

"There are at least 15 to 20 cubic metres of timber left here," he noted. "Do you know why it was abandoned here? The shorter long logs fall out of the trailer. The workers take only the longer ones since they have no other form of transport at the moment."

There are quite a few of these littered felling sites in each of the forestry enterprises. In 1987 alone, the timber industry based in the Mogilev Oblast had to pay 43,000 roubles in fines for undercuts, inadequate cleaning of the felling sites, and for damaging plantings.

Why are the loggers continuing to treat the forests in such an offhand manner? They act like this because the methodology currently accepted in the industry allows it. When a forestry enterprise gives a logging enterprise a prospective felling site, the logging enterprise is allowed to either add or subtract 10% of the calculated standing timber - depending on the quality of the stand. Furthermore, the evaluation is quite arbitrary. This is why the logging enterprises never run a loss even when conducting the most negligent of felling operations.

A Lakhtanov, Chief of the Production and Technical Logging Division of the "Bobruyskdrev" Association, one of the largest enterprises in the industry, frankly admits: "We have neither the energy nor the resources to process the tops of the trees, the branches, twigs and stumps. We need to be given more specialized equipment, better transport and more people. Furthermore, our wood fibreboard plants already have a large enough supply of the usual raw materials, consisting of waste wood from the furniture-making shops."