

CONCLUSIONS

A. General Summary

18. In one sense, world needs for the products of pulp—newsprint, other printing and writing papers, wrappings, packaging material, and textile fibres—are far greater than existing supplies. This was the tenor of the message from UNESCO, with which the Conference agreed in principle. However, physical limitations as well as the economic and financial problems connected with the acquisition of desirable supplies seem to stand in the way of meeting consumer needs as disclosed by UNESCO. Accordingly, the Conference had to restrict its deliberations to the present and future effective demand of the pulp-using industries.

19. The Conference estimates show approximate equilibrium between world production and requirements for 1948 to 1955. If these figures are confirmed by subsequent developments there should be no major wood-pulp surplus or deficit during the period under review.

20. The war has brought about a major change in the distribution of pulp-production and pulp-consumption as between different regions of the world. North America, which in 1937 produced 44 per cent. and consumed 51 per cent. of the world output, now produces 68 per cent. and consumes 71 per cent. The production and consumption of Europe, on the other hand, have fallen from 50 per cent. and 42 per cent. respectively in 1937 to 27 per cent. and 25 per cent. in 1948. The relative and absolute importance of consumption in Asia and the Far East have been reduced, largely because of the changed situation of Japan. In Latin America, and in Oceania large percentage increases in output have occurred, but the tonnages in both regions are small in terms of world production.

21. Although 1948 production was the highest on record, it was estimated that there was in existence unused pulp-producing capacity to the extent of 4,300,000 tons in Europe and of more than 1,000,000 tons in other parts of the world, mainly in Japan. At the same time a large amount of new capacity was building or planned.

22. The increases for consumption and production of wood-pulp and pulp products forecast for 1955 are subject to limitations which, particularly in Europe and Japan, may place grave difficulties in the way of their fulfilment. On the continent of Europe, but with less application to the northern countries, forests have been heavily overcut during the war and post-war years, and these accelerated rates of cutting cannot be sustained indefinitely without disastrous results. Full use of the pulp-productive capacity which already exists would require an increase of more than 60 per cent. in Europe in the rate of cuttings achieved in 1947 if full reliance were to be placed on the forests of the region. This appears to be improbable because of the high level of demands for other and competitive forest products, such as saw timber and pit-props. The situation is made more acute by the cessation of exports of pulp-wood from the U.S.S.R. Current estimates for European pulp-production in 1955 would require net imports of pulp-wood in excess of 3,000,000 cubic metres (m.3). This figure is to be compared to a total European pulpwood cut expected to range from 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 cubic metres (m.3) around 1955. Yet this deficiency raises a difficult problem since it affects primarily the countries of eastern Europe, which, in view of the present state of their forest resources, have to rely on large pulpwood imports.

23. The Japanese Government desires to increase wood-pulp production substantially, in spite of the domestic forests being overcut twice their annual growth. This Japanese production plan does not have the approval of the Occupation Forces. Prospects for large imports of pulp-wood are not good because of the lack of adequate funds by the Japanese.