

# Environmental Commitments, Empowering Responsibility

*Nurturing Our Home, Shaping Our Future*

## The Question?

There are many local, national, and international commitments to environmental protection. Yet, where do the citizens stand in this intricate web of action? Have we fallen short in effectively engaging and bringing them onboard? As policies are drafted and agreements are signed, are the voices, concerns, and ideas of the very people who inhabit and cherish these environments being integrated? Is there a gap in citizen involvement that could've a driver for commitments by empowering citizens with responsibility?

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

Environmental commitments encompass a range of promises, agreements, and pledges aimed at safeguarding our planet's well-being for current and future generations. These commitments can be made at local, national, or international levels, serving as blueprints for sustainable practices and policies.

## THE TEA DISCUSSION

In an effort to foster inclusive dialogue and gauge citizens' perspectives on the subject, we organized a community discussion over a warm cup of tea, bringing together a diverse array of individuals.

We asked participants about their awareness and understanding of environmental commitments through questionnaire. We encouraged them to openly share their thoughts, reflecting the unique perspectives that contribute to the tapestry of our community during the process. Later, we provided them with handouts detailing various commitments, allowing participants to delve deeper into the matter. Armed with newfound knowledge, they engaged in a second round of surveys.

The open dialogues paired with the answers brought up engaging ideas and perspective on the state of environmental commitments and their roles in empowering people with responsibility.

### Snapshot

People's sentiment for current state of environmental commitments'



More than half of the participant found it frustrating - 66%



Less than half of the participant found it hopeful - 34%

# Before the handouts

Even before reading the handouts, participants answered that **nearly 70% of them considered active engagement in addressing environmental issues very important**. Additionally, approximately 60% expressed a sense of empowerment to contribute to decision-making processes

## Area requiring attention for climate-environmental action

Based on their understanding, participants had diverse opinion on things that required immediate attention. A recurring theme for everyone was the vehicle emission and traffic pollution. Another significant issue was believed to be construction based air pollution. The seemingly indefinite infrastructure development projects has increased pollution in public spaces.

## Role of social environment

Social environment was believed to have a critical role in climate-environment concern of an individual. It was suggested that social environment can play an advisor role. Social environment of an individual is influencing and the negligence of a community will result in negligence by individual and vice versa.

## Under representation in discussion and decision-making process and encouraging participation

A sentiment that youths and business organizations are underrepresented in such process was observed. This general sentiment was expected to be tackled through awareness programs, involvement of such groups in workshops, and campaigns.

A crucial point was raised by suggesting the inclusion of such commitments in school curriculum for better reach.

"... When I see my friend put the chewing gum wrapper in his pocket, I do it too. But when I am in a different circle and they toss it, I do too. I think, if as a community we all made it so that wrapper are to be placed in pocket, most of us would.. but we kinda have this idea that it's a useless waste that needs to be tossed ..."



# After the handouts

Upon reviewing the handouts, around 40% of participants affirmed their pre-existing awareness of the discussed environmental commitments. The participants felt more informed from the handout and also instilled a renewed sense of empowerment within the decision-making process. The scaled that these commitments were fairly effective in addressing the issues with room for improvement.

## Inspirational or Commendable ighlights

Participatory approach in environmental issue stood out to some participants. Use of electricity as renewable energy source was particularly noticed by most participants. Weather it was e-cooking or e-vehicle, electricity as alternative solution to most fuel based energy appliance was discussed by the participants.

## Identified room for growth for effective implementation

Participant focused on awareness as the one of most lacking aspect. They suggested that such things needs to have information boards and government should talk to their citizens about such more often. They added a growing focus on e-vehicles should be highlighted along with waste management in such commitments. The discussion also shows TV advertisement, social media and mobile app could be a better platform for communicating such. Further, feedback sessions are also useful.

## Inclusion, indicators, education, and ownership

Participants reflected on inclusion and idealized the involvement of underrepresented group into the policy making process. They further discussed that local representative could be pivotal for inclusion. They also suggested that proactive research might improve inclusion. Similarly, 75% felt a sense of ownership after reading the handout. They suggested voluntary participation opportunity may improve sense of ownership. They suggested that public health metrics, usage trend of EVs, and periodic awareness campaign counts could be a good indicator of effective commitments.

## CONCLUSION

In a world where our environment forms the foundation of our lives, embracing the responsibility to shape its destiny becomes paramount. Nurturing Our Home shapes our future. The "Empowering Responsibility through Environmental Engagement" encapsulates the essence of our shared duty to actively participate in crafting policies and commitments that safeguard the planet. By recognizing our interconnectedness with the environment, we pave the way for a sustainable and harmonious coexistence. This idea serves as a rallying call, reminding us that the choices we make today reverberate into the world we bequeath to future generations. It emphasizes that our involvement is not just a duty, but a privilege to steer the course of our collective destiny towards a greener, healthier, and more equitable tomorrow.

