



VIEWS OF BRAZILIAN CHEMICAL RESEARCHERS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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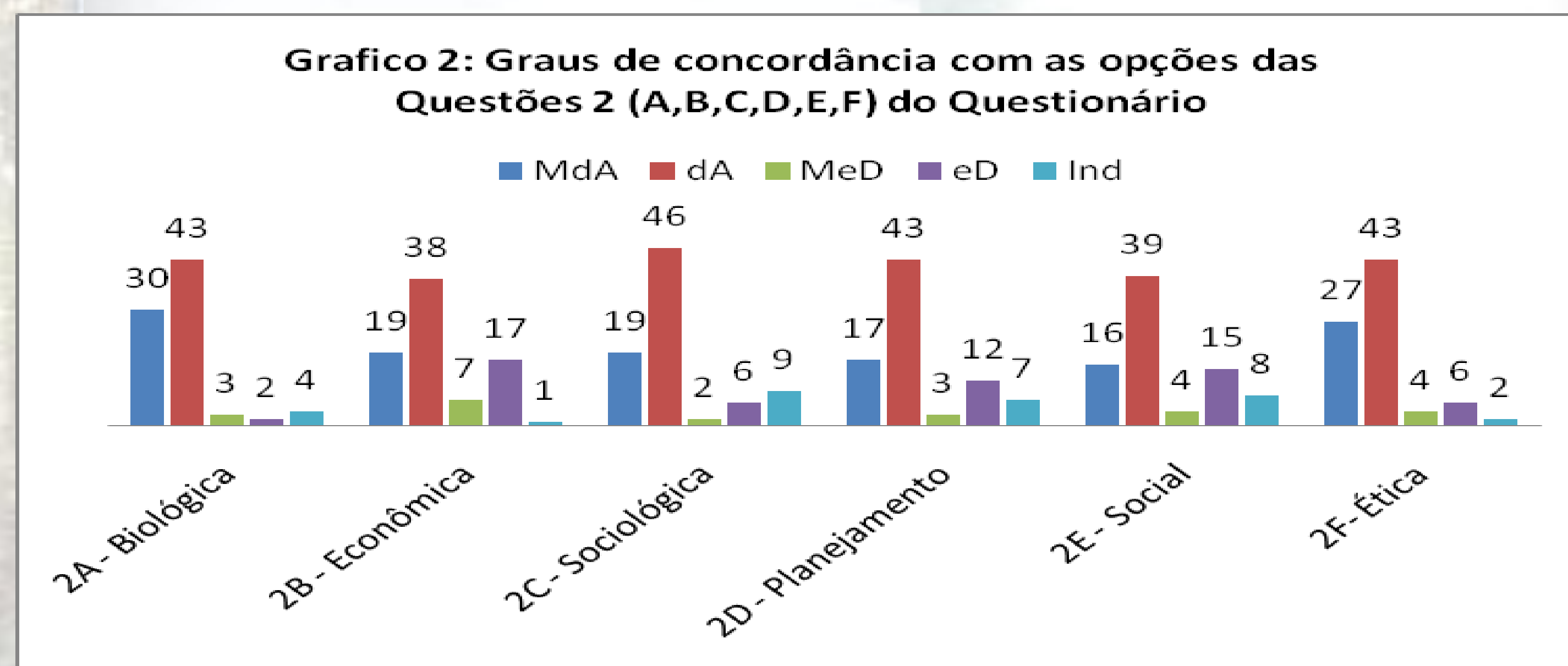
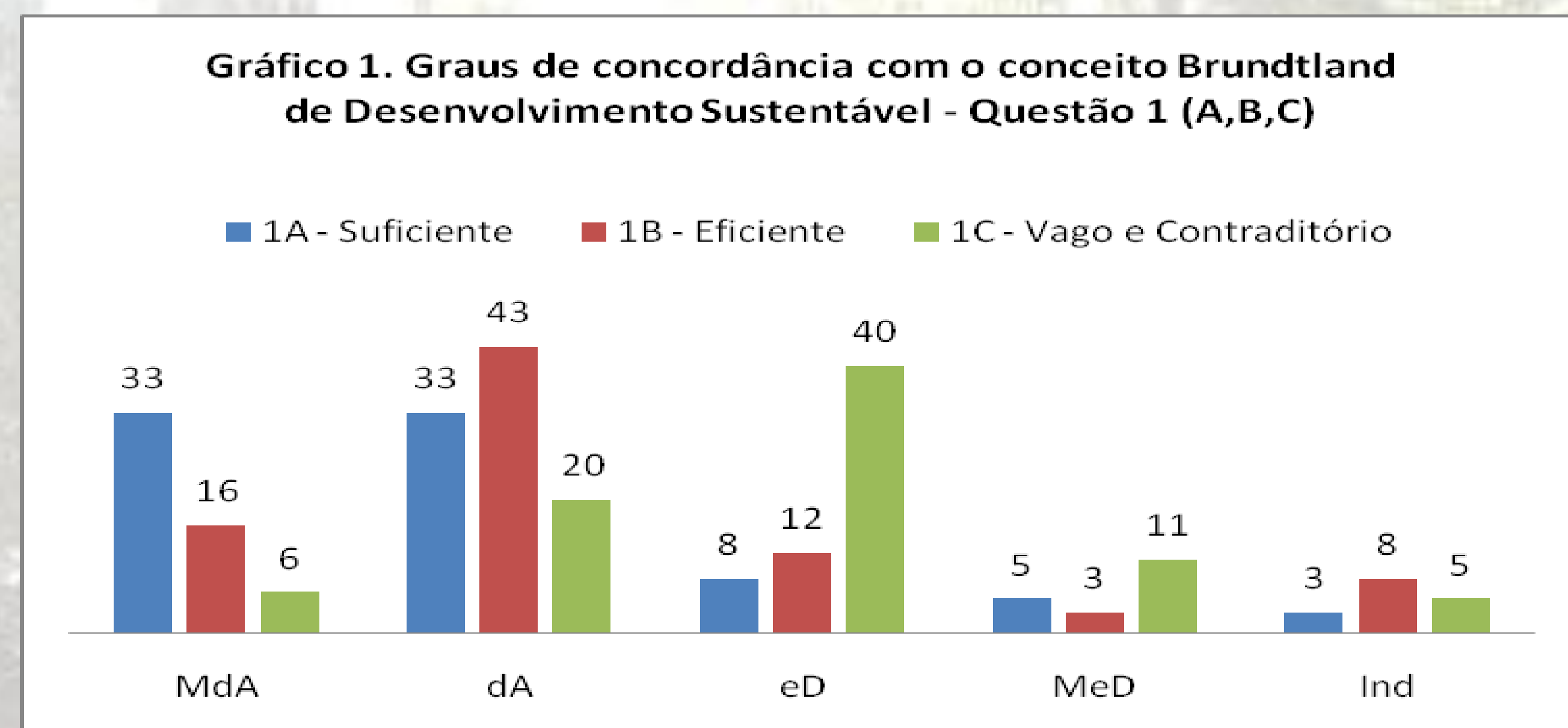
Introduction

- The purpose of this communication is to present the results of a study for characterizing the opinion of Brazilian chemistry researchers from the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) on the meaning and scope of the terms Environmental Sustainability (ES) and Sustainable Development (SD) in chemistry.
- The final aim of the study is to find how chemistry researchers feel about providing Sustainability with respect to the environment when the fragility and limits of this are taken into account

Methodology

- The study consisted of an on-line questionnaire based on short texts on concepts and situations connected to SD and ES followed by nine groups of Questions about the degree of agreement/disagreement on them.
- The Brundtland definition was used as a departure point (Q1), but the scope of the concept was broadened to include other formulations anchored in other areas of knowledge (biology, economics, etc.)

Results and Discussions



- The questionnaire was sent to 456 researchers and 82 replies were received.
- A majority of this group (ca. 82%) fully agrees with the conception of SD/Sustainability of the Brundtland Commission, considered sufficient and efficient to define the concepts.
- However, when other visions of the concepts such as those of biology, economics, etc, were considered, the group showed divisions on the degree of agreement, but strangely no mentions were advanced to the physical limits to Sustainability imposed by nature, as a consequence of the postulates of Thermodynamics.

Conclusions

- The responses show awareness of the requirement of a more sustainable development model with respect to the limits imposed by the environment, although with no consensus about the nature and strength of these limits.
- Indeed, although the respondents recognize the limits of the classic “risk paradigm” that has been followed for environmental control, they were divided over the need for and the characteristics of the new “ecological paradigm” that fully supports the ES, as well as Green Chemistry – indeed it is expressed in the 12 Principles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: To CNPq and CAPES Foundation (Brasil), and FCT (Portugal).

