

The allowable cut for the cedar forests (where logging activity is able to take place) amounts to 16.9 million cubic metres. But the actual size of the felling is only 4 million cubic metres. The stocks of mature and overmature cedars (not including the nut harvesting zones) currently amount to 1,710,000,000 cubic metres. Given the logging volumes being achieved, these stocks could last for 430 years! This is without taking into account the Siberian nut pine forests excluded from the economic turnover, where there are also about 1.8 billion cubic metres of mature and overmature timber. It is also necessary to point out that we have adopted very advanced felling ages in the case of this species, the effect of which is to promote the accumulation of forests that are exceedingly old.

According to the Institute of Forests and Wood, of the Siberian Division of the USSR Academy of Sciences, cedar stands aged 150 to 200 years are 30 per cent infected with rot. In the case of 200 to 250-year old stands, the figure is 40 per cent. Mature and overmature Siberian nut pine forests account for 45 per cent of the total. Due to the predominance of overmature stands the yield of marketable timber in them is less than that of the other coniferous species. Many millions of cubic metres of cedar wood are going to waste, that is, they are simply rotting away. Meanwhile, as a result of the resolution adopted to prohibiting the felling of cedar, the nation's pencil factories - producing more than a billion pencils per year - have been left without raw material.

Many local Soviets are engaged in illegal delistings of forested areas from the resource bases of logging enterprises. Between 1981 and the present time alone, about 500 million cubic metres of growing stock have been dislisted. The vast majority of them had already been furnished with access roads, along with the industrial collecting areas for registration of felling produce.