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## CHAPTER 4 — Different Countries, Different Views

**Regulate** - adjust usage to a standard

**Pollutants** - man-made waste that makes the environment impure

**Slag** - waste from melting of ores

**T**he Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was founded in 1970 to help repair environmental damage caused by humans. Its job is to regulate the use of water, air, and land. In 1980, the EPA developed a program called “Superfund.” Superfund oversees hazardous waste. Superfund is currently investigating pollutants coming into the United States from Canada. In January 2003, Superfund asked Canada to sample waters near a large lead and zinc factory.

Teck Cominco owns the factory in question. This Canadian-based company is concerned that an investigation by the EPA will make its mines harder to run. Teck Cominco stopped dumping slag into the water in 1995 and has reduced other pollutants. The company believes that it is doing its part to reduce pollution because the affected water does not pose a risk for human health. Teck Cominco thinks the EPA should focus its studies on pollutants that threaten human life.

Zinc levels in the nearby Columbia River, however, are more than 60 times higher than what is considered safe for aquatic life. EPA employees believe that the water pollution is a serious ecological concern and want the company to clean up the zinc pollution. Because Teck Cominco is a Canadian company, the EPA cannot force this company to comply with the EPA’s cleanup plans.

**Should Teck Cominco be responsible for the cleanup?  
Explain why or why not.**