

*EDITORIAL*

## Acid Rain

At the present time there is a great furore all over the world about the pollution of the environment. Acid rain has become a matter of particular concern to North American and European foresters over the past few years. Although the mechanisms involved are not too clear, there is substantial evidence that pollution is bringing about a decline in forest growth and even the total destruction of forest growth and even the total destruction of forest ecosystems.

In Ireland foresters have not paid too much attention to this potential problem. Perhaps this is because of the natural protection which we seem to enjoy from transboundary pollution. But we cannot completely ignore the fact that in Ireland the frequency of the incidence of precipitation with abnormal hydrogen ion concentration has increased, fairly dramatically, over the past ten years. In addition, we have seen serious damage to trees on a local scale. Foresters have traditionally been concerned environmentalists and we should now be alert to protect not only our forests, but also the total environment from the threat which acid rain poses. We should not hesitate either to speak out when we believe that new industrial development, however desirable from an economic point-of-view, poses a serious threat to our environmental heritage.