

The Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee examined the question of improving the administration of our industry on March 10 of this year. In the course of the discussions it was admitted that the current system, the serious deficiencies in forestry sector and timber industry management, and the mistakes committed by organizations run by the USSR State Planning Committee and the USSR State Committee for Material and Technical Supply, have begun to have a negative impact on the well-being of the various industries involved and on the formation of a truly economic approach to the forest riches of our country.

Measures for restructuring the administration of the forest-based sector have been determined. They are centred on overcoming the legacy of overly bureaucratic management methods and on developing a system based on sound economics. We are determined to effect a wide-scale democratization of the administration and to activate the human factor as much as possible.

Soviet citizens have often wondered why our country, which has the largest area covered by forests in the world and which logs the most timber, is so significantly behind the majority of developed countries when it comes to the per capita manufacture and consumption of the main types of products made from wood. What is preventing the timber-based industries from working effectively and in a stable manner?

As compared to the USA, the USSR actually produces almost six times less chemical pulp, seven times less paper and paperboard (it ranks 47th in the world in paper production), and 48 times less sanitary and hygienic paper products. We obtain just 27.3 tonnes of paper per thousand cubic metres of extracted timber while the Americans produce 137 tonnes, the Swedes - 129 tonnes and the Finns - 164 tonnes. We have even begun to fall noticeably behind in the export market.