

THE FINNISH FOREST INDUSTRY IN RUSSIA

ON THE THORNY PATH TOWARDS ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The vast majority of the old-growth forests remaining in Europe are located in the North of European Russia. These Russian forests have been considered as an inexhaustible source of cheap raw material for the West European forest industry. Consequently, the Russian forests have received much emphasis in the debate on conservation of the biodiversity of boreal forests.

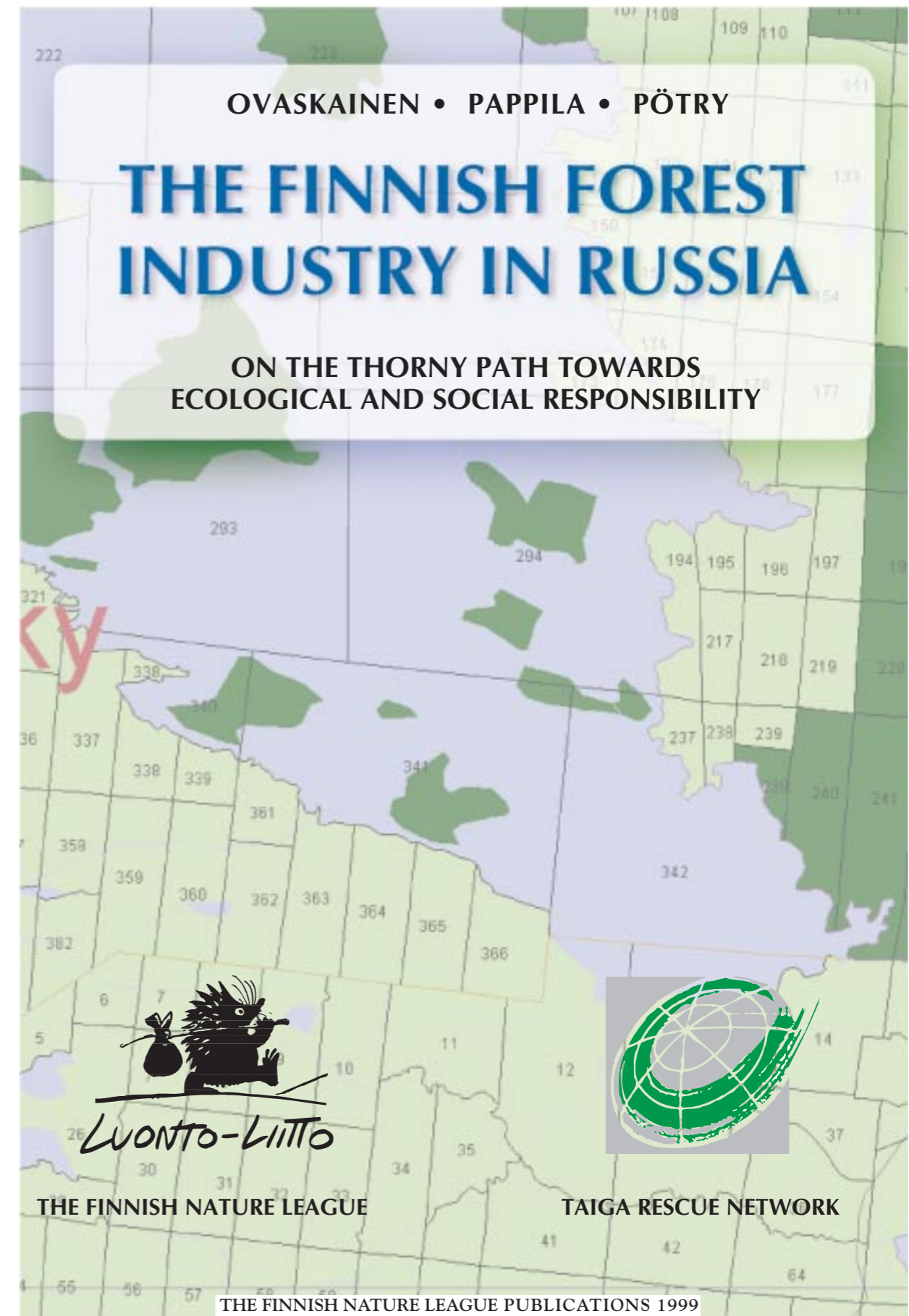
In Northwest Russia, the role of the Finnish industry is predominant. About 75% of all roundwood exported from this area goes to Finland. Thus the Finnish forest industry carries a major responsibility for the ecological and social sustainability of the utilisation of these forests. The first steps towards ecological responsibility have already been taken by most of the major Finnish companies, with acceptance of the moratorium on logging from the old-growth forests of Karelia and Murmansk. But much remains to be done.

This publication describes the state of Russian forests and forestry in 1999, concentrating on the role of the Finnish forest industry. A detailed description of 22 Finnish companies is included.

The publication also reviews the debate between the environmental organisations and the forest industry that has led to the current situation.



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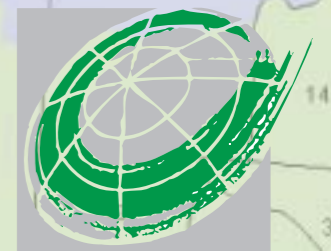
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