

Forest Mismanagement and Environmental Pollution in
Arkhangel'sk Oblast - Strong Warning Issued

Enterprises of the "Arkhangel'sklesprom" (Arkhangel'sk Timber Industry) Production Association are allowing serious violations of environmental legislation to occur. This is leading to the exhaustion of forest resources and pollution of the environment. Such is the conclusion that was reached at a board meeting of the RSFSR State Committee on Nature Conservation (Goskompriroda), where the activities of this logging concern were discussed.

Here, the principle of sustained inexhaustible forest use is being systematically violated and the association is being slow to resolve questions relating to the relocation of logging capacities. Whereas in a number of enterprises the designated coupe is at times underutilised by up to 50 per cent, in most of them substantial overcuts are permitted. For the Oblast' as a whole, they amount to 3,700,000 cubic metres of coniferous timber.

A long list of grievances was submitted to the directors of "Arkhangel'sklesprom". Contravention of the "Regulations Governing the Removal of Standing Timber in the Forests of the USSR" and other legislative and normative documents, the leaving of debris in cut-over areas, destruction of the understorey... the list could go on and on.

But the association is not only inflicting harm on the forest resources. Its enterprises are the main polluters of the Oblast's lakes and air space. The pulp-and-paper combines especially are at fault. Last year they discharged 18,000 tonnes of pollutants into the atmosphere of the city of Arkhangel'sk. The figures for Novodvinsk and