

Indicator 31. Supply and Consumption of Wood and Wood Products, Including Consumption Per Capita

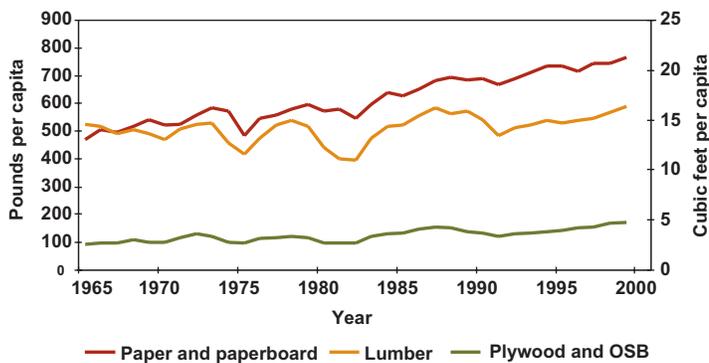


Figure 31-1. Wood and paper product consumption per capita, 1965-1999.

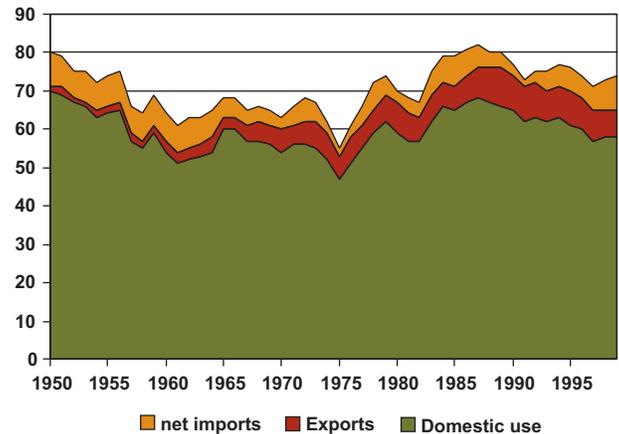


Figure 31-2. Wood use per capita to make wood and paper products consumed in the United States, 1950-1999.

What Is the Indicator and Why Is It Important?

Consumption of wood products per capita is one indication of the value people and businesses place on using wood products, given their relative availability reflected by prices, prices of substitutes; their perceived use qualities; and environmental benefits and costs. The amount of consumption from domestic supply (versus imports) indicates the degree to which resources, investment, management, and regulation for U.S. forests and U.S. industry meet U.S. consumer demand. Domestic fiber supply comes from recycled fiber and U.S. wood harvest. Harvest is influenced by many factors, including investment, management, regulation, and owner objectives, and it changes timber productivity and ecosystem conditions in various regions. Changing productivity and forest conditions in various regions also influences the level of harvest that is possible to meet consumer demand. Harvest of wood for imports to the United States and export of U.S. products influences forestry and the forest industry in other countries.

What Does the Indicator Show?

Per capita consumption of wood and paper products in 1999 was 1,580 pounds (lbs) (up from 1,240 lbs in 1950), with an additional 9 cubic feet (cf) consumed as fuel wood (down from 15 cf in 1950). This

consumption required 74 cf of roundwood equivalent of wood harvest per capita in the United States and other countries, (80 cf in 1950). Wood needed for industrial products (not fuel wood) was roughly constant at 65 cf per capita. Consumption also used 272 lbs of recovered paper per capita in 1999, up from 105 lbs in 1965. Per capita consumption of sawn wood for the United States, all developed countries, and the world in total are, respectively, 19, 9, and 2 cf for 2000. Per capita consumption of paper and paperboard for the United States, all developed countries, and the world in total are, respectively, 729, 388, and 118 lbs for 2000. A key use of solidwood products is home construction: 1.7 million units in 1999. The main paper and paperboard uses in 1999 were containerboard, 33 percent; printing and writing paper, 31 percent; newsprint, 13 percent; and tissue and sanitary paper, 7 percent. The portion of wood required for U.S. wood and paper products consumption that came from imports (versus U.S. harvest) has increased from 13 percent in 1950 to 20 percent in 1999. If wood for exports is deducted from wood for imports, wood for net imports decreases from 11 percent to 9 percent of wood needed for consumption. Between 1952 and 1996, per capita wood supply increased in the South – (31 to 38 cf), decreased in the West – (22 to 16 cf), and remained constant in the North.