

MARKET INFORMATION

Myths & Realities of Doing Business in Emerging Environmental Markets



Team Canada - Équipe Canada

This article is a summary of a paper presented at the World Environmental Congress in London, Ontario last September. It is published with the permission of the authors of the original paper Dr. Norbert W. Schmidtke and Henry R. Hidell III and provides clear insights on doing business in emerging environmental markets.*

The international market is far less accepting than Canada of environmental concerns, the precepts of costs, and the implied need for resource conservation, resource recovery and environmental protection. Those nations which are emerging into more globally oriented world trade seek only markets for their industrial products.

Often, the public health issue is not the business driving force. They are less concerned about the environment and more concerned about their economies. Therefore, the environmental professional seeking to develop these countries must understand that in most emerging industrial economies their pretence is unwanted, with the exception of 'polite' acceptance of their efforts for the sake of international public relations. In addition, any activities which may indicate that the government is not concerned about the environment will be 'buried' in rhetoric, but the real effort - the focus- will remain on the sale of their industrial goods and maintaining strong economic activity..

In most emerging economies, environmental policy ranges from absence to presence in only the most rudimentary form. The need to devise, revise or even enforce such policy will be met with strong resistance from governments -even though they will confirm the need for same and espouse a very favourable public position. In addition, many of the industries in these emerging economies are owned and operated by government, quasi-government or very powerful private enterprises which do not want to interrupt income streams or reduce 'profits' to respond to environment concerns. Economic output remains the principal force in these nations. These countries often argue that environmental issues are only for rich countries.

The environmental professional seeking international business opportunities

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