

Section 3.—Forest Depletion

General information on forest depletion and increment as well as statistics on forest fires and fire losses are presented in this Section. The scientific control of the influences that account for wastage, such as forest fires, insect pests, etc., is dealt with in Section 5.

The average annual rate and cause of depletion of reserves of merchantable timber during the ten years 1953-62, together with data for the year 1962 are given in Table 4. Of the total depletion of the forests in the ten-year period, 86 p.c. was utilized and 14 p.c. was destroyed by fire. (Information on the extent of damage caused by agencies other than fire, such as insects, disease and natural mortality, is not available.) The average annual utilization of 3,232,353,000 cu. feet comprised 50 p.c. logs and bolts, 40 p.c. pulpwood, over 8 p.c. fuelwood and almost 2 p.c. other products. A little over 4 p.c. of the total utilization was exported in the form of logs and bolts and pulpwood.

The productive forests of Canada covering an area of 967,946 sq. miles constitute the reserve from which forest production will be obtained for many years to come. The supply of merchantable timber on this area is estimated at 751,883,000,000 cu. feet and the utilization in 1962 of 3,432,000,000 cu. feet therefore represented less than one half of one per cent of the supply. However, it should be noted that utilization does not occur evenly throughout the productive forest area but is concentrated on the relatively small area of occupied forest land (land under lease, licence or private ownership). Thus, overcutting may occur on many of these occupied areas, emphasizing the need for orderly management of all commercial forests if the forest industries are to maintain their important position in the Canadian economy. The more efficient utilization of cut timber is an important factor related to forest depletion, for there is little doubt that in the past too high a percentage of the sawn log was discarded. However, changes of great significance have taken place recently in the uses of wood, permitting the utilization of sizes, qualities and species previously considered unmerchantable.

4.—Forest Utilization and Depletion, 1962 compared with Ten-Year Average 1953-62

Item	Usable Wood		Percentage of Total Depletion	
	Average 1953-62	1962 ^r	Average 1953-62	1962 ^r
	M cu. ft.	M cu. ft.	M cu. ft.	M cu. ft.
Products Utilized—				
Logs and Bolts—				
Domestic use.....	1,608,424	1,882,885	42.8	52.9
Exported.....	8,399	11,855	0.2	0.3
Pulpwood—				
Domestic use.....	1,153,597	1,138,933	30.7	32.0
Exported.....	128,933	104,119	3.4	2.9
Fuelwood.....	276,731	228,456	7.4	6.4
Other products.....	56,269	65,554	1.5	1.8
Totals, Utilization.....	3,232,353	3,431,802	86.0	96.5
Wastage—				
By forest fires.....	526,220	125,532	14.0	3.5
Totals, Depletion.....	3,758,573	3,557,334	100.0	100.0

Forest Fire Statistics.—There were 7,670 forest fires reported in Canada during 1963 but, although the number was 27.2 p.c. higher than the annual average for the previous ten years, fire losses were light. The total area burned was only 17 p.c. of the ten-year