

If we listen to the executive of Arkhangel'sklesprom, this is their goal. V. Zazhigin, Deputy Director of the complex, defined their task as reducing the number of rivers on which wood is floated to 28 by 1991, with the total volume of timber released on them, 4.9 million cubic metres, and further reducing the number of such rivers to 20 by 1996 with a reduction in wood volume to 4 million cubic metres. Is that a lot or a little?

It depends on whose figures you are listening to. Consider for instance, the limits imposed by a resolution adopted in December 1987 by the Oblast Executive Committee. This committee issued instructions to the effect that free-floating of logs should be permitted on only 9 rivers by 1995, not on the 20 proposed by Arkhangel'sklesprom. Incidentally, neither proposal corresponds to the resolution of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, also adopted last year: to totally put an end to the floating of logs in stages by 1995. This is an obvious example of how a government resolution is interpreted locally: the lower down the ladder one goes, the freer the interpretation. If this is what happens to planning, what will happen in practice?

We have no intention of telling the experts what should be done to gradually decrease the log floats. They have the experience, and there are enormous reserves with which to speed up the matter. V. Shishov, Chief Engineer at the Dvinoa-Vaga Floating Timber Office, persuaded us that the floating of logs on the Vaga can be reduced to a minimum. To achieve this, part of the wood must be returned to the railway, the volume of on-shore raft assembly must be increased, and a start made on the shipment of wood in barges. We will not go into detail here - especially since V. Zazhigin already