

Environmental Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Coronavirus, otherwise known as COVID-19, is a global health challenge of the century with major impact on most aspects of human activities, economy and healthcare systems. So much has been reported and continue to be reported about this pandemic including loss of lives and major economic downturns. Like most affected sectors, the environmental sector is not lagging behind. But compared to the negative effects to most of the sectors, the environmental sector has mainly positive impact, disregarding other factors that have already contributed to the deterioration of the environment. One of the main benefits to the environment as a result of the pandemic is the improvement of air quality and emissions into the atmosphere. After a long time, for the first time in the last decade, we have seen the environment "calming down" from the consequences of human influence. Reports and research in Albania and around the world show that after the outbreak of COVID-19, environmental conditions have improved including air quality, sea water and rivers. As a result of blockages, quarantine and closure of borders, reduced travels and production activities, there was reduction of air pollution. These positive environmental effects will most likely be temporary, but they can help set example in lifestyle changes. This paper provided an overview of the environmental situation as an effect of COVID-19 with focus on the positive and negative impacts and evidence of the state of the environment before and during the pandemic. It also assessed the link among the environmental pollution, air and virus. Through the analysis, strategies were given to monitor and improve the situation using all environmental parameters.

Keywords: COVID-19, environment, air quality, impact, pandemic