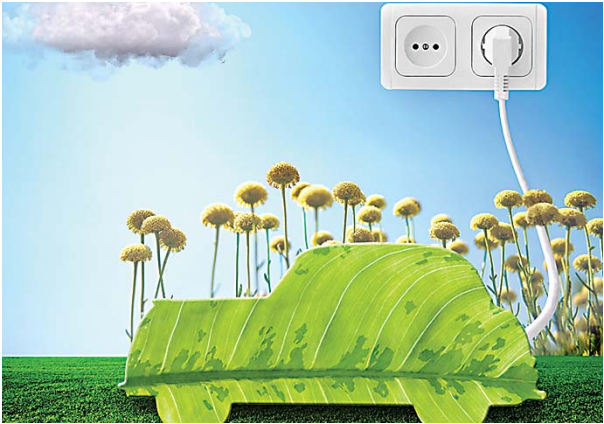


Green cover down from 71% to 12%



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● BANGALORE

If researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) are to be believed, Bangalore is one most poorly managed cities in the country with a huge carbon footprint (CF). IISc researchers Dr TV Ramachandra, Bharath H Aithal, Salvi Takur and Shwetmala, who are amid a two-year project funded by Asia-Pacific Network for Climate Change, say the area under vegetation in the city declined from 71% in 1973 to 12% in 2012.

“Bangalore leads the pack of cities with higher CF. It is one of the most mismanaged cities and only 3.4% of the Bangaloreans is environmentally literate,” says Ramachandra of Energy & Wetlands Research Group, Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES).

The city’s architecture, which is not eco-friendly, too adds to CF. “There has been an increase in the number of high-rise buildings with glass facades which trap heat. This means more use of electricity for fans and air conditioners, which drives up CO2 emission,” he says.

The study, which focuses on measuring the city’s CF, shows that high-rise buildings account for 59% of the carbon emission.

One of the most mismanaged cities, only 3.4% of city dwellers are environmentally literate

Ramachandra says there is gross mismanagement of solid waste in the city. The study shows 72-75% of the city’s urban solid waste (USW) is essentially organic waste. “There is a lack of coordination in managing waste and the treatment system is not effective,” he says, pointing out that the dumping of USW poses severe environmental problems.

According to the study, mismanagement of the city’s water resources, along with inadequate recycling, not only contributes to CF but threaten residents’ well-being.

“Urbanisation leads to a reduction in the number of water bodies. This especially affects those below poverty line as they don’t have a place wash their clothes. Besides, water gets contaminated,” says Ramachandra.

Sewage and wastewater are mostly discharged into storm water drains that link to waterbodies, contaminating them and posing a threat to public health, the study adds.