

The future outlook for the development of logging in our country is in many respects linked with the circumstances under which the forests are made available for leasing. As is well known, the draft of the Statute on the Leasing of Forests was envisaged by the decree of the CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers on "Improving the Management of Forestry and the Timber Industry in the USSR". Unfortunately, here also we are at odds with the USSR State Committee for Forestry on a number of fundamental issues. First and foremost, there is nothing in the draft Statute that would make the leasing of forests economically attractive to a lessee. As is the case today, the lessee will be enmeshed in a network of multiple operating instructions and regulations which are even more stringent in the draft statute. Besides, a number of the sections directly contradict the Fundamentals of Forest Legislation in the USSR and the Law on State Enterprises (Associations). Certain of the paragraphs have been drafted in such a way that the effect of the Statute is extended to enterprises of all of the ministries and agencies except Goskomles SSSR, even though it ranks second in the country in the volume of forest products extracted.

The draft Statute drawn up by the Committee ignores the economics of the logging industry. It provides for the charging of a rent both for the overcutting of a designated coupe and its underutilization, as well payment of a fee for non-ligneous forest products. It would be more correct to call these charges punitive sanctions.

If an attempt is to be made to compel the logging industry to pay a fee for unfelled timber, then using this analogy as a guide, why shouldn't the USSR Ministry of Water Management and Reclamation