents in Manila indicating they are affected by the air pollution and 71% believing that the air quality has worsened over the past year, air pollution is clearly a significant problem for a very large proportion of the population.

“The air pollution is affecting people in many different ways, with 82% of respondents indicating that they were experiencing irritation to their eyes, nose and throat, 57% breathless or having more difficulties in breathing and 27% attributing skin problems to the pollution,” Ms Sarthou said.

Air pollution is also having an impact upon people's emotional lives, with 62% of residents in Manila worrying about the living environment for children and 40% feeling depressed due to the air pollution.

Of those respondents affected by air pollution, 50% indicated that it made them want to move to a less polluted place.

“The survey reveals that residents in Manila aren't just being affected by the air pollution in a physical manner, but that it is also having a perceived effect on their emotional lives. This is a real cost, both in terms of increased medical bills and standard of living,” Ms Sarthou said.

“As a result, people are now willing to make sacrifices to improve their lives through reduced air pollution and they are also eager to see more done to encourage a better environment.”

This includes action by industry and government that may have a direct financial impact upon consumers. Most respondents (85%) agree that polluting companies should be fined even if it puts some jobs at risk and 85% agree that the government should do more to promote and encourage a better environment even if taxes have to go up slightly.

A further 75% of residents agree that power stations and factories should switch to cleaner processes, even if consumer bills and prices have to go up.

Residents in Manila are also ready to take individual action, with 93% believing that improving the environment is the responsibility of every citizen and 77% indicating that they are actively involved in cleaning up the environment.

However, further education is required, with 87% of residents believing that if they knew how to contribute to a better environment they would take action. The government also needs to be involved, with 94% of respondents indicating that they would like to see the government more active by implementing recycling programs in the city.

Ms Sarthou said that the clear message from the study was how strongly people in Manila feel about air pollution and the environment, and the very real impact bad air quality has on their lives.

“Importantly, the survey also highlights the need for governments and NGOs to work together to educate citizens and provide the necessary policies to help create a better environment,” Ms Sarthou added.

ends

The full survey findings can be found in the pages following.

About Synovate

Synovate is a leading global research company, operating in 44 countries and employing more than 4,000 people. The company generates consumer insights that drive competitive marketing solutions and provides a broad range of market intelligence services using powerful and established methodologies, as well as innovative and tailored solutions.

About the survey

In December 2004, a series of questions were explored via AsiaBUS, Synovate's monthly omnibus survey. A representative sample of consumers aged 15-64 were interviewed via telephone (face to face in the Philippines) in the markets of China (Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Wuhan), Hong Kong, Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), Thailand (Bangkok) and the Philippines (Manila).

Results

Overall Air Quality in Hong Kong

Question: How would you rate the overall air quality in your city now compared to last year?

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1920	987	506	972	500
	%	%	%	%	%
Much better	7	1	5	5	2
A little better	29	3	20	16	6
About the same	33	27	28	39	21
A little worse	18	27	27	24	23
Much Worse	13	42	20	16	48

Causes of Air Pollution

Question: What do you believe are the main causes of air pollution in your city?

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1955	1001	507	1020	502
	%	%	%	%	%
Motor vehicles	70	72	83	66	94
Industrial sources/ Factories/Manufacturing facilities	30	19	27	39	54
Waste disposal	11	5	17	22	40
Construction	14	10	9	15	0
Population growth	6	9	8	4	6
Pollution from other countries	1	29	-	5	1
Smoke of cigarettes	1	3	1	1	8
Increasing use of air conditioner	1	8	0	-	-
Power Plants	1	5	0	1	2

Does Air Pollution Affect You?

Question: To what extent is the air pollution affecting you?

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1935	1001	506	1020	502
	%	%	%	%	%
Very much affected	34	40	34	19	46
Affected a little	54	56	52	55	52
Not affected at all	12	4	14	26	2

Effects of Air Pollution

Question: In which of the following ways are you affected? Any others?

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1709	889	426	705	492
	%	%	%	%	%
Breathless/having more difficulties breathing	28	37	64	35	57
Doing less outdoor activities	35	40	51	40	56
Doing more to look after my skin	32	44	59	35	50
Doing more to stay healthy	53	62	74	46	70
Feeling depressed	35	21	54	17	40
Irritation to eyes/nose/throat	56	66	61	53	82
Skin problems	32	30	30	24	27
Wanting to move to other less polluted place	56	53	47	26	50
Worrying about the living environment for children	40	49	85	41	62

Agreement on "Polluting companies should be fined even if it puts some jobs at risk."

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means 'Strongly agree' and 1 means 'Strongly disagree'.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1812	968	505	1004	498
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	54	37	61	57	78
Agree	19	26	23	24	7
Neither agree nor disagree	17	27	8	12	11
Disagree	5	6	4	3	1
Strongly disagree	5	4	4	4	3

Agreement on “Power stations and factories should switch to cleaner processes even if consumer bills and prices have to go up.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1801	970	504	1000	498
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	40	28	36	43	64
Agree	21	28	31	28	11
Neither agree nor disagree	23	30	19	16	17
Disagree	7	8	8	7	2
Strongly disagree	9	6	6	6	6

Agreement on “Government should do more to promote and encourage a better environment even if our taxes have to go up slightly.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’. (China not asked)

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	-	980	505	1003	501
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	Not asked	44	40	40	76
Agree	Not asked	24	27	27	9
Neither agree nor disagree	Not asked	24	18	16	10
Disagree	Not asked	4	7	8	1
Strongly disagree	Not asked	4	8	9	4

Agreement on “Police should stop and check car emissions more frequently even if it causes traffic delays.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1737	975	505	1007	502
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	29	32	34	35	71
Agree	12	20	22	24	12
Neither agree nor disagree	28	35	21	21	11
Disagree	13	8	9	10	1
Strongly disagree	18	5	14	10	5

Agreement on “Improving the environment is the responsibility of every citizen.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1839	984	505	1015	501
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	86	76	79	74	87
Agree	9	15	14	20	6
Neither agree nor disagree	3	7	5	4	5
Disagree	1	1	0	1	1
Strongly disagree	1	1	2	1	1

Agreement on “Recycling programs should be put in place and promoted across the whole city.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents	1785	982	505	1011	502
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	69	69	67	65	88
Agree	17	21	21	25	6
Neither agree nor disagree	10	8	8	6	5
Disagree	2	1	2	2	0
Strongly disagree	2	1	2	2	1

Agreement on “I am actively involved in cleaning up the environment.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1836	980	505	1007	501
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	55	34	46	25	64
Agree	21	28	34	24	13
Neither agree nor disagree	17	28	15	29	20
Disagree	4	6	3	13	1
Strongly disagree	3	4	2	9	2

Agreement on “The pollution is out of my control and I cannot do anything to change it.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1794	973	504	1000	502
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	25	21	16	20	31
Agree	12	13	15	24	8
Neither agree nor disagree	29	29	23	19	30
Disagree	14	17	16	18	7
Strongly disagree	20	20	30	19	24

Agreement on “I do not see the pollution as a problem.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1818	981	506	1009	499
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	6	10	9	10	8
Agree	2	5	12	6	2
Neither agree nor disagree	8	9	13	10	14
Disagree	11	15	15	20	8
Strongly disagree	73	61	51	54	68

Agreement on “If I knew how to better contribute to a cleaner environment, I would take action.”

Question: Please tell me how much do you agree or disagree on the following statements using a 5 point scale where 5 means ‘Strongly agree’ and 1 means ‘Strongly disagree’.

	China	Hong Kong	Bangkok	Malaysia	Philippines
Number of respondents who gave answers	1833	979	504	1009	502
	%	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree	68	56	60	47	71
Agree	19	28	29	34	16
Neither agree nor disagree	10	14	9	13	11
Disagree	2	1	1	3	1
Strongly disagree	1	1	1	3	1