

Drive capacities along the river routes are not exploited to the full even though raft-towing is much cheaper than shipping the timber by road or rail. This shortcoming is all the more worrying given the current industry-wide shift to the profit-and-loss accounting system (khozraschet). The time has come to re-evaluate the role and place of the timber drive in the logging industry.

The current log drive has its own particular features. According to the USSR Law of State Enterprises (Associations) the float workers themselves must plan the releasing and arrival of the timber in addition to simply shipping it by raft or boat. When this change actually occurs the numerous complaints against the planning and economic department of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry, will no longer be important. This Department used to knowingly set unattainable, inflated plan targets which were completely out of sync with the available resource and which failed to take the specific characteristics of each of the separate regions into consideration.

High-quality preparations must be done if the goals are to be reached. In the next few days river improvement work has to be completed on more than 3,000 kilometres of the float routes. Other work has to be completed in this time: more than 3,000 kilometres of booms have to be built or repaired and the industry's fleet, bundling machines, sunken log removal units and floating cranes have to be put in working order. The cables and rigging also have to be delivered to the river stations.

While determining the tactics of the current drive, however, we shouldn't let ourselves forget about the work that still has to be done. The timber