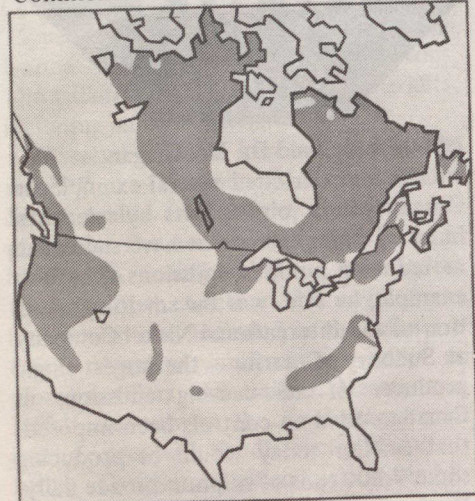


Most acid materials fall to earth within a few hundred to a few thousand kilometres from their point of origin. This provides time for them to cross state, provincial and international borders creating an environmental and political problem that is not dealt with in existing legislations among the world's countries.

The United States is the largest producer of sulphur dioxide in the world emitting 25.7 million metric tons a year, compared to Canada's total of 5 million metric tons. Because of the prevailing winds, large quantities of sulphur dioxide produced in the U.S. are blown into Canada, falling in areas such as Muskoka-Haliburton, the heart of Ontario's tourist industry; onto Quebec, which is extremely acid-sensitive; and as far east as Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. It is estimated that about a half of the sulphur coming into the atmosphere over eastern Canada comes from the United States; Canada is the source of about 10-15 per cent of the acid rain in the United States.

culable damage. Such delays would be particularly repugnant to Canadians if they were the result solely of narrow vested interests," said Dr. MacGuigan.

Legislative action is vital if further damage is to be averted, he said. In recognition of this, Canada's House of Commons and the Senate recently voted



Areas in North America containing lakes sensitive to acid rain.

unanimously to amend the Clean Air Act in order to meet Canada's obligations towards the United States with respect to transboundary air pollution, said the minister.

"In light of this legislative action, and the actions taken to begin controlling Canadian pollutant sources, Canadians now expect the United States to demonstrate the same degree of concern to address the problem. In short, we in Canada are convinced that we cannot resolve acid rain ourselves. We urgently need the co-operation of the United States," said Dr. MacGuigan.

Canada and the United States signed a memorandum of intent in August 1979 which committed both countries to begin negotiation on an air quality agreement

this June. The memorandum of intent provided for the establishment of five joint Canada/United States working groups which were charged with developing a common information base on the acid rain problem. The memorandum also called on both Canada and the United States to undertake interim measures to control transboundary air pollution.

International law

The legal principles involved in the acid rain question are clear, said Dr. MacGuigan. Both Canadian and American governments support the 1972 Stockholm Declaration which provided that states have "the responsibility to ensure the activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction," said the minister.

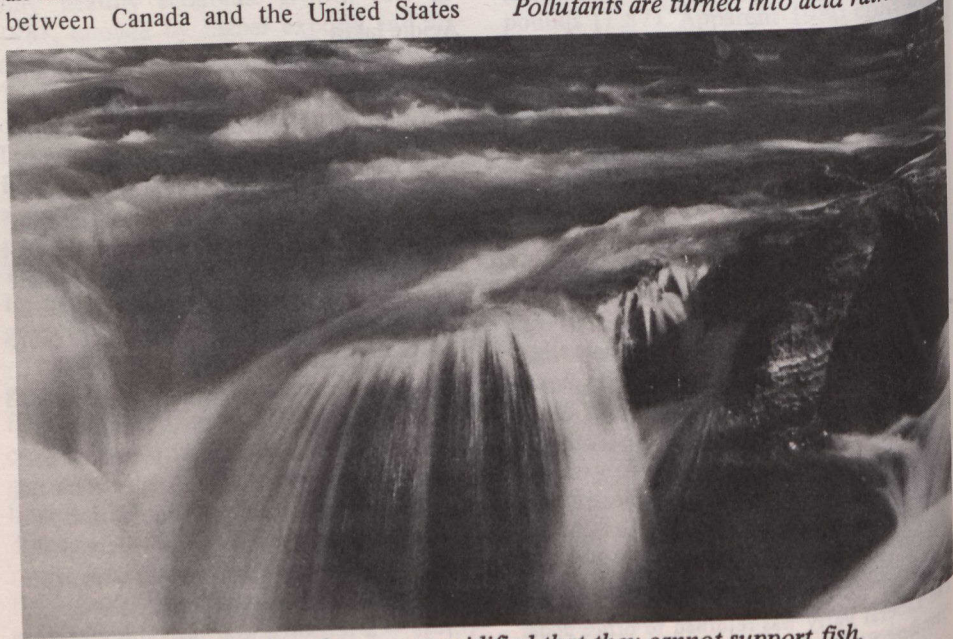
Dr. MacGuigan pointed out that it was an international arbitration in the 1930s between Canada and the United States

that provided the clearest statement of international law relating to air pollution. At the conclusion of the Trail Smelter Arbitration in which Canada had previously accepted liability for damage caused in the State of Washington by fumes from a smelter in British Columbia, the arbitral tribunal said that "no state has the right to permit the use of its territory in such a manner as to cause injury by fumes in or to the territory of another or the properties of persons therein..."

"I am...certain that responsible Americans recognize that our mutual obligations must be met by dealing with the causes of acid rain to prevent further damage rather than concentrating on remedies for damage after it has occurred," said the minister.



Pollutants are turned into acid rain.



Some rivers and lakes have become so acidified that they cannot support fish.