

the brink of a catastrophe. And the paradox is that even though fellings far surpass regeneration, mankind apparently prefers not to know this.

Question. The situation is indeed catastrophic. What are the chances of averting a global catastrophe - of saving the forests and thereby ourselves? Could it be that all this is somewhat theoretical in character?

A. In the USSR a forested area measuring two kilometres wide and eight thousand kilometres long is annually laid bare. This equals the distance from Moscow to the shores of the Pacific. Yet if it were seen fit to use branches, leaves and chips, which are usually discarded as waste, fellings could be decreased by two-thirds.

A forest is not only the main supplier of oxygen. It also takes up dust and aerosols, regulates the temperature and humidity, moderates solar radiation and lessens the force of the wind. By engaging in indiscriminate felling, we are disturbing the natural balance that has existed from time immemorial. According to global statistics, in roughly thirty years time the Earth will be completely without forests. The only way to prevent this is to take emergency action. Everywhere, selective felling should be instituted and a system of management followed which conforms to the teachings of G. Morozov, the founder of forest science.

The forest massifs need to be completely restored, as is already being done for example, in the Ivano-Frankovsk Oblast and the Baltic region. There they are replanting three times more than they are felling and getting a yield of four times as much