

At the same time, half of the turnover in world trade is accounted for by pulp-and-paper products. In 1987, 44 per cent of all the wood used for export was shipped from our country unprocessed. In shipments to capitalist countries, moreover, the proportion of unprocessed wood was 54 per cent. Throughout the period 1980-87, unprocessed wood consisting mainly of cheap pulpwood and small saw logs accounted for almost two-thirds of the growth in exports.

Consequently, the main reason for the slow growth of earnings from timber exports is the predominance in them of cheap, unprocessed raw material. And what is the export pattern of our competitors? The principal exporters are Canada, the Scandinavian countries, the USA and Austria, added to which are Brazil and Portugal, both of them advancing rapidly as sellers and specializing in overseas sales of pulp-and-paper goods. It is in this form that 50-70 per cent of the wood set aside for export is being shipped. Ordinarily, the proportion of unprocessed wood in exports does not exceed 3 to 4 per cent.

However, there is more to the problem than just the predominance of unprocessed wood in our exports. For a long time now, our competitors have been placing the main emphasis in their exports not on volumes, but on the quality and cost of what is being shipped, and also on the range of products. They seek to satisfy in full the purchasers' requirements as stipulated in the specification, are shortening delivery dates and are strictly monitoring the implementation of contractual obligations. In most of these elements of competitiveness we normally give a worse showing than the other exporters.