



**Alexey Savinov**  
**Head of the Russian**  
**Federal Forestry**  
**Agency**

**“In times of global financial and economic crisis and globalization of economy, the role of state forest management is essential for the sustainable development of society and the attainment of the goals formulated in United Nations Millennium Declaration.”**

This is the opinion of **Alexey Savinov, Head of the Russian Federal Forestry Agency** who will be speaking at the Inaugural Session of the XIII World Forestry Congress in Argentina.

**Moscow - Rome, FAO headquarters** - “In times of global financial and economic crisis and globalization of economy, the role of state forest management is essential for the sustainable development of society and the attainment of the goals formulated in United Nations Millennium Declaration.” Read the interview with **Alexey Savinov, Head of the Russian Federal Forestry Agency** who will be speaking at the Inaugural Session of the XIII World Forestry Congress in Argentina.

**Q) What impact does state participation in forest management exert upon economic and social development?**

**A)** The role of state as a public and social institution in the forest management largely depends on socio-economic development level of society. The appearance of a planned forest economy in Russia 200 years ago was due to state influenced expansion policy in the world and also to the need for trade development. This epoch of important geographical discoveries required the creation of a proper fleet. **State influence on forest management is determined by its functions.** First and foremost comes legal regulation of forest relations, including: the establishment of legal norms related to use, protection, conservation and reproduction of forests in the interests of society; elaboration of strategic goals and forestry development objectives; organization of forest management systems for the achievement of targets set for forest sector development; and ensuring the requisite socio-economic conditions for the development of society.

Another, no less important, state function with regard to forests is preservation and maintenance of its ecological functions, to ensure favourable habitat and resolve global problems facing mankind.

It should be remembered that, **over the last few years in Russia, forestry has undergone a period of management decentralization** involving transfer of an essential part of state competences to the level of the subjects of the Russian Federation. **The necessary legal framework for the development of favourable economic conditions in the field of forest resources use is being created. We are very interested in the experience of other countries that have previously undergone their own series of reforms.** Taking into consideration the scale of forest resources in Russia and also the great attention given by the Government of the Russian Federation to the need for a modern forest sector it can be confidently stated that the role of the state in forest management will be adequate.

**Q) What impact did break-up of the USSR have on the forest sector of the Russian Federation?**

**A)** The period of radical, economic and political reforms following the break-up of the USSR did not bring the expected results. In spite of the shortcomings of planned economy of the Soviet Union, **the main problems of forestry in the '90s arose from the break-up of economic and business contacts amongst organizations** which, finding themselves in different states, were compelled to

build up anew their relations, under new conditions. This affected in particular forest organization, design and scientific organizations. **In Russia in the '90s, forestry, as well as other sectors of the economy, saw a sharp economic downturn take place.** The state faced serious problems relating to the fulfillment of its functions connected with forest management and financing of forestry arrangements. The volume of work in forestry and wood harvesting dropped several-fold. **In certain years, economic indices and production output in the forest sector were at the war level of the 1940's.** Nevertheless, we understand that change was necessary and we have succeeded in coming through this complex period. **We hope that, on the basis of existing experience, we shall also be able to overcome the international, financial crisis.**

**Q) How does the Russian Federation intend to meet the challenges related to a possible new international agreement on climate change?**

**A)** In 2004, the Russian Federation ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

In 2006, in accordance with the requirements of the Kyoto Protocol, the Russian assessment system of man-made (anthropogenic) emissions from sources and absorption by greenhouse gases absorbers, and the Russian register of carbonic units, were set up.

In 2008, as a result of confirmation by the competent bodies of the Kyoto Protocol of the fulfillment of all the requested conditions, **the Russian Federation was granted right of access to the flexibility mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol** (joint realization, trade in emissions and the Clean Development Mechanism).

Currently, preparatory work for the conclusion of the international agreements relating to a new climate regime for the period after 2012 is nearing completion and the position of Russia is as follows: **managed forests account for 69 percent of Russia's forestland.** The use of sustainable forest management methods through reduction of forest loss as a result of forest fires, other natural phenomena and organization of forest use based on long-term planning, will make it possible to regulate the dynamics of greenhouse gas absorption in the forest sector.

At a later stage, **we also intend to make more active use of international agreements to further develop forestry, improve forest management,** increase forest accounting information credibility and reliability regarding the state of forests, forest use, forest carbon storage assessment and the creation of carbon depositing plantations. **We hope that new climatic arrangements will provide extra incentive for the use of wood fuel as an alternative energy source.** In this way, **we hope to obtain from the new climatic arrangements additional opportunities for the development and expansion of Russia's existing forest potential** with a view to mitigating global climate changes.

**Alexey Savinov** served as Deputy Minister for Agriculture of the Russian Federation in 2008. He has occupied his current position as Head of the Russian Federal Forestry Agency since 2008.