

know how to do it or because public authorities do not pay much attention to the environment.

However, a survey carried out by MERCADO Magazine for Telesurvey reveals that, although the environmental protection level in Argentine industries is very low, companies are presently discussing and analyzing the subject. Companies count on freedom from the lack of enforcement of the rules by the authorities and by the absence, until now, of criticism by neighbours.

It has only been during the last two years that concern for the environment has grown, largely as a reaction to the situation in the developed world. The claims by the green parties and by ecological organizations have been reaching the Argentine with some delay,

Awareness of these trends has only influenced a limited number of companies. This view was confirmed by the low response rate to the environmental survey carried out at MERCADO Magazine's request in August 1993: only 62 out of 93 surveyed companies answered, belonging to the following sectors: food (10), textile (14), tanning (3), refrigeration (4), metallurgical-car (17) and chemical/laboratories (14).

The answers to the survey identify foreign and chemical companies as those most interested in the environmental issue. Domestic companies are the ones that, as a general rule, require greater advice, although they are as well acquainted with legal matters as the foreign ones. Nevertheless, in both cases there are few companies with sections fully dedicated to environmental problems and there are even some big companies that share specialists in this field.

The survey also revealed that, generally, environmental issues are not in the hands of decision makers and are almost completely ignored by those to whom they report.

Ecological products are practically absent and, surprisingly, the chemistry sector stands out in their elaboration, even beyond the food sector.

The number of companies that have carried out training courses or seminars hardly amounts to 50% of those surveyed -the chemical and food industries are the most active in this regard.

Generally, training courses are, first, directed to professionals and, then, to managers. Only one third of the surveyed entrepreneurs believes that the sector in which they are involved complies with environmental preservation regulations. Curiously, the level of self criticism is adjusted according to the degree of exposure to specific controls: while metallurgical and food industries are among those asserting that they comply with the regulations and, among these, each one maintains that it is better than its competitors. Chemical and textile industries, conscious of their being targets because of the materials they handle, admit that they have not reached the established parameters.

Since one third of the companies indicated a lack of sewers and running water, future conflict can be foreseen in the outskirts of big cities, once the administrative means to express criticism are within the population's reach.

Economic Matters concerning Environmental Pollution

Argentina is rich in natural resources, covering an area of 2,971,810 km². Although many of these resources are presently being exploited, others are either unexploited or poorly exploited, a