

COVID-19 Restrictions and Its Environmental Impacts

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Editorial

The pandemic of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has created a global health crisis of enormous proportions. Aside from investigations into designing treatments and vaccines, several experiments have looked into the environmental "lockdown" consequences. The phenomenon's vast size provides a remarkable insight into the effect of policies and plans on the global environment, which would otherwise be impossible to investigate. Global controls on manufacturing, educational, and tourism operations are one example of a foreign strategy that results in lower oil consumption and lower greenhouse gas emissions, such as CO₂. This sudden drop in emissions could result in lower CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere, which this study would investigate. Extensive studies of the prospects for near-term carbon reductions should be conducted to ensure that the reduction has the least possible effects on social well-being. The economic reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic would almost certainly have an effect on CO₂ pollution in the future.

COVID-19 dispersed around the world in December 2019 after being discovered in the Chinese city of Wuhan. COVID-19 spread rapidly across the world, killing hundreds of thousands of people, including the elderly and others with weakened immune systems. The COVID-19 index case was first discovered in Malaysia on January 25, 2020. The Ministry of Health Malaysia registered 2766 confirmed cases of COVID-19 during Phase I of the Movement Control Order, or MCO, while the ministry reported 4987 cases in Phase II in mid-April 2020.

Faced with the pandemic, most countries around the world enacted

directives and laws banning mobility, conferences, and meetings. Thanks to the restrictions imposed, workers all over the world were ordered to work from home. The manufacturing, agriculture, transportation, and tourism industries all suffered as a result of the travel prohibitions imposed by countries, states, and towns. With residents being confined to their homes with all businesses and plants shut down, there was a significant decrease in vehicular and factory pollution, which had a favourable effect on air quality. Low emissions may result in a substantial reduction in CO₂ levels in the atmosphere.

Lockdown policies resulted in a 30 to 50 percent reduction in air pollutant concentrations in European countries. The reduction of air pollution was found to be in the range of 37 to 49 percent in the first phase of lockdown and baselines identified in 2017–2019 in the United States. Over the lockdown time, China's air pollution levels fell by 25%, or around 1 million tonnes, compared to the same period the previous year. In India, air pollution levels have dropped by 52% over the last three years. Air emission levels ranged from relatively low to extremely high in Australia, where I was born and raised. The highly toxic air category was estimated to have decreased from 1.55 percent to 0%, the very high category from 5.43 percent to 0.26 percent, and the high category from 16.80 percent to 1.55 percent. The information was gathered by a study of residents' perceptions of air quality before and after the restrictions. Researchers recently conducted a study on the air quality status during Malaysia's Movement Control Order (MCO), which found that particulate matter concentrations decreased by up to 58.4 percent in some areas designated as COVID-19 "red zones." In the case of CO₂ emissions, a related phenomenon was found. However, no data on the impact of decreased CO₂ emissions on ambient CO₂ concentrations has been published.

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