

INDIAN CONSUMERS: Tied for Lead

Greendex Score: 60.0 (Rank: Tied for 1st of 14)

Indian consumers tied with those in Brazil for the top rank on this 14-country index, in part because of their relatively lower environmental impact from housing and above-average performance on transportation and food.

Though significantly trailing the top-ranked Brazilian consumers on **housing**, Indian consumers ranked second of 14 countries on this measure. While over half have air-conditioning (55%), less than four in 10 have home heating (39%) and 58% have hot running water — both among the lowest surveyed. Indian (and Chinese) consumers are more likely than other respondents to say they have installed solar panels at their residence to heat water (12%); six in 10 (58%) use an on-demand electrical water heater, by far the highest among consumers surveyed.

In terms of **transportation**, Indian consumers also rank near the top. A third (33%) — the second-highest on this survey — say they live close to the places they need to go most days in order to reduce their impact on the environment. They are by far the most likely to own motorcycles or scooters instead of a car, and among the most likely to take public transportation (35% daily) and to drive a compact car rather than a larger vehicle. As a reflection of rapid economic growth and increasing transportation needs in India, consumers in this country are among the most likely to say that last year they used public transportation and bicycles more often than in the year prior, but were also more likely to have increased their frequency of driving alone and flying.

On the **food** sub-index, Indian consumers outperform those in the other countries surveyed by a considerable margin, driven primarily by their avoidance of meats: 72% never eat beef and 76% never eat pork. In addition, 84% eat locally grown food at least weekly, among the highest recorded in the survey.

On **goods**, Indian consumers do better than most, with widespread preference for green products and ownership of relatively few appliances and electronic devices. Four in 10 prefer to repair things rather than replace them, the highest (on par with Hungarians) in the survey. However, only 17% always recycle, the lowest (also on par with Hungarian consumers), likely due to high levels of reuse.

Attitudinally, many Indian consumers — higher than the 14-country average — are very concerned about environmental problems (42% strongly agree), feel these problems negatively impact their health (35%), feel guilty about their own environmental impact (22%), and say they are currently working very hard to reduce that impact (27%). Three of these last four statements were found to be drivers of Greendex scores, meaning the more likely consumers are to agree with these statements, the more likely they are to be behaving in a more environmentally sustainable way.

While **citizen behavior** related to the environment is fairly low in most countries, Indian consumers significantly outrank all others on several items, including attending a demonstration/protest about environmental issues (24% did last year vs. the 14-country average of 9%). A third (34%) donated money to or volunteered for an environmental group, and 15% wrote letters to a company or the government about their environmental concerns, both the highest percentages across countries surveyed.

Finally, while Indian consumers (along with Brazilians) outranked others on the Greendex of environmentally sustainable behavior, they came in last on a short quiz of **environmental knowledge**, correctly answering on average only two of the six questions posed. In particular, only a quarter knew that nearly all plastic is made from crude oil, and (along with American consumers) they were the least likely to know that increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is the primary cause of recently measured increases in Earth's temperature (just over half answered correctly).