



Industrial Waste

Canadian experience in industrial waste treatment and the restoration of contaminated sites gives companies specializing in this sector good market development potential, since there are a substantial number of contaminated sites in France.

In the area of soil decontamination, French industry is almost 10 years behind the Netherlands, Germany and the United States. The reason for this is the virtual absence of regulations. The government has not yet established a regulatory framework to define exactly what a polluted site is or the pollution levels that would require intervention.

Site cleanup today faces two major obstacles: lack of technology and lack of personnel training. The development of decontamination techniques has been relatively slow in France, and few engineers are qualified in chemistry, geology or chemical engineering. In France, environmental clean-up companies concentrate solely on oil spill clean-ups and have neglected research on mineral pollution. Some 40% of 669 sites identified as polluted suffer from organic pollution.

Waste Water

The French water industry, the world leader in technology, production and industrial infrastructure, comprises powerful, high-performance companies. However, the urban water purification and treatment industry has not kept up with needs: almost 50% of the French population still lives in municipalities without treatment plants.

Because water purification is the major environmental concern of communities,

the market for pollution control equipment is extremely buoyant: annual growth is estimated at 10% over the next five years.

Some small industries are also developing considerable R&D capacity in order to carve out a position for themselves on the world market. The Canadian water industry, which has developed some leading-edge technology in this field, could take advantage of R&D co-operation with French firms to establish itself on the international market.

Air

Small French air clean-up businesses are not as well placed in a market dominated by German companies. The domestic demand for air clean-up equipment has been relatively slow in France, given its industrial structure, energy sources (it has used nuclear energy, for example) and relatively lax regulations.

However, with the adoption of legislation on clean air and the rational use of energy in December 1996, the air monitoring market, which has tended to stagnate in recent years, is being revitalized. Canadian companies will be able to benefit from the tighter legislation through technology, turnkey contracts, joint ventures and local partnerships.

Noise

The noise control field is the least developed, attracting less than 10% of environmental spending. There is no specific industry in this field, even though major progress has been made in measuring and controlling noise and implementing solutions to reduce traffic noise. The major problem in the sector is funding.

