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Summary (Valeriy Podkorytov)

The Round Wood Grading and Quality Assessment Manual

Ukraine is facing an urgent need to develop the uniform standards for round timber that would comply with the European regulatory prototypes. This is due to the emergence of new timber conversion technologies, raising requirements for its quality, European integration processes in the forest sector and expansion of our country international trade relations in the forest market.

The main difference between Ukraine's acting regulations (GOST) and the European standards is stipulated by the methods of grading and determining log volume, and sorting timber by quality classes (grades) and assortments. Ukraine uses as the main method a piece of timber grading method and determining log volume by the top diameter and volume tables (GOST 2708-75). Logs are graded in three grades, and GOSTs provide for logging of about 30 different assortments.

The EU uses timber measuring using the automated timber measurement systems as the main method, which corresponds to a piece of timber method for measuring the median diameter. Logs are graded in four quality classes – A, B, C, D – for coniferous and soft-leaved species, such as oak, beech, maple, ash; and in three quality classes – A, B, C – for soft-leaved species (poplar). By the assortments, round timber is divided into timber for unknown purpose, and timber for specific use. In the first case it is graded according to grading standards, and in the second case according to an agreement (contract).

In Ukraine, new national standards for round timber based on the European regulations are being developed since 2001. Then, the first European-style national standard for round timber (DSTU 4020-2-2001) was approved. From 2001 to 2005 10 more regulations were adopted as national standards based on the European regulations. There are 13 interstate standards (GOST) for round timber now acting in Ukraine, which compliance is mandatory. National standards that have been developed on the basis of the European standards for round timber (total of 11) are a general guideline only.

These DSTU standards are closely linked with the European terminology standards EN (8), which are not yet harmonized, i.e. not translated into Ukrainian.

The manual is designed at the request of interested parties on the basis of harmonized European standards (DSTU) and can serve as a guide in the transition to the new standards for round timber through their improvement by the State Committee of Ukraine for Consumer Standards (SCUCS or Derzhspozhyvstandart) making appropriate changes.

For Ukraine, the application of these standards is a prerequisite for support and development of round timber exports to Europe. Implementation of the European standardization methodology and timber trade principles is rather efficient instrument for Ukraine's domestic market. The manual outlined the most important standards to achieve these goals, such as terminology, measurement and round timber classification standards.

The manual is intended for permanent forest users, woodworkers, timber trade organizations' professionals, students of educational institutions and other employees operating in the industries related to round timber circulation. It may also be useful for professionals in finalizing national standards (DSTU) for round timber designed to respond to modern requirements.