

South Asia's Massive Brown Clouds

CORE CASE STUDY

Air pollution is no longer viewed as primarily a localized urban problem. Annual satellite images and recent studies by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) have found massive, dark brown clouds of pollution—called the *South Asian Brown Clouds*—stretching across much of India, Bangladesh, and the industrial heart of China as well as parts of the western Pacific Ocean (Figure 18-1).

In most years, this 3-kilometer- (2-mile) thick set of clouds covers an area about the size of the continental United States. The clouds contain small particles of dust, smoke, and ash resulting from drought and the clearing and burning of forests for planting crops. They also contain particles of soot (mostly from the burning of biomass such as wood and animal dung); acidic compounds from vehicle exhaust and from emissions from coal-burning power plants; and particles of toxic metals such as mercury and lead, produced mostly by coal-burning facilities, smelters (see Figure 14-11, p. 355) and waste incinerators.

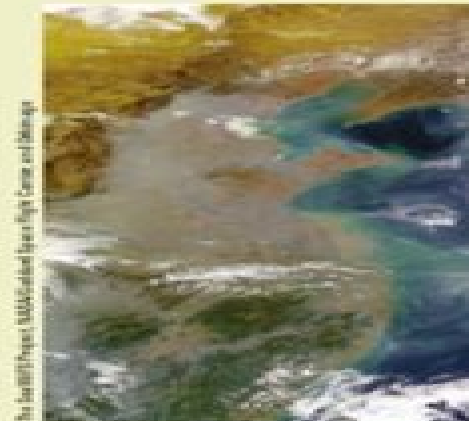
Instead of blue skies, many of the people living under these clouds see brown or gray polluted skies much of the year (Figure 18-2). The clouds are changing weather patterns and affecting food production in China by causing decreased rainfall in the north and increased flooding in the south.

Another problem with the enormous South Asian Brown Clouds is that they do not stay put—they can move across continents within three to four days. Also, satellites have tracked the spread of dense clouds of pollutants from northern China across the Pacific Ocean to the west coast of the United States. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), using measurements by atmospheric scientists, estimates that on certain days, nearly 25% of the particulate matter, 77% of the black carbon (soot), and 33% of the toxic mercury in the skies above Los Angeles, California, can be traced to China's coal-fired power

plants, smelters, wood and dung fires, diesel trucks, and dust storms blowing out of drought-stricken and deforested areas.

Satellite measurements show that these and other long-lived air pollutants from China, India, the United States, or anywhere else on the planet can circle the entire globe in about 2 weeks. Air pollution connects us all.

The history of air pollution control in Europe and the United States shows that pollution such as that in the South Asian Brown Clouds can be reduced fairly quickly by enacting and enforcing standards for coal-burning industries and utilities, and by shifting from coal to cleaner-burning natural gas for industries and homes. China and India are beginning to take such steps but they have a long way to go.



An EarthSatellite Image of the South Asian Brown Clouds

Figure 18-1 The South Asian Brown Clouds are gigantic clouds of dust, smoke, soot, and other pollutants that stretch over much of South Asia. One is visible here over eastern China.



Shanghai, China, is one of a number of Asia's large cities that have been polluted and darkened by the regional haze from the cocktail of pollutants in the South Asian Brown Clouds.

Figure 18-2 Shanghai, China, is one of a number of Asia's large cities that have been polluted and darkened by the regional haze from the cocktail of pollutants in the South Asian Brown Clouds. Other cities affected by these clouds include Beijing, China; Bangkok, Thailand; Cairo, Egypt; and Mumbai and New Delhi, India.

Living In The Environment 17th Edition Questions

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Living In The Environment 17th Edition Questions: Bestsellers in 2023 The year 2023 has witnessed a remarkable surge in literary brilliance, with numerous captivating novels enthralling the hearts of readers worldwide. Lets delve into the realm of top-selling books, exploring the engaging narratives that have charmed audiences this year.

The Must-Read : Colleen Hoover's "It Ends with Us" This poignant tale of love, loss, and resilience has gripped readers with its raw and emotional exploration of domestic abuse. Hoover masterfully weaves a story of hope and healing, reminding us that even in the darkest of times, the human spirit can triumph.

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Discover the Magic : Delia Owens "Where the Crawdads Sing" This captivating coming-of-age story follows Kya Clark, a young woman who grows up alone in the marshes of North Carolina. Owens crafts a tale of resilience, survival, and the transformative power of nature, captivating readers with its evocative prose and mesmerizing setting.

These bestselling novels represent just a fraction of the literary treasures that have emerged in 2023. Whether you seek tales of romance, adventure, or personal growth, the world of literature offers an abundance of compelling stories waiting to be discovered.

The novel begins with Richard Papen, a bright but troubled young man, arriving at Hampden College. Richard is immediately drawn to the group of students who call themselves the Classics Club. The club is led by Henry Winter, a brilliant and charismatic young man. Henry is obsessed with Greek mythology and philosophy, and he quickly draws Richard into his world. The other members of the Classics Club are equally as fascinating. Bunny Corcoran is a wealthy and spoiled young man who is always looking for a good time. Charles Tavis is a quiet and reserved young man who is deeply in love with Henry. Camilla Macaulay is a beautiful and intelligent young woman who is drawn to the power and danger of the Classics Club. The students are all deeply in love with Morrow, and they are willing to do anything to please him. Morrow is a complex and mysterious figure, and he seems to be manipulating the students for his own purposes. As the students become more involved with Morrow, they begin to commit increasingly dangerous acts.

The Secret History is a brilliant and suspenseful novel that will keep you speculating until the very end. The novel is a warning tale about the dangers of obsession and the power of evil.

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