

**THE LAW ON THE AMENDMENT OF THE FOREST LAW
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

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1999, NR.: 110-3203; 2000, NR.: 111-3566)

Article 1. New edition of the Forest Law of the Republic of Lithuania

The Forest Law of the Republic of Lithuania shall be amended and laid down as following:

LAW ON FORESTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

**CHAPTER 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Article 1. Purpose of the Law

The purpose of the Forest Law is to regulate reforestation, protection and use and to form the legal preconditions for the management of all ownership type forests upon equal sustainable forestry principles, ensuring a rational use of the forest resources by supplying with the industrial material, preservation of the *biodiversity, increase of forest productivity, landscape stability and environment quality possibility* to perform the ecological, economical and social functions without inflicting damage to other ecosystems.

Article 2. The major definitions of the Law

(1) **Forest** – a land area not less than 0.1 hectare in size covered with trees, the height of which in a natural site in the maturity age is not less than 5 meters, other forest plants as well as thinned or vegetation-lost forest due to the acts of nature or human activities (cutting areas, burnt areas, clearings). Tree lines up to 10 meters of width in fields, at roadsides, water bodies, in living areas and cemeteries, single trees and bushes, parks planted and grown by man in urban and rural areas are not defined as forests. The procedures for care, protection and use of these plantings shall be established by the Ministry of Environment.

(2) **Forest stand** – part of forest where the storey's structure of woody forest plants is even, with a predomination of a certain tree species, the vegetation is of similar age, having a common site and it is the part which distinguishes itself upon those criteria from nearby forest parts.

(3) **Forest land** – an area covered with forest (forest stands) and non - forest covered areas (cutting areas, dead forest stand areas, forest clearings, nursery areas, forest seed orchards, raw-material bushings and plantations). Forest roads, forest block, technological and fire break lines, areas covered by timber storage houses and other forest-related equipment, recreation grounds, animal feed grounds, and land assigned for afforestation is ascribed to forest land as well.

(4) **Forest group** – forest land areas with similar basic forest management objectives and regimes.

(5) **Urban (city) forests** – forests on the urban territories.

(6) **Forest parks** – forest areas not less than 3 hectares used for intensive recreation with appropriate recreation equipment and infrastructure.

(7) **Forest resources** – non-cut forests, resin, stumps and the resinous, tree bark, bast and birch-bark, sap, Christmas trees, other decorative forest materials, branches, twigs, mushrooms, nuts, berries, fruits, herbs and medical materials, forest litter and leaves, and forest vegetation.

- (8) **Non-cut forest** – growing trees, dead-wood, windfalls, windbreaks and other non-cut woody forest plants.
- (9) **Forest estate** – a forest land area managed upon private or state ownership rights.
- (10) **Forest owners** – the state and the citizens of the Republic of Lithuania which, obtained the ownership rights for forests upon the procedures set forth by the Law.
- (11) **Forest governors** - forest enterprises, administrations of state strict nature reserves, administrations of national parks, municipalities, other state enterprises and organisations possessing the forest governance right provided by the Government upon the procedures set forth by the Law.
- (12) **Forest users** – legal and natural persons having obtained forest and forest resource use right following the procedures set forth by this Law and other legal acts.
- (13) **State forest officers** – officers of state forest governance and state forest control institutions, forest protection staff of forest enterprises having the powers established by the Law. The list of offices of the state forest officers shall be approved by the Ministry of Environment.
- (14) **Forest enterprises** – state enterprises governing and using state forests upon the property-confide basis and disposing them upon the procedures set forth by the Law and performing complex forestry activities and other activities defined under the statutes of the forest enterprise.
- (15) **The General State Forest Enterprise under the Ministry of Environment** – economic administration institution of state forests ascribed to the forest enterprises which organises and co-ordinates reforestation, maintenance, protection and forest resource use of these forests.
- (16) **Complex forestry activities** – activities, covering reforestation, maintenance, protection, rational use of forest resources and trade in timber and forest resources.
- (17) **Forest management planning** – forestry planning system covering forest inventory and recording, analysis of forest condition, use and economic activities and forestry organising and development project preparation.

Article 3. Forest groups, objectives of economic activities and regime

- (1) Forests are divided into groups upon the objectives of the economic activities, their regime and the major functional purpose.
- (2) Group I – strict reserves forests. These are the strict reserves and small strict reserves forests on the territories of state strict nature reserves, state parks and biosphere monitoring territories. Objective of economic activities – to preserve the forests for a natural growth. Forest cuttings, except for the cases defined under the Law on Protected Areas and the Regulations of strict nature reserves, are not made.
- (3) Group II – forests of special purpose, split into the following:
- 1) A – ecosystem protection forests. Landscape, telmologic, pedologic, botanical, forest genetic, zoological, botanical-zoological reserves and reserves of these types in national parks and biosphere monitoring territories, forests with protected natural resource areas, anti-erosion and other forests. Objective of economic activities – to preserve or restore forest ecosystems or separate ecosystem components. Forests damaged by the natural calamities or biotic factors, forest stands of poor sanitary condition shall be cut by non-clear or clear sanitary cuttings. The forest stands which reached the natural maturity can be cut by final non-clear cuttings;
 - 2) B – recreational forests. Recreational forests cover forest parks, urban (city) forests, forests of recreation zones of the state parks, recreational forest areas and other forests defined for recreation. Objective of economic activities – to form and preserve the recreational forest environment. Forest stands damaged by the natural calamities or biotic factors and forest stands of poor sanitary condition shall be cut by non-clear or clear sanitary cuttings. The forest stands which reached the natural maturity can be cut by final non-clear cuttings. All types of forest thinning, sanitary and landscape formation cuttings are allowed. Cuttings shall be performed after the recreation season except for the forest stands damaged by the natural calamities or biotic factors.

(4) Group III – protective forests. These are the forests in the territories of geological, geomorphological, hidrographical, and cultural reserves, reserves of these types in the state parks and biosphere monitoring territories, forests of protection zones and other forests. Objective of economic activities – to form productive forest stands, capable of performing the functions of protection of soils, air, water and human living surroundings. Non-clear and small-area (up to 5 hectares) clear-cut cuttings, forest tending and sanitary cuttings permitted.

(5) Group IV – economic (commercial) forests. These are the forests not ascribed to I-III groups. Objective of economic activities – to form productive forest stands and supply wood continuously following environment protection requirement. All types of cuttings permitted. Clear cutting areas shall not exceed 8 hectares.

(6) The sanitary clear-cutting areas at II, III, and IV group of forests shall not be limited.

(7) Certain parts of the forest reserves may be ascribed to different forest groups, following territory-planning documents.

(8) The procedure and regulations for forest ascribing to certain groups shall be defined and performed by the Government upon the proposal of the Ministry of Environment.

Article 4. Forest ownership rights and forests of state significance

(1) Forests can belong to the state or citizens of the Republic of Lithuania upon the right of ownership. The state ownership predominates in the forests of the Republic of Lithuania upon the forest areas.

(2) The state forest can be leased for recreation, hunting or other purposes by the Government or its authorised institution except for the cases related to organising of economic activities.

(3) Private forest estates shall not be split into parts if the estate equals or is below the size of 5 hectares.

(4) The forests of state significance belong to the Republic of Lithuania on exclusive ownership rights. The forests of state significance are:

1) forests of the state strict nature reserves, state park strict reserves and small strict reserves, the Kursiu nerija (Curonian Spit) National Park forests;

2) urban (city) forests;

3) state forest nurseries and seed orchards ;

4) forests belonging to the objects of forest scientific research and training, seed breeding and selection the areas of which are approved by the Government;

5) state forest belts with the width of 7 km at the Baltic Sea and the Curonian Spit having no ownership rights restituted upon the Law on Restitution of the Citizen Ownership Rights for the Remaining Real Estate Property;

6) other forests ascribed to the forests of state significance upon decisions of the Government.

(5) The Government or the Ministry of Environment authorised by the Government possesses the rights and obligations of the state forest owner.

(6) The state forests are managed upon the property-confide basis by forest enterprises, administrations of state strict nature reserves, administrations of national parks, municipalities, other state enterprises and organisations possessing the forest management right provided upon the procedures set forth by the Law.

Article 5. State management of forests and supervision of implementation of the Forest Law

(1) The state forestry policy trends are defined by Seimas (Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania) by adopting appropriate laws.

(2) The state forestry strategy and state forestry programmes are prepared by the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Environment, during the performance of the state forestry administration functions:

- 1) organises forestry strategy and state forestry development programmes preparation;
 - 2) organises forest coverage increase, forest genetic fund, landscape and biodiversity preservation, selection and seed breeding, forest resource use, and other programme project preparation and co-ordinates the implementation of these programmes;
 - 3) prepares drafts of legal acts on the forestry issues;
 - 4) organises and co-ordinates the inventory of all forests of the country, preparation of forest management projects, co-ordinates forest monitoring;
 - 5) organises the state accounting of forests and formation of the Forest State Cadaster of the Republic of Lithuania;
 - 6) prepares annual forest cutting norm projects for state forests;
 - 7) organises the International co-operation related to the forestry sector.
- (3) The State Environment Protection Inspection and its territorial forest control divisions perform condition, use, reforestation and protection control functions for all forests of the country:
- 1) controls the observance of the Law on Forests and performs the state control function of all ownership type forest condition, use, reforestation, and protection;
 - 2) issues permissions for forest cutting for the state forest governors and private forest owners upon the procedures defined by the Ministry of Environment;
 - 3) controls forest management work quality;
 - 4) consults private forest owners on the issues of forest use, reforestation, maintenance, and protection.
- (4) Reforestation, maintenance, protection and forest resource use is organised and co-ordinated by the General State Forest Enterprise under the Ministry of Environment. The General State Forest Enterprise under the Ministry of Environment during the performance of its functions:
- 1) acts as the founder (establisher) of the forest enterprises and co-ordinates their activities;
 - 2) establishes the obligatory norms for forest enterprises for reforestation, protection and management works;
 - 3) organises the general state fire-emergency and sanitary forest protection system;
 - 4) organises and co-ordinates reforestation, protection, management and forest resource use in relation to progressive technologies.
- (5) Private forests are reforested, managed and used by private forest owners following the Law on Forests as well as Regulations on Management and Use of Private Forests and other legal acts regulating the forest management approved by the Government or the Ministry of Environment authorised by the Government taking into regard proposals of private forest owner organisations. Private forest owners have the right to joint into associations and co-operatives upon the procedures set forth by the Law, establish enterprises and organisations. The state shall promote and support private forestry development, private forest owners self-governing organisations which provide consulting and economic activities for private forest owners. Forest owners co-operatives shall have the status of agricultural co-operatives.

Article 6. Rights and obligations of the state forest officers

- (1) The state forest officers shall have the right to:
- 1) possess and wear established types of uniforms and distinctive tokens;
 - 2) stop vehicles carrying timber and other forest production, check the documents of origin of timber or other forest production carried by these vehicles, and also, in case of suspicion for illegal obtaining of this production, check the personal documents of the carrying vehicles, use forced stopping measures of transporting vehicles;

- 3) demand certifications from legal and natural persons regarding the obtaining and use of the forest resources, and in case of their absence – demand written or spoken explanations for actions related to the use of forest resources;
- 4) to take over the illegally obtained timber and other forest production from the transgressors, poach accessories and other material evidence of transgressions upon procedures set forth by the Law;
- 5) to bring the transgressors to police headquarters or into the municipality premises of alderman offices in rural areas for identification of personalities, writing of protocols and acts;
- 6) stop or prohibit illegal economic activities in forest estates if these activities infringe the Law and requirements set forth by other legal acts and when damage to forest is made;
- 7) conclude administrative infringement protocols upon the procedures set forth by the Law, impose administrative penalties for infringements of this Law and infringements of the requirements of other legal acts defined under the Administrative Law Infringement Code;
- 8) possess, carry, and use firearms and special accessories upon the procedures set forth by Firearm and Ammunition Control Law and other laws in case of infringements defined under Article 6, Part 2 of this Law. In case of refusal to fulfil the legitimate demands of the officer, the officer shall have the right to use compulsion, but as far as it shall appear necessary for the fulfilment of his official duty, and only after all possible persuasive or other means were inefficient;
- 9) the state forest officers shall also have other rights provided by the Law.

(2) The state forest officer shall have the right to use physical compulsion, special means or firearms when it is related with the execution of his duties during forest protection:

- 1) when protecting himself or other persons from excess or directly threatening danger to the life or the health;
- 2) during detention of transgressors or persons convicting crimes who avoid detention actively and when it appears impossible to detain them otherwise, and also in cases when such persons refuse to fulfil a legitimate demand to lay down firearms or other objects able to damage a human when it appears impossible to disarm such persons otherwise;
- 3) in case of attempts to take over the firearms and when it is repel attack of protected objects if its is life-threatening.

(3) It is prohibited to use physical compulsion or special accessories and firearms against women if it is obvious that they are pregnant, and against other persons if it is obvious that they are disabled, under-aged when their age is known to the officer or when their appearance corresponds to their age, except for cases when they resist in a life- or health-threatening way or in case of attacks of groups of such persons when such attacks are life- or health-threatening. It is prohibited to use firearms at public-gathering places if there is a threat of damaging of others.

(4) State forest officers and forest enterprise employees shall not have the right to work on a hired basis, be establishers or participants (shareholders, members, interest holders, etc.) of legal persons, private timber preparation, wood processing, timber and wood trade and hunting service companies and perform other activities prohibited by the Law.

(5) The tasks, functions, and duties of the state forest officers shall be defined by the Regulations of the State Forest Officers. The regulations shall be approved by the Government.

Article 7. Economic regulation of state forestry

(1) Forest enterprises act upon the Law of State and Municipal Enterprises, perform complex forestry activities in state forests, sell ready-made forest production, non-cut forests and provide services upon procedures established by the Government or the Ministry of Environment authorised by the Government. Taking into regard the capital of forest enterprises, land and forest shall not be included into accounting in terms of value expression.

(2) Obligatory 5 per cent deductions shall be calculated to the state budget revenues from forest enterprise incomes for the raw material timber an non-cut forests sold as defined under procedures established by the Government for meeting of the general forestry needs. These deductions shall be included into state budget revenues and shall be used for financing of the Special (General Forestry Needs Financing Programme (forest inventory, accounting, preparation of state forest management projects, organising and maintenance of common independent on forest ownership rights state fire-emergency system, liquidation of natural calamity damages or pest source liquidation, forest science and projecting works, consultation and training of private forest owners, establishment of private forest owners organisational structures, organising of forest propaganda, for programmes implemented by forestry servicing organisations as well as financing of other forestry needs).

Article 8. Visits of persons at forests

(1) Physical persons shall have the right to visit forests freely, except for forests of strict nature reserves and special purpose objects (border zones, military objects, or similar) and forests where it shall be limited by the Law. Visiting persons can gather fruit, medical herbs and medical materials, except for the plant species, the list of which is approved by the Ministry of Environment, can gather nuts, berries, and mushrooms, keep bees in state forests keeping them in hives and bee-coops following this Law, Law on Environment Protection and requirements of other legal acts.

(2) Upon the applications of the executive municipality institution forest enterprise, state park administrations, and private forest owners, and in city forests - without such applications, in the presence of important reasons (big forest fire emergency threat, forest cuttings, specialised economic activity areas, protected objects, necessity to preserve forest resources, forest businesses, and etc.) visits to of physical persons forest or use of medical herbs, mushrooms, berries and other forest resources can be prohibited or restricted.

(3) Visits to forests and use of forest resources in protected areas is regulated by the Law of Protected Areas and Regulations of Protected Areas, approved by the Government or the Ministry of Environment authorised by the Government.

(4) The forest areas of prohibited or restricted visiting shall be indicated by information signs built by forest governors, owners or users.

CHAPTER II FOREST USE

Article 9. Obligations of the forest governors, owners, and users

(1) Forests shall be managed upon the principle of sustainable use ensuring a continuous supply of timber and other forest resources and preserving annual or periodical balance between the timber growth and its use volume.

(2) Forest governors, owners, and users obligate to protect forests from fires, pests, diseases and other negative factors, to reforestate the cut forest in time and in a proper manner, to use forests in such ways which would decrease the negative impact to the environment, to perform rational economic activities on forest land (in forest), to maintain the soil productivity, preserve the biological diversity, follow laws and requirements defined by other legal acts.

(3) The forest users obligate to arrange damaged forest areas during the forest use in such a way to be suitable to use upon their purpose, to use the forest roads, drainage systems and other technological units with care without infringing the rights and legal interests of forest governors, owners, and other users.

(4) Forest governors and users in state forests shall follow the Regulations on Non-Cut State Forest Allotting and Marketing. These Regulations shall be adopted by the Government. The timber producers in state forests shall cut and take out the produced wood upon terms identified in forest use permissions, including extended terms. Forest cutting and produced wood take out terms may be extended up to 6 months upon requests of timber producers. The cut timber and non-taken out wood during the defined terms shall be transferred to the forest governor's property upon a gratuitous basis. The settings of forest cutting and produced wood take out term are defined under the Regulations on Non-cut State Forest Allotting and Marketing.

(5) Forest owners shall follow this law, the Regulations on Management and Use of Private Forests and other legal acts as well as the obligatory forest management project parts to be implemented, i.e. final cutting decade norms, reforestation and environmental requirements.

(6) It is prohibited to perform cuttings or use other forest resources without having a permission issued upon established procedures when such permissions are necessary upon legal acts in force.

(7) Private forest owners shall provide information and statistical data about forestry activities in their estates to the Ministry of Environment and the Department of Statistics.

(8) Roundwood measuring, accounting, and marking procedures shall be established by the Ministry of Environment.

Article 10. The right of forest governors, owners and users to use forests and forest resources

(1) Owners of private forests attain the right to use forest after receiving a document confirming the ownership of the land plot. Regulations on Management and Use of Private Forest are approved by the Government, taking into consideration the proposals of private forest owners organisations.

(2) Forest governors and users shall have the right, as established by the Government or the Ministry of Environment authorised by it, to use forests and forest resources (timber and other forest resources prepared for scientific research, training, bee-keeping, pasturing of domestic animals, protection of natural complexes and other purposes in compliance with the Law). In the cases defined under these procedures, the right for timber and other forest resource preparation shall be attained after receiving permissions of appropriate forms. This right expires in case of death of the person having the permission, after reorganisation or liquidation of a legal person when the permission expires or when the permission is treated as invalid upon the established procedures.

(3) The rights of forest governors, owners, and users are protected by the Law. The rights infringed shall be restituted, and the damages inflicted shall be compensated upon the procedures defined under the Law and other legal acts. The rights of the forest governors, owners, and users may be limited upon the procedures defined under the Law for the interests of the society, environmental purposes, or forest protection.

Article 11. Conversion of forest lands into other purpose lands

(1) The forest lands may be converted into other purpose lands in exceptional cases only concordant to the interests of the state, forest owners, and society upon the procedures established by the Government.

(2) Forest cutting for the technological and production forestry purposes (preparation of nurseries, construction of the forest roads, fire break lines, technological clearings, recreation grounds and construction of timber storages, digging of sand or gravel upon the procedures established, and etc.) shall not be treated as forest land conversion into other purpose lands.

Article 12. Forest land draining and fertilising, road construction on forest lands

(1) Forest drainage, fertilising and use of poisonous chemical substances in forest land shall be performed in compliance to the Law on Environment Protection and applicable legal acts.

(2) Forest land drainage systems and forest roads, extending over the forest estates of several forest owners or governors shall be maintained and repaired by the governors, owners or users of these estates upon the procedures defined by the Law. Forest drainage system maintenance works shall be performed and forest roads shall be constructed from the resources of the forest governors, owners, users, municipalities, Road Funds, and from other resources.

**CHAPTER III
STATE FOREST CADASTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA AND
FOREST MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

Article 13. State forest inventory and forest register

- (1) The objective of the state forest inventory and forest register – to evaluate the forest resources, their quality, provide information about the natural and economic condition of forests. State forest inventory is performed at all forest estates. The state inventory performed at forest enterprises, state strict nature reserves and state parts not only includes forest register, but state-owned non-forest land (agricultural land, water, etc.) as well.
- (2) The non-forest land covered by naturally generated trees shall be inventoried during the process of forest management and included into register as forest upon the procedures defined by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- (3) The state forest inventory specialists shall have the right to enter all forest estates, perform inventory works and receive necessary information for their performance.
- (4) The state inventory in the Republic of Lithuania shall be performed upon the selection method. It is purposed for strategic planning of the forest sector upon the state level. Forest compartment inventory is performed for organising of the forestry on the level of forest estates and for preparation of forest management projects.
- (5) State forest inventory and forest register procedures, their content and periodicity shall be defined by the Ministry of Environment.
- (6) Forest register shall be managed and state cadaster of the forests of the Republic of Lithuania shall be prepared using the state forest inventory data. This cadaster covers the sum of total data about forests, their ownership, forest resource quantities, their quality, and economic value. The contents of the cadaster and its compilation procedures shall be defined by the Government.
- (7) The state forest inventory and register in state-owned and private forests shall be performed from the state resources. The inventory and register data shall be provided to forest owners and governors upon a free-of-charge basis defined upon the procedures of the Ministry of Environment. Forest compartments inventory and forest management project preparation shall be carried out from the state funds and funds of forest governors and owners.

Article 14. Forest management project

- (1) Forest management project – a document of special territory planning upon which forestry is organised, reforestation, use and forest land management works performed. Forest management projects are prepared for all forest estates. Forests shall be managed, used and reforested upon forestry management projects.
- (2) The following types of forest management projects are distinguished:
 - 1) forest management schemes – prepared for forest governors and region territories, and are purposed for defining of the general forest land use policies, preparation of their management concepts;
 - 2) interior forest management projects – prepared for forest governors and private forest estates and are purposed for defining of concrete management mean system.
- (3) Forest management projects shall be prepared upon the project preparation regulations and methodology and criteria defined in them approved by a government-authorised institution. The composite forest management project parts shall be the following:
 - 1) the background – shall cover the existing situation of land use, protection, and forest management, problem analysis, evaluation of previous results of forest management project implementation, and the forecast of social and economic needs;

2) project part - covers the issues of solution preparation for the planned forest territory use objectives and management concept (forest management schemes) or management mean schemes (interior forest management projects);

3) conclusion – covers planning document solution result forecasting, discussion, compliance and approval.

(4) Ministry of Environment, taking into regard the size of forest estate, defines the contents of forest management project and other indicators, as well as forest stands cutting age at all forests. The final forest cuttings shall be performed at mature or over-mature forests, and in maturing forests in cases defined in the regulation for these cuttings. Intermediate forest cuttings shall be performed for the purpose of forest stands productivity increase, improvement of the forest sanitary condition, preservation of the biological diversity, use of the timber resources, forest stand reconstruction and other purposes defined under other legal acts. The annual forest cutting norm for final forest cuttings shall be defined for each forest governor and owner upon the methodology approved by the Ministry of Environment.

(5) The annual forest cutting norms for state forests are approved by the Government. The annual forest cutting norm shall not be exceeded, except for the cases of natural calamities when dried-up, fallen, broken, burnt or otherwise damaged forest stands volume makes up more than on quarter of the annual cutting norm. The total annual norm of all types of forest cutting in the country shall not exceed the annual timber growth.

(6) The volumes of intermediate forest cuttings at state forest shall be established by the Ministry of Environment.

(7) The forest governors, possessing more than 500 hectares of forest, shall not exceed the annual major forest cutting norm. In case of the natural calamities and when this norm was not implemented during the proceeding years calculating from the year of its approval, the annual final forest cutting norm may be increased upon the procedures established by the Ministry of Environment. Other forest governors and owners may deviate from the annual forest cutting norm without breaching of the requirements of forest cutting regulations, but shall follow the decade forest cutting norm.

(8) The forest management projects shall be prepared and forest inventory shall be performed by natural and legal persons upon the procedures defined by the Ministry of Environment. Following these procedures, the forest management data is accumulated and managed in a centralised way, forest management projects are prepared, co-ordinated and approved.

CHAPTER IV REFORESTATION, GROWING AND CUTTING

Article 15. Reforestation and afforestation

(1) Forests shall be reforested by their governors, owners and users from their own resources.

(2) The forest coverage of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania shall be increased upon the procedures established by the Law and other legal acts regulating the establishment of forests in non-forest lands.

(3) Forests in non-forest lands shall be planted following the procedures established by the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture from the state funds and the funds of forest governors and owners.

(4) When forests are planted in non-forest territories upon the procedures established by the Law, the Law of Forests shall apply to these areas.

(5) Forest shall be artificially reforested in clear - cutting areas and burnt areas not later than within three years after their origin. The forest shall artificially be reforested upon the ecological basis, according to Regulations on reforestation, approved by the Ministry of Environment. The state forest officers may prohibit further forest final cuttings till the cut forest be reforested. Exceptions shall be available in cases when big-size forest areas are lost due to the natural calamities.

(6) Reforestation and afforestation also covers forest stand reconstruction, supplementation of forest plantings and care and protection until young stand is formed. Lost forest plantings shall be reforested not later than within two years.

Article 16. Growing and cutting of forest stands

(1) The purpose of the forest stand growing and care means is to form productive forests complying to the conditions of forest site by giving a priority to the local tree and other plant species, mixed forest plantings and mixed forest stands. The forest stand growing and care regulating means as well as final and intermediate forest cuttings are performed by the norms and regulations approved by the Ministry of Environment.

(2) Forest thinning are performed in non-mature forest stands for the increase of their productivity and stability and preservation of the biological diversity. These forest cuttings regulate forest stand density and the specific composition. The sanitary forest cuttings are performed for maintaining and improving of the forest healthiness.

(3) Other cuttings, such as cuttings for landscape forming, implementation of the biotechnical means, preparation of the fire break lines and places for the technological equipment, and other purposes, may also be performed.

CHAPTER V FOREST PROTECTION

Article 17. Forest protection tasks

The forest protection tasks include protection of forests and forest resources against illegal activities- self-willed forest cutting, infringement of forest use procedures, plundering of forest resources, forest pollution, littering, setting on fire, damage inflicted by the domestic animals as well as protection of forests against the damage inflicted by forest animals, fires, diseases, pests and other natural calamities, mechanical damage of forest soil and trees.

Article 18. Forest protection against fire and natural calamities

(1) All forest, despite their form of ownership, shall have the common system of state fire-emergency means created and maintained including check-ups, prevention and protection means. This common system of state fire-emergency is prepared and implemented by the General Forest Enterprise under the Ministry of Environment, forest enterprises and state park administrations together with municipalities. Forest governors, owners, users and visitors shall follow the fire-emergency protection requirements approved by legal acts.

(2) Forest enterprises, state parks, and municipalities shall provide funds for the common state fire-emergency check-up and fire extinguishing system in all forest estates. Forest governors and owners shall implement the preventive fire-emergency protection means (installation of fire break lines and bonfire places, cleaning of littered forest, etc.) from their own resources.

(3) In case of the natural calamities, the Ministry of Environment has the right to establish special protective and calamity consequence liquidation means which shall be obligatory to all forest governors, owners, and users.

Article 19. Forest protection against diseases and pests

(1) Forest governors, owners, and users shall follow forest sanitary protection requirements established by legal acts, to transport the coniferous timber out of forest during established periods, or protect properly this timber left in forest against pests. Forest governors, owners, and users shall inform forest enterprises and state park administrations about the sources of tree diseases and pests.

(2) Big pest and disease sources shall be localised and liquidated from resources of the state, forest governors and owners.

Article 20. Forest protection against domestic and wild animals

(1) Pasturage of domestic animals in state forest lands is prohibited, except for the cases defined by the Ministry of Environment. Animal pasturage in private forests is prohibited in cutting areas and young forest stands under 20 years of age.

(2) The number of hunted animals in the forest lands shall be maintained such as to guarantee the stability of ecosystem. During the regulation of animal number in forests, the requirements of the Law on Environment Protection and other legal acts shall be followed.

Article 21. Forest protection against pollution

Forest protection against pollution, permissible pollution and compensation for the damage inflicted on forests is established by the Law on Environment Protection and other legal acts. Lost or damaged forests shall be reforested from the resources of the damagers, and in case on non-identification of the damagers- from the resources of state, forest governors and owners, and other sources.

**CHAPTER VI
LIABILITY FOR INFRINGEMENTS OF THE FOREST LAW****Article 22. Liability**

Natural and legal persons who inflicted the requirements of this Law shall be held liable upon the procedures established by the law.

Article 23. Compensation of damage inflicted by illegal actions

(1) Natural and legal persons which inflicted damage to the forests of forest governors, owners, and users, and other property, legal interests of forest, as object of environment, shall compensate the damage in full, or, in case of opportunity, to restore the condition as it was before the infringement. Damage estimation procedures are established by the Law and other legal acts.

(2) The right to of initiating a suite for the damage inflicted by illegal actions can be used by:

- 1) forest governors, owners, and users whose forests, property or legal interests suffered damage;
- 2) state forest officers, when the damage is inflicted on forest, as object of environment.

**CHAPTER VII
INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA IN THE FORESTRY****Article 24. International co-operation of the Republic of Lithuania on the forestry issues**

The Republic of Lithuania, following principles of sustainable forest management, concludes international agreements on the forestry issues, participates in the activities of international forestry organisations.

Article 25. Application of the international agreements of the Republic of Lithuania

If the international agreements of the Republic of Lithuania define forest use, reforestation and protection requirements which different from this Law, the provisions of the international agreements shall apply.

I, hereto, announce the approval of this Law adopted by the Seimas (*Parliament) of the Republic of Lithuania

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

VALDAS ADAMKUS