

purpose was in 1974 when it carried 3 million cubic metres of timber. In 1980, 2,135,000 cubic metres of timber were transported along it, and over the past eight years the volume has decreased by another one million cubic metres.

Slightly over a million cubic metres are transported on the river today, but even this is a lot for the exhausted river after decades of exploitation. Free-floating timber is an anachronism, and to still use this method is hopelessly outdated. The Northern Dvina basin is so polluted that the water at its mouth will soon be unfit to drink and the public is being advised not to swim on the beaches at Arkhangel'sk this summer. Five powerful pulp-and-paper complexes are located in Arkhangel'skaya Oblast where there are 39 such rivers, along which roughly five and a half million cubic metres of timber are transported. This means there are 39 rivers with water unfit to drink or even to sustain fish and plant life. Moreover, as a result of sloppy work and clean-up methods, a lot of wood is lost at the end of the line.

We must get rid of free-floating logs as quickly as possible. But how can this be done without reducing timber deliveries to the consumer? Even the factories in Arkhangel'sk, the largest timber center in European Russia, are suffering from shortages of raw wood. Arkhangel'sklesprom has experience in replacing timber floating by other means of transport. In recent years it has been possible to reduce the volume of wood floated freely down the Pinega River and on the Vaga by redirecting a significant portion of it along other routes. This type of approach should be expanded and a new transportation network created.