



## Environment



Australia maintains one of the most effective regimes of environmental regulation in the world. *The IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2008* ranked Australia sixth in the world for the extent to which local environmental laws do not hinder the competitiveness of businesses, and eighth in the world for not having pollution problems that affect the economy.

One of the main environmental health hazards to a city's population is exposure to air pollution from transport and industry. According to the *2008 Environmental Performance Index*, Australia recorded concentrations of particle matter that were lower than countries such as Germany, the United States and Japan and Singapore.

Like Australia, Sydney's air quality is significantly better than in many other large cities. Concentrations of air pollutants in Sydney are considered to be low by world standards and meet official guidelines. Sydney's clean environment is attractive to those who work here, and the city combines the sophistication of a global business centre with a natural and unspoilt physical environment.

The strict air pollution regulations enforced in Sydney and New South Wales regional centres have contributing to the healthy lifestyle enjoyed by the State's residents. Helping to further promote a cleaner environment in Sydney is the New South Wales Government's 25-year *Air Quality Management Plan, Action for Air*, which has led to improved regulation of industrial emissions and cleaner motor vehicles and fuels.

Environment, 2008

Country	Particulate matter (1)	Environmental Laws (2)	Pollution Problems (3)
France	13.8	6.81	6.59
United Kingdom	15.1	6.00	6.40
New Zealand	15.5	5.42	7.51
Australia	15.9	7.37	7.44
Germany	19.3	5.89	7.31
United States	22.6	6.42	5.92
Malaysia	28.9	6.83	6.42
Japan	31.2	7.30	6.80
Phillipines	32.2	5.53	3.75
Korea	38.2	5.17	4.44
Singapore	44.4	8.33	7.48
Taiwan	59.7	6.35	5.61
India	71.6	5.73	4.52
China	72.2	5.40	3.66
Thailand	73.4	5.78	5.08
Indonesia	102.1	4.52	4.25
Hong Kong SAR	n.a	6.82	3.02

1 Particulate matter refers to fine suspended particulates less than 10 microns in diameter (PM10) that are capable of penetrating deep into the respiratory tract, causing significant health damage. This matter consists of smoke, soot, dust and liquid droplets from combustion that are in the air. Particulate levels indicate the quality of the air that people are breathing and the state of a country's technology and pollution controls.

Exposure to urban particulates is measured by using population weighted PM10 concentration estimates in cities with populations over 100,000. The target for urban particulates is set at an annual mean of 20 micrograms per cubic metre, which is derived from an air quality guideline set by the World Health Organisation (WHO 2005)

2 0 = seriously affect your economy, 10 = do not seriously affect your economy

3 0 = hinder the competitiveness of business, 10 = do not hinder the competitiveness of business

