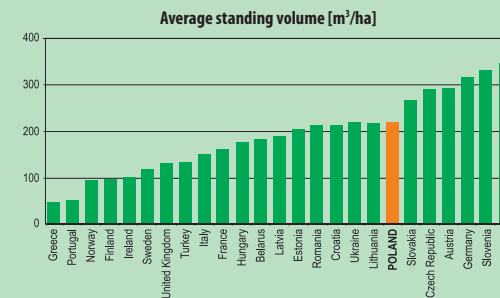


How much wood in the forest?

Timber resources in Europe's forests, likewise their area, steadily increase. In recent years, timber resources have increased by about 360 million m³ each year and now amount to nearly 114 billion m³. Timber resources in Poland's forests are estimated at about 2 billion m³ of merchantable timber.



The larch forest in Central Poland (M.O.)



of forest stands in the Czech Republic and Slovakia reaches an average of approximately 260 m³/ha. The average for Europe is about 140 m³/ha. In comparison, Polish forestry, with the prevalence of lowland forests, shows a relatively high average standing volume of 240 m³ of timber per hectare.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS • 2011

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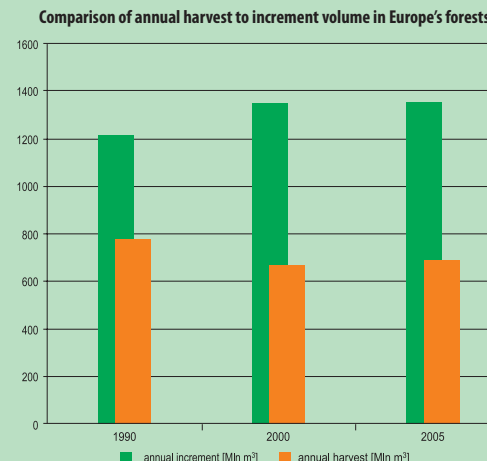
Higher increment than loss



Resonant spruce wood in the sawmill in Switzerland (J.D.)

In addition to their protective and recreational functions, forests also supply timber. Currently in Europe, wood consumption *per capita* ranges from 0.5 m³ in the south-eastern countries to 3 m³ in Scandinavia. Poland is ranked in the middle.

For the last dozen or so years, the volume of harvested timber in Europe has been increasing, but has always remained below the increment of the growing stock. Most countries harvest over 50% of the increment (except for Italy – 26% and Germany – 40%). In Poland this figure is 55%, which indicates that the remaining timber resources increase the volume of growing stock.



The primary quality of wood is its renewability. In contrast to our planet's natural resources, such as crude oil or coal, wood resources under sustainable forest management are inexhaustible. In addition, every year the incrementing layers of wood absorb and accumulate carbon which is the main constituent element of the wood building substance. Among European countries, the largest fixed carbon resources in forests are in Germany, Sweden and France (over 1.1–1.2 billion tonnes of C), the lowest in Switzerland, Lithuania and Hungary (about 150 million tonnes of C). Poland, along with Ukraine and Italy, is ranked in the middle (700 million tonnes of C).

Forests provide jobs



Timber harvest in the Swiss Alps (J.D.)

Employment in the forestry sector across Europe (data as of 2007, covering 41 countries) exceeds 1 million people, the timber industry employs more than 1.35 million, and the pulp and paper industry – a further million. In total, forests provide jobs for more than three million people. This figure does not include pickers of forest floor fruits and mushrooms, cork producers, tourist guides, owners of hotel facilities and tourist services in the immediate vicinity of forests, etc.

350 thousand people are directly employed in forestry in the EU countries. The number of forest owners is estimated at 16 million, but it is difficult to estimate how many of them earn their living exclusively from forest resources.

In Poland, forests and forest management are of a significant social importance. The State Forests today employ nearly 25 thousand people

across the country, including 16 thousand in the Forest Service. Forest also provides work for nearly 50 thousand people involved directly in commercial, cultural and protective activities, while the total number of people employed in the sectors such as wood processing and manufacture of wood products, furniture and paper making, including their suppliers, is estimated at 300 thousand.



Foresters of the Polish Forest Service during the registration of wood (M.K.)

POLAND  The State Forests

GREEN



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