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# EXTRACTS FROM THE SOVIET PRESS ON USSR FORESTRY AND FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES

NOVEMBER 1989

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## TIMBER AND WOODWORKING

Drop in Timber Production Anticipated for 1990  
(Excerpts from a speech by the Minister of the Timber Industry to a plenary session of the Central Committee of the Trade Union)

In a recent report by the USSR State Committee for Statistics (Goskomstat) on the socioeconomic development of the country during the nine months of 1989 just ended it is stated that the greatest lag in the fulfillment of obligations for deliveries of products was permitted to occur in enterprises of the wood chemistry industrial complex. The country has been undersupplied to the extent of 1.5 billion roubles worth of products, including more than half a million roubles worth by our ministry.

There can be no denying that despite all of the efforts being made, the situation in our sector is still very strained. The rates of increase in production, worker productivity and scientific and technological advances, and in the solving of social problems, fall short of the Five-Year targets. The directors of a number of associations and enterprises are not making full use of the rights accorded to them. Some of them have made no attempt to solve the problems that have arisen. What is one to make of the fact that a number of associations have still not accepted the State order for the delivery of consumer goods in 1989 valued at more than 100 million roubles? We have no alternative but to make an overall change in the contracting procedure, because the situation with respect to the conclusion of contracts for 1990 is very serious.

Here, many have criticized our ministry for the unbalanced state of the production targets without mentioning, however, their own enterprises, the USSR Council of Minister and the USSR State Planning Commission (Gosplan), on whom the

formulation of plans also depends. Currently, responsibility for solving numerous problems is being transferred from Moscow to the production sites. For example, centralised capital investments in the amount of 810 million roubles are to be ceded by the Ministry to the enterprises beginning in 1990 in order that they can administer them independently.

We have worked to ensure that the State order for next year will amount to no more than 95 per cent of the plan. A State plan for the harvesting of wood by the enterprises has been adopted in the amount of 183 million cubic metres as against the 200 million cubic metres planned for this year. This means that there will be a shortfall of 40 million cubic metres of marketable wood, and we will reduce deliveries of it by 9 or 10 million cubic metres, even in relation to the amount actually delivered in 1989. Of course, the Council of Ministers is unable to agree with this position. In the plan ratified by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR the volume is specified as 190.5 million cubic metres. We shall continue our efforts to ensure that the State order remains at 95 per cent for both consumer goods and paper. But since we are experiencing an acute shortage of newsprint, we shall probably have to spend currency on purchasing the paper produced over and above the plan, in order that it won't be sent abroad.

The plan that has been established is strenuous and difficult, but we shouldn't reject it out of hand. There are still fourteen months to go. Certainly, we shall resolve the problem of resources. The easiest thing to do would be to stand firm and declare "We will not accept such a plan". But we ourselves suffer from the fact that the market is far from being saturated with goods. Today, you



won't buy our furniture anywhere. So let us use government channels to develop the economy of the sector and eliminate the shortage of the commodities in greatest need.

It stands to reason that management and the trade union must work as a team, so as to solve these problems together. Above all else, I earnestly appeal to you to support our efforts in their entirety, for in the two months remaining until the end of the year it is necessary to increase (or at the very least, not decrease) timber extraction by two million cubic metres in comparison with last year. This will enable us to put our affairs in order. It won't do to carry over our debts into the new year, especially into the new Five-Year Plan.

Although, in my opinion the plan for 1990 will enable all of the enterprises to work in a stable and steadfast manner, people have developed the bad habit of laying the blame for blunders and misunderstandings in one's work on sub-contractors. An example of this is the railway workers. But take a good look at the figures: even though the railway workers undersupplied us with 283,000 railway cars in the current year, 150,000 cars were lost by the loggers and woodworkers through their own fault.

Today, we at the Ministry are occupied with deciding on many central questions, such as, for example, the formation of a machine-building arm for the timber industry, the organization of joint ventures with foreign companies, improvements to managerial structures. Already, 32 plants of the Ministry of the Automobile Industry have been transferred to us and we are pressing for the transfer of the Altaisk and Onega tractor plants. There is an urgent need to begin producing wheeled

tractors and introduce Scandinavian logging technology. We are also greatly disturbed by the unsatisfactory conditions in the social sphere. Here I would like to remind you that we mustn't expect that someone will give us the funds and the materials for building housing and social and cultural amenities. We must earn the money ourselves. It will be from sales of the 5 per cent of our output that is over and above the State order that we will acquire the requisite materials and equipment and do the building.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

November 4, 1989

Page 2 (Abridged)

New Building Plastic Developed at Urals Wood  
Technology Institute

In the Department of Wood Sciences of the Urals Wood Technology Institute (UWTI) the technology has been developed and test specimens produced for a new building material: lignocarbhydrate wood-based plastics (LCWP). With a quality at least as good as that of wooden boards - LCWPs offer the advantage that, unlike the latter, they do not require agglutinants, which are sometimes harmful. Not only wood wastes but also plant wastes, such as the stems of cotton plants, hemp, grape vine, straw and even the husks of sunflower seeds, serve as raw material for their production.

Our correspondent chatted with one of the developers of LCWPs, the Head of UWTI's Department of Wood Sciences, Gennadii Artemevich Povod.



"The Institute began work on the creation of this unusual plastic way back in the sixties. Professor Viktor Nikolaevich Petri was the leader of the team. An entire school was set up, with an leading role played by a senior lecturer of the department, Irina Aleksandrovna Vakhrusheva, who selected this topic to defend her Candidate's thesis. A group of enthusiasts successfully completed a number of designs and made the test specimens of some types of LCWPs. However, after Professor Petri's death, everything came to a halt."

"Completely"?

"Industrially speaking, yes. In due course, work began on the building of shops for the production of LCWPs but soon afterwards they were all closed down. The main reason, I think, was our lack of progressiveness and inability to think ahead. We wanted to do things on a grand scale, to have giant factories! Instead, there were these tiny shops ...

"But the Institute did not abandon the scheme. In our day, interest in the advanced material has become unusually great and the department is continuing to perfect the production of plastics from wood wastes and plant materials. An innovative group of leading specialists has been formed, among them Candidates of Technical Sciences A. Druzhinin, N. Kartashov and Z. Yusupova, Scientific Co-Worker M. Il'icheva and others, totalling about 40 people in all."

"And already there is something to show"?

"A number of new technologies have been devised for the manufacture of plastics. Test samples have been produced in the institute's laboratory. Take a look..."

Gennadii Artem'evich picks up several square plates, closely resembling wood fibreboard, although possibly a little thicker. He then takes one of the plates which has a beautiful light texture and strikes it hard against the edge of the table, after which he tries to break it over his knee, all to no effect.

"The new material is more durable than wood particle board, is highly impervious to water and performs well when converted or used as facing. From which raw material do you think this piece has been molded? You'll never guess: it's from straw!"

"From simple straw, and it is so durable! I would never have believed it."

"Our plastics can be used when laying out apartments (as panelling, dividing walls and floors) and in the manufacture of built-in furniture replacing that made from boards and fibreboard and particle board, all of which are in short supply. They are cheaper and don't forget, are made from raw material of which there is an abundance in any part of the country."

"What is the manufacturing technology, if it isn't a secret?"

"The method of obtaining LCWPs is very simple. In any event it differs little from the production of wood fibreboard and wood particle board. Here, incidentally, there is yet another advantage to the new material: the possibility of using already existing equipment. The principle is as follows: after being brought to a specific fraction and moisture content, the plastic is shaped



into a "carpet", which is molded under pressure and at a high temperature and then cooled without reducing the pressure. That's all there is to it."

"So, what is new here?"

"The principle is not new. But the "secret" is in the manner of preparing the raw material (let us say, in the degree of wetness), and in the behaviour of the presses. But there is one peculiarity: we don't use bonding substances. The LCWP is formed from the "inner reserves" of the raw material itself. Which is why, strange as it may seem, the longer the wood wastes lie in the heaps the more valuable they are to us, since biological processes are "working" for our technology."

"A gold mine! We have amassed mountains of bark, lignin and sawdust, and there is nowhere to put them. You are undoubtedly overwhelmed with suggestions?"

"As the enterprises are converting to full profit-and-loss accounting and self-financing, interest in our research efforts has increased to an unprecedented level. Orders (along with requests to send documents and render practical assistance in the setting up of production facilities) are being received from ministries, departments and many cooperatives. In the next few years it is planned to build LCWP plants in the Urals, Siberia and Central Asia. It is true that there are problems, primarily with the basic plant. Who will make the presses, for example? The Dnepropetrovsk plant, which is in a monopoly position, has raised the prices of its presses so high that they are no longer within reach of the small factories, the more so the cooperatives. At present there is no manufacturer of

non-standard equipment. Surely it won't be necessary for each plant starting up production again to act independently?"

"What is the attitude of our ministry towards the institute's efforts in this area? For it also is capable of providing such resources?"

"One of total indifference. In my view it is precisely the Ministry of the Timber Industry that is primarily to blame for the fact that a promising development has been unable to emerge from the laboratory setting after all these years. The former Minister M. Busygin expressed interest in the new building material and a decision was taken to build a pilot plant in order to work out the technology and get the production process rolling. But everything has remained on paper ... Meanwhile, we have just found out that foreign companies have become interested in our idea. It will be a very great pity if once again we are overtaken by events."

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

November 11, 1989

Page 2 (Slightly abridged)

Plan to Manufacture Modernized Power Saws at Perm  
Factory Falls Far Short of Requirements

We are in the fifth year of perestroika, and yet the production of modern power saws has still not begun. No concrete action has been taken to correct the situation outlined in the resolution adopted by the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Trade Union in March 1989 "On the non-conformity to the requirements of labour protection and ergonomics, and



also the low technical standard, of the gasoline driven implement produced by the Perm-based Production Association known as the Dzerzhinskii Machine Building Factory". One is ashamed to say that the "Druzhba" model has been in production for 35 years, the "Ural-2" - for 20 years and the "Taiga-214" - for 12 years. During this period we have been far outpaced by the Japanese (about which the engineer G. Telitsyn took pains to report), the Swedes, the West Germans (at the "Lesdrevmash-89" exhibition the "Shtile" Company demonstrated some amazing power saws with a universal application) and the Chinese. We, however, have made no progress at all and in no way can it be said that we are climbing out of the mire-filled engineering and design rut. We are playing paper football.

Here is the programme for the production of modernized saws which the Dzerzhinskii factory has consented to undertake in the immediate future: a "Ural-3" saw with a vibration damping frame - 100 in 1989 and 30,000 in each of the years 1990 and 1991; a "Ural-3" incorporating a vibration damping frame and a new reducer and sawing apparatus - 1,000 in 1990 and 30,000 in 1991; a "Taiga-245" saw with a standard carburettor - 5,000 in 1990. Will it cope with the task? If the answer is yes, then all the same this is but a pittance compared to the actual requirements, which number many hundreds of thousands of units annually.

It would seem that the production of powered implements is something in which the entire machine building arm of the forestry, timber and woodworking sector should engage, and that in order to avert a harmful display of departmental monopolism, perhaps there should be not just one plant or factory for the country as a whole, but several firms, taking

advantage of the opportunities that arise for conversion. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that as far as the Dzerzhinskii machine building plant is concerned, saws are a compulsory secondary item which it has no interest in producing.

If we are not up to the task of creating a high-quality, domestically produced saw, then we shall either have to purchase (saws) from a foreign factory or, jointly with foreign firms, establish an enterprise for the production of a powered implement for the forest-based sector. At the very least, a licence should be acquired, but to dawdle until the end of the century would be shameful.

We are faced with the following alternatives: either we go all out to smash through the granite wall of technical backwardness and bureaucracy, or we lose by attrition the most-valuable of our skilled workers and leave the country without wood.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

November 21, 1989

Page 2 (Abridged)

First Convention of Machine Building Technologists  
Held in Moscow

The first All-Union Convention of Machine Building-Technologists is being held in the congress hall of Hotel "Kosmos". Its organizers are the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers, the USSR State Committee for Science and Technology, the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the USSR State Committee for Public Education and the Ministries responsible for the machine building sectors.



More than a thousand Soviet and foreign specialists are attending. The convention was opened by the First Deputy Minister of the Bureau of the USSR Council of Ministers responsible for machine building, A. Kamenev.

Among the tasks being discussed are the status of technological science and machine building practice, determining the main paths of development of the technology, increasing its impact on labour productivity and the quality of production, lowering the cost of it, working out the main concepts in the development of technological systems, which includes perfecting the underlying technologies, the development of contacts with foreign colleagues, and the founding of the Association of Machine Builder-Technologists of the USSR.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

November 18, 1989

Page 1 (full text)

A Plea for Tighter Discipline to Meet the Challenge of Economic Reform

Since the start of 1989 the indebtedness of our sectors to the national economy, expressed in monetary terms, exceeds 700 million roubles. The year is drawing to a close and in a number of associations they have not even taken up the State order for supplying consumer goods valued at more than 100 million roubles. Work on the conclusion of contracts for the coming year gives even more cause for alarm. Clearly, there has been a lessening of accountability for the fulfillment of production programmes.

How can we avoid getting into the situation of say, the toilers of the Kondopoga papermaking association "Kondopogabumprom" who are objecting to the fact that the State order for next year is as high as 95 per cent? The council of the association's labour collective maintains that it should be no more than 90. The papermakers need to take funds from somewhere for renovation of plant, for you won't get far with worn out machinery. They want to have a free hand in disposing of all production over and above the plan: part of it would be exported and part of it sold to our own publishing houses at agreed prices. This would give them the funds needed to purchase not only plant but also advanced technology to permit the utilization of waste paper. The reasonableness of this approach is all the more apparent when you consider that out of a 50 million rouble profit the association is left with only 8 millions.

Where are the roots of the undisciplined behaviour of the enterprises belonging to "Severolesoeksport", which is falling down on its own contractual obligations? For, in order to fill the State order the Kondopoga association will be short of about a million cubic metres of sawtimber. And the situation for next year is nothing short of horrendous: there is barely more than 500 thousand cubic metres of raw material left in the warehouses. Unless this is made up to the woodworkers right away, unless the necessary stockpile is created, all that will be left will be bits and pieces. And what this means under the conditions of radical reform, no one needs to have explained. It is only a step to bankruptcy ....



In general, an analysis of the progress of reform at our enterprises indicates that for all its positiveness, every once in a while there are some negative manifestations. I have in mind the so called production-based egoism. For example, we all understand the indignation of the Irkutiyans. Every year, upwards of 30 million cubic metres of timber are felled in the Irkutsk Oblast, of which they are left with a mere 4.5 million. And this notwithstanding the constant state of imbalance between the State order and the plan for deliveries. Clearly, this kind of "arithmetic" runs counter to common sense.

The Siberians are also right when they raise the question of the unacceptably low prices paid for timber. Judge for yourselves: on the average a cubic metre realizes 18 roubles, whereas on the world market it is purchased for 70 dollars. Added to this is the fact that the cooperators attached to our enterprises are selling timber several times dearer than are the timber industry enterprises (lespromkhozy). How could the loggers not take offence, given that they extract the timber under the harsh taiga winter conditions and sell it for a song!

My feelings about the complaints being levelled at the railway workers are somewhat ambivalent. Certainly, their failures to make rolling stock available to the loggers are costing us dear. On the other hand, we know how complex the situation is at the moment on the main lines, how difficult it is to keep the nation's enterprises supplied with empty freight cars. We know this, but are making far from optimal use of them. Over a ten months period, through the fault of our enterprises about 140,000 railway cars have been kept out of circulation, whether by delays in loading, breakdowns

through overloading, or underrequisitioning of rolling stock. A more disciplined attitude is needed, as well as increased accountability for utilization of rolling stock and a managerial overview of everything happening at the loading front. For the fines for excessive idling time are very stiff, and they are being paid from the pocket of khozraschet (profit-and-loss system of accounting).

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

November 16, 1989

Page 2 (Abridged)



PULP AND PAPER

1989 Newsprint Production Figures for Kondopoga

The Ministry has reviewed the article "Robbery by Licence" (Lesnaya promyshlennost' No. 73 of June 20, 1989) and reports as follows:

In view of the acute situation which developed in the past year with respect to subscriptions to newspapers and magazines, the government took the decision to provide for a supplementary output of newsprint.

For this year a State order (goszakaz) for the Kondopoga Pulp and Paper Combine (PPC) was set in the amount of 14,385 million square metres (690,700 tonnes) of newsprint, which is in accordance with the established capacity of the newsprint machines. The Combine was also tasked with the production of a further 8,000 tonnes, for which a bonus in the amount of 10 roubles for every tonne over and above the plan would be paid from the Ministry's funds.

The application for a licence to deliver 6,000 tonnes of newsprint to the joint venture "Burda Moden" - newsprint which the Kondopoga PPC must produce over and above the State order and the supplementary assignment - was received at V/O "Eksportles" on May 5, 1989. The Ministry then issued a licence authorizing the above to be done. At the time of writing, Kondopoga PPC is in the process of fulfilling the State order.

As for the author's remarks about the sizes of the currency deductions for supplying the paper, these are determined by government ordinances and regulations and their implementation is mandatory.

(Signed) N.N. Sankin,  
Deputy Minister  
Lesnaya promyshlennost'  
2 November 1989  
Page 3 (Slightly abridged)

Non-Arrival of Railway Cars Presents a Threat to  
Newsprint Production at Kondopoga

The giant papermaking concern "Kondopogabumprom" is threatened with a shutdown. More than 6,500 tonnes of newsprint waiting to be shipped out have accumulated in warehouses and production areas due to the non-arrival of railway cars.

In October the papermakers were undersupplied to the extent of 150 cars. In the first few days of November the situation has worsened. On November 3rd alone, 90 cars failed to arrive. For the first time in many years deliveries of paper for export have been disrupted. The situation has become critical.

"Unless 80 cars arrive in the next day or two, the situation will get out of control and the papermaking machines will be shut down", stated the



Deputy General Director for Commercial Matters,  
L. Nefedov.

Sotsialisticheskaya  
industriya  
4 November 1989  
Page 4 (full text)

Paper Consumption by Government Departments: Cost and Quantity

Letter to the Editor

Everywhere you hear: "there isn't enough paper to publish books, magazines and newspapers". But has anyone given a thought to the question of how much paper the ministries spend on their needs?

V. Savchuk  
Kiev

Here is what the Chairman of the State Committee for Printing, N. Efimov, said in reply to a question from the People's Deputies in the course of a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR:

"For the promulgation of orders (prikazy) and dispositions (rasporiyazhenii), and for correspondence and other needs, our ministries require exactly 130,000 tonnes of paper."

But this, as they say, is a dry figure. What is the cost of it? We cite the following example: for a publishing house to produce printed matter, let us say, books valued at 100 million roubles, approximately 30,000 tonnes of paper are

needed. So it is not difficult to estimate how much the paper "creativity" of the ministries' employees is costing the country.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

November 25, 1989

Page 3 (full text)



FORESTRY

Society of Soviet Foresters Founded to Save the Forests from Destruction

The constituent assembly of the Society was held in late February in Leningrad. More than 200 foresters from Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaidzhan, Georgia, Latvia, Moldavia, Turkmenia and Estonia adopted the programme and statutes of the new society. It is hardly correct to refer to it as new however. Its members consider themselves the successors of the societies of foresters that existed formerly in Russia, in which many eminent scientists played an active part. The resumption of activity by this type of public organization is explained by the critical state of the forests.

The Society of Foresters of the USSR has declared itself to be a professional, social and political organization of citizens of our country who are united by common interests in achieving a specific objective. And that objective is: concern for the forest. In the programme it is stated that the growing changes in the ecological situation have a complex, all-embracing character. The world's forests are one of the principal natural regulators, maintaining and restoring the conditions of life. The notion that has formed in the consciousness of millions of people that our country is the most richly forested nation in the world is unrealistic. For each of us there is no more than 2.9 hectares of forested area. And only a third of this area is of real value for industrial exploitation, which is much less than in Canada, Sweden, Finland and certain other countries.

The main objectives of the Society of Foresters of the USSR are to rescue the country's forestry from the present crisis situation; protect the forests from becoming exhausted by excessive fellings, fires and industrial emissions; and instill in the consciousness and actions of governmental bodies and all citizens everywhere the need for a careful attitude towards the forest as a source of renewable timber and non-timber resources for many generations to come.

The Society maintains that, inasmuch as the forest is a highly complex ecological system, it can only be entrusted to competent specialists. The participants in the assembly enunciated their credo in an appeal to the public and the People's Deputies of the USSR. The following is a quotation from it.

From an appeal at the constituent-assembly of the Society of Foresters of the USSR

"Our finest coniferous forests have been plundered and impoverished in the traditional harvesting zones: in the European North, the Urals, the Tyumen and Irkutsk Oblasts, and the Krasnoyarsk and Primorskii Krai. In the past decade, in the European-Urals zone alone, some 666.8 million cubic metres of timber have been felled in excess of the allowable cut, which is 1.5 times the maximum amount of timber that could be sold. Even in the current year of political and economic restructuring and renewal of the economy, the lumbermen have again requested authorization from the government to fell the senselessly high figure of 17.6 million cubic metres of coniferous timber. Strange as it may seem, they obtained the consent of the RSFSR Ministry of



Forestry and the USSR State Planning Commission (Gosplan). Furthermore, the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR issued a special decree making it "legitimate" to go over and above the allowable cut and fell coniferous forests, which this assembly contends is plundering our national property.

The reserves of materials and machinery available for forestry are extremely sparse. For the establishing of a hectare of new forest 150 roubles are allocated. In taiga forests the amount is even less (compare this with 600 dollars in the USA).

It is not only the cardinal principle of sustained forest use that is being held in contempt but other principles of forest management as well. The goals and tasks of forestry are being increasingly devalued and subordinated to the short-term interests and demands of the timber merchants. Fellings for regeneration purposes (both shelterwood and selection fellings) have been transformed into the worst variety of clear fellings, namely, those that leave small and inferior trees standing. Even in the course of improvement fellings, undertaken to ensure the growth of highly productive stands, it is often not the worst, but the best trees that are removed. All this is leading to a situation in which the growing stock in mature stands is diminishing in comparison with those approaching maturity, and the gene pool of the forests is being depreciated.

Those who, in obeying administrative orders, are cutting down our forests, in many cases right to the last tree, are unfortunately the very ones who ought to be taking care of them and preserving them. In these circumstances forestry workers are often compelled to engage in an imitation of silvicultural



activity. All this could not fail to affect the professional psychology of the foresters. Many of them no longer believe in the social worth of their profession and have left it.

Whereas in the past the conduct of forestry in State owned forests brought in a large revenue, today the sector is not only failing to provide this, but has even become a petitioner and dependant of the State budget. Financing of the sector from the State budget is ten times less than what is actually needed.

The existing forest legislation is ineffective in protecting the forests against squandering and exhaustion. Legislative instruments that were drawn up at the USSR State Committee for Forestry (Goskomles), such as the regulations governing State supervision in the forests of the USSR and those pertaining to leasing, have become bogged down in the government and at USSR Gosplan. Moreover, they are running into powerful resistance from the forest based industrial complex. The currently practised separation of functions of custodian of the forest lands between various departments runs counter to the interests of the people and the State. Indeed, it is none other than a partitioning of the forests, handed over for administrative purposes to departments and organizations that are not in fact answerable for the regeneration of the forest riches and are exploiting them in the worst traditions of the colonial regime. The request by the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry which was implemented by the USSR Council of Ministers and calls for the establishment under its aegis of so called integrated forest-based industrial enterprises entailing the assignation of the rights and functions of overall boss of the forests will make it possible for the loggers to cut down the remaining forests in whatever way it suits them.



An immediate and radical organizational and economic restructuring of the timber industry is needed. First priority must be given to the following.

1. Concentrating the administration of the nation's forests, independently of their ownership, in the hands of highly qualified foresters in a single Union-Republic departmental system, responsible to the people and the State for the condition of all the forests and forest lands. Only this department (and not Gosplan) will have the right to decide the allowable cut, determine sites, volumes and felling, monitor the work of the loggers, arrange for a forest revenue and based on the profit-and-loss accounting system, use it to regenerate and protect the forest from fires, insect pests and diseases, and organize hunting expeditions.

2. Eliminating the existing contradictory duality in the functions of forestry enterprises, that is to say: release them once and for all from the requirement to do fellings (except improvement fellings).

3. Placing forestry on a self-supporting footing and unreservedly acknowledging that the main commodity of the sector is not felled and converted timber, as is accepted at present, but raised and preserved forests that are highly valuable as a source of raw material and have a beneficial effect on our habitat. The revenue derived from the forest sector should be used in the main for forest regeneration and for maintaining ecological equilibrium in nature.

4. Prohibiting environmentally harmful methods of timber conversion and other forms of incompatible economic activity that have a destructive effect on forest ecosystems. Under no circumstances must overfellings of allowable cuts be permitted, nor for that matter, the barbaric, irrational use of felled timber and other forms of injurious exploitation of forests.

If we continue to practise forestry in the old way, then the country will be forced to purchase wood abroad, and the ecological consequences of this type of management will be unpredictable.

The constituent assembly of the Society of Foresters of the USSR appeals to the People's Deputies to review the question of placing the forests under the jurisdiction of the local Soviets and approach the taking of a decision with special seriousness. The assembly warns that a transfer of the prerogatives of administering the forests to local bodies which are incompetent in the very principles of organizing and conducting forestry will inevitably lead to catastrophic consequences. This has already occurred in the past and threatens us today."

Corresponding Member of the All-Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences D.P. Stolyarov was elected President of the Society. The Central Council will consist of 30 individuals. Its address is 194021 Leningrad, Institutskii Pereulok 21. It has been decided to hold the first assembly of delegates from the republican societies of foresters and the regional divisions in 1990.

Lesnaya promyshlennost'

November 23, 1989

Page 2 (Slightly abridged)



### Appointments

The Council of Ministers of the USSR has appointed:

Pavl Grigor'evich Ereemeev - Deputy Minister of the Timber Industry (USSR) and Head of the Department of External Economic Relations;

Nikolai Stepanovich Lyashuk - Deputy Minister of the Timber Industry (USSR) and Head of the Department for the Development of Logging and Timber Floating;

Nikolai Akimovich Medvedev - Deputy Minister of the Timber Industry (USSR) and Head of the Social and Economic Department;

Vladimir Nikolaevich Tokmakov - Deputy Minister of the Timber Industry (USSR) and Head of the Department for the Development of Lumber Production and Woodworking;

Vladimir Alekseevich Chuiko - Deputy Minister of the Timber Industry (USSR) and Head of the Department for the Development of Pulp, Paper and Wood Chemistry Production.

\* \* \*

By an Order pertaining to the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry the following have been appointed first deputy heads of departments:

Anatolii Petrovich Chernovol - Planning and Capital Construction;

Gennadii Yakovlevich Shaitanov - External  
Economic Relations.

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Departments Replace Directorates in Reorganization of  
Ministry of the Timber Industry

In accordance with a decree of the USSR Council of Ministers a new and simplified organizational structure has been introduced at the headquarters of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry, effective October, 1989.

The main directorates and directorates have been reshaped into ministerial departments and will be the principal structural subdivisions of headquarters. A ceiling for headquarters employees has been set at 950 (instead of the former 1,270) with an annual wage fund of 4,218,000 roubles.

The Ministry is authorized to have 9 deputy ministers, including two first deputies, and a Board of 18 members. The departments for the development of logging production and timber floating, the development of pulp, paper and wood chemical production, the development of lumber production and woodworking, external economic relations and social and economic affairs are to be headed by deputy ministers.

Until the reorganization of the headquarters staff of the Ministry has been completed the directors and other officers of the main directorates



and directorates will continue to perform the duties previously entrusted to them and will be responsible for ensuring the execution of assigned tasks.

The structure of the central apparatus of the USSR Ministry of the Timber Industry will now be as follows:

Social and Economic Department.  
Scientific and Technical Department.  
Department of Long-term Development, Inter- and Intra-Sector Relations.  
Department for the Development of Logging Production and Timber Floating.  
Department for the Development of Pulp, Paper and Wood Chemical Production.  
Department for the Development of Furniture, Plywood and Board Production.  
Department for the Development of Lumber Production and Woodworking.  
Department for the Development of Consumer Goods Production.  
Department of Forestry.  
Department of Sector-Oriented Machine Building.  
Department of Planning and Capital Construction.  
Department of Material and Technical Supply and Equipment.  
Department for the Development of Communications Facilities and Automation.  
Department of External Economic Relations.  
Department of Personnel and Training Establishments.  
Department of Transport.

Department of Ecology, Nature Conservation  
and Accident Prevention.  
General Department.  
Department of Administrative Organizations.

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## ENVIRONMENT

### Replacement of Aerial Skidders by Caterpillar Tractors Proves Disastrous to Ecology of the Caucasus

Thirty years ago the mountainside felling areas of the Krasnodar Krai were covered by a dense network of simple mechanisms. Along steel cables stretched between masts and augmented by a system of blocks and tackles connected to a winch, timber from felling sectors 800 to 1000 metres distant was hauled aerially through passes, canyons and river valleys to the upper landings. These simple mechanisms, which were called aerial skidders, hauled up to 800,000 cubic metres of timber annually from otherwise inaccessible sites without doing damage to the environment. Such inexpensive machinery was greatly prized. Its assembly and operation was entrusted to specially trained teams of workmen and engineers. The expertise of the skilled craftsmen of the day was renowned throughout the country.

But then, along came the heavy TT-4 caterpillar tractor. Powerful, manoeuvrable and controlled by a single operator, it quickly squeezed out its rival skidder, the maintenance of which required professionals with engineering skills. The more so since with lower expenditures there was a sharp increase in output per shift. Moreover, the fellers snipped off some "tasty morsels" - felling sections on gentle slopes, in upland valleys, on river banks and close to roads. The forest in those days was like a circular wall and few people suspected that its reserves were anything but limitless. As for the ecology, not a word was breathed about that.

Poor aerial skidders! Suddenly they were discovered to have so many defects that they were rapidly withdrawn from the felling areas, and shortly afterwards, ceased to be manufactured at all. By a sweetheart deal between consumers (loggers), developers, designers and manufactures they were soon declared expendable. Meanwhile, to the applause of short-sighted specialists, their successful rival, having mastered the more abundant sectors, climbed higher and higher into the mountains, further still from the roads. Snaking their way around steep hairpin bends, the TT-4s climbed onto cliffs where as yet untouched trees stood. Now they were able to drag timber over distances of two or three kilometres. Expenses grew, output fell and it cost more to produce a "cubic". Only then did the Krasnodar timber people announce to the country that the felling sites were becoming exhausted. Kind uncles in Moscow verified the claim and reduced the logging volume. Thus, from 4 million cubic metres it fell initially to 2 million, with another drastic cut to follow. And again the lament: felling sites are becoming scarce.

But where were they becoming scarce? In the more accessible areas. Higher up, on the steep slopes, far removed from the roads, overmature giant trees are continuing to die while still standing, trees which might have yielded a further million cubic metres of excellent timber.

It was the Kuban' people who were the first to notice that for 10 to 15 years the mountain forests had been in a disastrous state, that irreparable damage had been inflicted on the environment of the Krasnodar Krai as a whole. Along the slit-like trenches formed by the treads of the TT-4s and along newly formed river beds, pouring



rains were transformed into torrential run-off, which was carried by the rivers into the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. The habitat deteriorated for valuable species of fishes. The rivers became shallower, since due to the intensive fellings along the banks they had been deprived of their protective forests, and the flow rates of potable water and mineral springs decreased. Added to this were the heavy losses of underwood and the damage inflicted on the soil by the heavy caterpillar treads. A major disaster has been caused by the pursuit of short-term gains.

At an All-Union seminar held to consider this matter at the Guzeripl'skii timber industry enterprise in the Krasnodar Krai, the thought was repeatedly expressed: "Give us environment sparing technology with which to exploit the mountain forests". The emphasis was on the extensive use of aerial cable installations and helicopters instead of the destructive TT-4 tractors. While it was the Krasnodar people who had the most to say in the discussion, they should have been the first to acknowledge that had it not been for the banishment of the harmless aerial cables, they would have had such technology all along. And even today, they might have been harvesting those 4 million cubic metres, as in past years, but without causing damage to the ecology of the Northern Caucasus. A representative from the Ukrainian Ministry of the Timber Industry. I. Davydenko, was the sole speaker in support of the widespread introduction of cable installations on an experimental basis. In the Carpathians, 150 of these units were in operation, with 800,000 cubic metres of timber harvested annually. It was deplorable that throughout the country as a whole, including the Ukraine, only 1,100,000 cubic metres were being obtained by this method.



On the following morning, the participants in the seminar were familiarised with the latest type of self-propelled cable skidder, the universal ML-59, which was undergoing bench tests on the range. Being equipped with a telescopic mast, it will operate automatically without the use of a tractor and will be remotely controlled, either from a panel or by radio. It is difficult to estimate how much interest was generated by the demonstration, as the onlookers kept their impressions to themselves. Evidently, some people had been placing all their hopes on imported models, which were much admired. But since everyone knows that they are not to be had (a great deal of hard currency would be needed), only one way out suggested itself: let the ecology suffer until better times. But others spoke straight from the shoulder: "if we don't manage the mountain forests efficiently, they won't remain intact for our successors". There was no question in the minds of the participants that the domestic models were inferior to the foreign made ones.

Now, however, we are in a position to state that our country does in fact, have environment-sparing machinery. For those who would like to acquire it, here is a brief description of some of the models:

1. The LL-26B skids assortments weighing 3.2 tonnes by the overhead method over a distance of 1,000 metres. A variant of it - the LL-30 - skids tree-length logs (3.2 tonnes) for hoisting and lowering by the overhead method over the same distance. Both are widely used in the Carpathians.

2. Their "sister", the ML-50, skids tree-length logs (6.3 tonnes) for hoisting by the overhead method over a distance of 1,000 metres.



A self-propelled unit - the LL-31 - is intended for overhead and semi-overhead skidding of tree-length logs (without the use of a tractor) over a distance of 700 metres in "hoist" or "lower" operating regimes and is used in various parts of the USSR.

The output per shift of these cable installations is between 40 and 80 cubic metres. Further information is obtainable from the Caucasian Branch of the Central Research Institute of Mechanization and Power Engineering in the Timber Industry (TsNIIME), 350630 Krasnodar, Ulitsa Zheleznodorozhnaya 24.

Moreover, for the mountain forests of the Urals, Siberia and the Far East the Irkutsk Research Institute of the Timber Industry has designed the self-propelled ML-43, which skids tree-length logs (without a tractor) over a distance of 350 metres. Thus, there is already a choice of models for those who want to do something tangible for the ecology. And in a year from now, in 1991, the Caucasian Branch of TsNIIME is expected to launch the ML-59 universal self-propelled unit, which will be as good as the best foreign models. Yes, it can now be said that the technical problem is, in the main, solved. But how long will it be before the destructive tractor quits the mountain forests for good?

Some astonishing figures were cited on the subject of helicopter haulage costs. Despite the fact that a cubic metre of timber moved by helicopter is three or four times dearer than one that is tractor-skidded, in the Guzeripl'skii timber industry enterprise (lespromkhoz) they are paying between 1,000 and 1,600 roubles per flying hour, depending on the type of aircraft, to transfer 50 to 60 cubic

metres of timber per shift from the inaccessible slopes. This was obviously an exception, for who would incur such ruinous expenditures under the system of profit-and-loss accounting? Even so, in the "Druzhba" Furniture and Woodworking Production Association, of which the Guzeripl'skii lespromkhoz is a part, they are allocating a million roubles in the coming year to lease helicopters, which will be used to haul out approximately 10 or 11 thousand cubic metres of timber.

Now that the enterprises can go to foreign markets independently, it makes sense to use this capability to earn funds for the introduction of ecology-sparing technology. Given the heavy foreign demand for forest products, a part of the output should be sold for currency.

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