# Stanford University Study Reveals 30 Power Plants in India Contribute Significantly to Air Pollution Mortality



A recent study by Stanford University has identified 30 power plants in India contributing significantly to the country's mortality burden due to air pollution. These plants, which are responsible for about 25% of the health impact, generate only 3% of India's electricity. Lead author Kirat Singh emphasized targeting these specific units could drastically improve air quality and reduce mortality.

Currently, less than 5% of India’s power plants have modern pollution control systems for substances like sulphur and mercury, despite regulations established in 2015. The study involved extensive computational analysis, assessing the impact of power plants and simulating scenarios of turning off one plant at a time.

Interestingly, the most harmful plants, primarily burning low-quality lignite, were not necessarily the oldest. They also found that the government’s 2021 regulation, which targets plants within 10km of populous cities, misses many of the most detrimental units. The adverse impacts are particularly pronounced in southern states like Tamil Nadu.

India is planning a 50% increase in electricity generated from coal between 2018 and 2030, which could potentially prevent 844,000 premature deaths if halted. The study suggests that shifting power generation from the most harmful to less harmful plants could save thousands of lives annually.