

Twenty years ago an agreement was signed whereby Bulgaria could harvest timber in the Komi ASSR. Large-scale felling operations were envisaged. Any further agreement should specifically ban overcutting and should ensure that both partners participate in reforestation and in the comprehensive processing of the timber. Foreign companies should also contribute to the social development of the area in which they harvest the timber. The Ministry has overlooked this for years and its bureaucratic style of management is facilitating the further plundering of our national treasure.

M.I. Busygin is a typical example of a Soviet bureaucrat. One is horrified at the thought that he may again be permitted to destroy our wonderful industry..... He is an old-fashioned Minister; perestroika under his management would be a hopeless endeavour.

S.V. Pil'nikov, Secondary School Teacher in Pitkyaranta (Karelia):

We are faced with a number of problems in Karelia. We have set up a number of comprehensive enterprises where loggers and wood processors work side by side. Unfortunately, relations between the two groups are strained. Secondly, we are faced with a severe overcutting problem. There are not enough forests. Thirty years ago we had reserves of 775 million cubic metres of mature timber but now have less than half this amount. This is enough to last just another twenty years. Stricter regulations have to be applied. We support the expanded use of wheeled tractors in logging operations and have found our several dozen Scandinavian units more productive and manoeuvrable than Soviet machines.