

Production Figures for the First Eight Months of 1988

Today, the pattern of wood consumption is under review everywhere and there are even proposals for substitutes for paper products. In our country, no more than 60 per cent of a felled tree is utilized. The remainder is wasted. The inability to process wood efficiently is placing us in an exceptionally disadvantageous position on world markets. We are exporting top quality logs at low prices and are buying articles manufactured from them for three times as much. Every year up to 100 million cubic metres of various timber wastes are not utilized, and we are losing them irretrievably.

No wonder we are selling less pulp and paper products on the export market than Finland does. It was our northern neighbour who was the first to introduce at home the integrated processing of forest resources, utilizing for this purpose timber industry plantations. Depending on the amount of new growth, just so much was felled. We, however, are felling (on a level with the USA) about 380 million cubic metres but are producing only a tenth as much in goods. We occupy 47th place in the manufacture of paper per head of population, and in the amount of plywood, pulp and fibreboard produced per cubic metre of wood we are surpassed by Sweden, Canada, Czechoslovakia and East Germany from two to five times on the average.

In all fairness it is necessary to point out that the prices for raw material are depressed in our country. On world markets a ton of timber has been equivalent in cost to a ton of petroleum. The price of a cubic metre of converted wood is almost ten times higher in Bulgaria than in the USSR, seven to eight times higher in Roumania, and four to five times higher in East Germany.