

# INFORET

-- Actualités --

## Actualités



### Résumé :

Le Kremlin devrait bientôt vendre 8,4 millions de km<sup>2</sup> de forêts russes à de compagnies privées d'exploitation du bois. 8,4 millions de km<sup>2</sup>, c'est 49 % de la superficie totale de la Russie (17 millions de km<sup>2</sup>) !

Nouvelle catastrophe en perspective

## **8,4 millions de km<sup>2</sup> de forêt prêts à être vendus par le Kremlin**

Source : Transfert.net -  
Matthieu Auzanneau

woodman  
jeudi 18 décembre 2003

## 8,4 millions de km<sup>2</sup> de forêt prêts à être vendus par le Kremlin

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Cette décision fait redouter un désastre écologique, rapporte le quotidien britannique The Guardian. De la Baltique au Pacifique, la forêt couvre 70 % du territoire Russe et enjambe 12 fuseaux horaires : c'est le "poumon" du continent eurasiatique. Après la forêt amazonienne, les conifères de la taïga russe forment le second ensemble forestier mondial. Ils réabsorbent 15 % des émissions de CO<sub>2</sub>, le gaz à effet de serre considéré comme le principal responsable du changement climatique.

Andrei Ptichnikov, de World Wildlife Fund de Russie note : "La Russie dispose de 22 % de la forêt de la planète. La taïga est très importante à l'équilibre du climat à cause des espèces rares qui y poussent."

La loi de privatisation préparée à Moscou va permettre la mise en vente de concessions d'exploitation pour une durée 99 ans.

Le texte d'origine :

Ecological disaster looms if Russia sells forests

THE GUARDIAN , MOSCOW Saturday, Sep 20, 2003,Page 6 A plan by the Kremlin which would allow Moscow to sell off the 843 million hectares of Russia's forests to private logging companies has raised fears of an ecological disaster.

Forest makes up 70 percent of Russia's territory and spans 12 time zones. It is known as Europe's lungs and is second only to the Amazon in the amount of carbon dioxide it absorbs, and is home to many rare species.

Law reviewed

On Wednesday the Kremlin decided to review the law on state ownership of Russia's forests, currently under the management of the ministry of natural resources, so they could be bought up by private companies. The estimated value of the land at private sale has been put at US\$164 billion. Yet environmentalists fear that the cost of its destruction to the planet, and air quality in Europe, may be far higher.

Andrei Ptichnikov, forest coordinator of the World Wildlife Fund, Russia, said : "Russia has 22 percent of the forest on earth -- a very important part of climate stability and global biodiversity because of all the rare species that live there. According to some estimates, Russian forests absorb 15 percent of the world's carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide. It provides a huge amount of oxygen for not just Europe, but the world."

A new draft of the forest code -- a part of Russian law notorious among bureaucrats and ecologists for being as dense and impenetrable as the forest it governs -- focuses on selling off the forest to private companies. At present, private firms can lease some of the land from the government for up to 49 years. The Kremlin heavily regulates its use.

Chance to buy

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The new law however gives any private company the chance to buy the forest land outright, or to have use of it for up to 99 years and then buy it. The government hopes it will be approved by parliament by Nov. 1.

A spokesman for Alexander Belyakov, head of the parliamentary committee on natural resources, which has to approve and refine the new law, insisted that if the forest is used properly, it should grow back to 80 percent its previous size.

In order to get the legislation through before December's parliamentary elections, they intend to amend the last law, rather than push through a new one.

He added that the law is being carefully scrutinized to ensure the state does not lose out if oil or other natural resources are found beneath the soil after the land is sold off.

In Russia, logged wood sells for US\$1 a cubic metre, whereas it sells for US\$30 in Finland and US\$15 in Estonia. "Prices are cheaper, but there is also less money to keep the forest going," he said. "It is difficult to see how that can change. Forest companies do not want their prices to go up."

Timber contraband already represents a large problem in the region, with Russia losing US\$30 billion a year from the illegal trade in wood with China and Japan, according to a report by the World Wildlife Fund last year. Legal exports accounted for only US\$4.15 billion in 2001, they added, calling for stricter state control.

### Species threatened

The potential levelling of vast swaths of the Siberian forest could also threaten the existence of several endangered species.

The far eastern leopard, of which there are only 30 left, and the Siberian tiger, of which 400 remain, would all suffer from widespread logging.

Rare trees such as the Siberian cedar pine and Korean cedar pine are also threatened in Russia's far east, and the wild chestnut, already being illegally logged in the Caucasus, is also at risk.

*Post-scriptum :*

"Ecological disaster looms if Russia sells forests" (*The Guardian*) : [site d'origine](#)

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