

Indicator 6.32.

Exports as a Share of Wood and Wood Products Production and Imports as a Share of Wood and Wood Products Consumption

What is the indicator and why is it important?

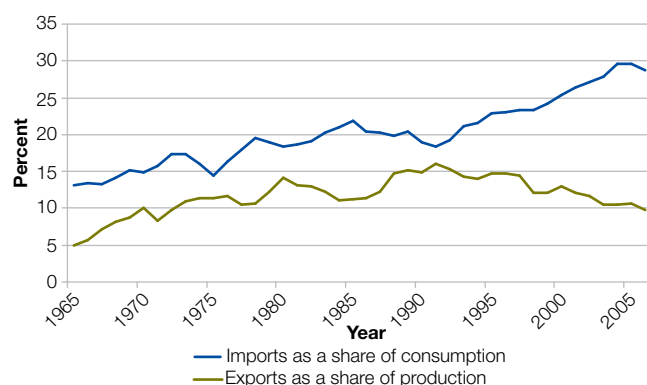
This indicator provides information on the relative importance of international trade in wood and wood products to domestic production and consumption. This indicator is used to evaluate the role of trade in the forest sector and thereby its effect on forest sustainability across social, economic, and ecological dimensions.

What does the indicator show?

The United States has become progressively more reliant on imports to meet consumption needs. In terms of roundwood equivalents, imports of wood and paper products as a share of consumption increased from 13 to 30 percent between 1965 and 2005. During this same period there was initially a concurrent trend toward increasing exports as a share of production, which reached a high in 1991, but these exports have since declined. Exports as a share of production increased from 5 percent in 1965 to a high of 16 percent in 1991 then decreased to 10 percent in 2006 (fig. 32-1).

The sustained increase of the overall import share to the historically high level of 30 percent is due largely to growth in the softwood lumber import share, which reached a level of 38

Figure 32-1. Wood and paper products imports as a share of consumption, and exports as a share of production, 1965–2006 (on volume basis in roundwood equivalents).



Source: USDA Forest Service

percent in 2006. The overall import share is up from 15 percent in 1965. The import share for other products was relatively stable between 1965 and the 1990s, but has since also increased (figs. 32-2 and 32-3).

The trend in overall export share of production, an increase then a decline, is because of initial increases and subsequent declines for softwood lumber, softwood plywood, and paper and paperboard. For hardwood lumber the share has continued to increase, and for pulp the share increased then leveled off after the mid-1990s. (figs. 32-4 and 32-5).

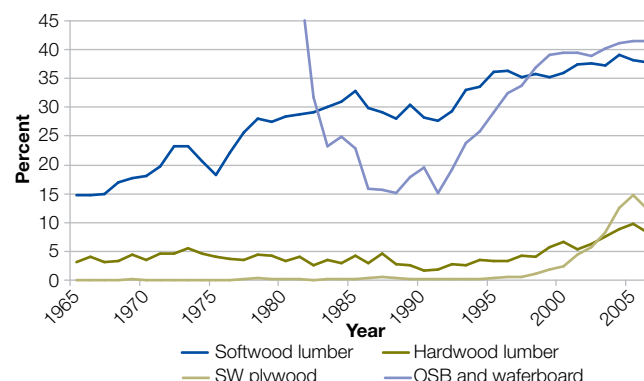
What has changed since 2003?

The overall trends in import share (increasing) and export share (decreasing) that appeared before 2003 have continued through 2006.

Are there important regional differences?

Data are not available for interstate imports and exports for U.S. regions, so import and export shares cannot be provided by U.S. regions. It is possible, however, to roughly estimate which regions are net importers of wood and paper products, in roundwood equivalent, if we assume that consumption

Figure 32-2. Wood products imports as a share of consumption, 1965–2006 (cubic units imported per cubic unit consumed).



Source: USDA Forest Service

per capita is uniform across regions. In terms of roundwood equivalent, of the four Resource Planning Act (RPA) Regions, only the U.S. South is a net exporter of wood and paper products (fig. 32-6).

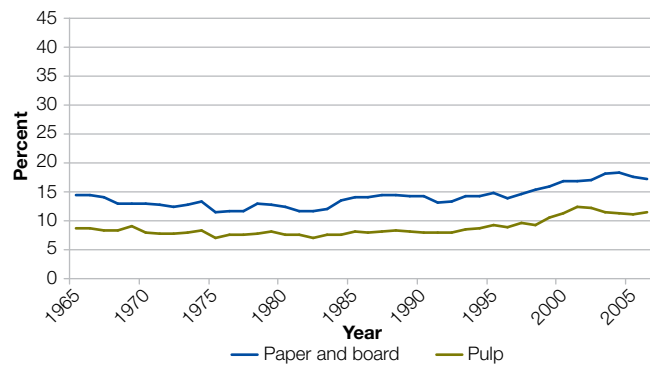
Why can't the entire indicator be reported at this time?

It is not clear if data on value of wood and paper industry shipments covers the same range of products as the value of wood and paper imports and exports, so import and export shares on a value basis have not been provided.

Relation to other indicators

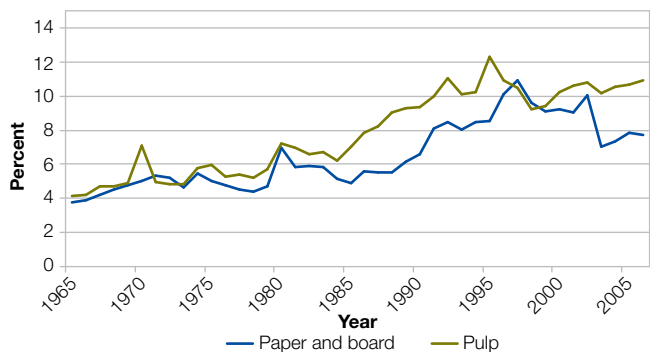
The level and trend in wood and paper export share of consumption are a key factor in sustaining certain benefits from

Figure 32-3. Pulp, paper, and board imports as a share of consumption, 1965–2006 (tons imported per ton consumed).



Source: USDA Forest Service

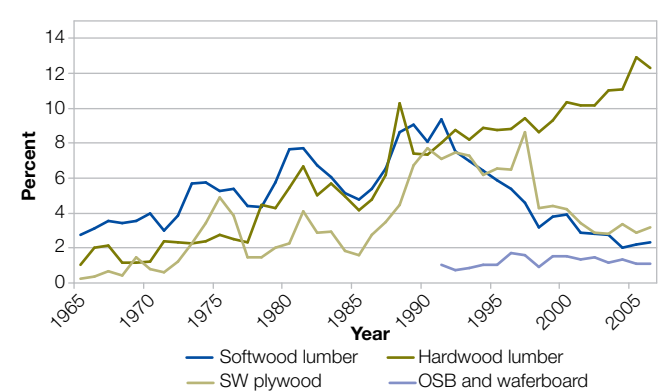
Figure 32-5. Paper and paperboard, and pulp exports as a share of production, 1965–2006 (tons exported per ton produced).



Source: USDA Forest Service

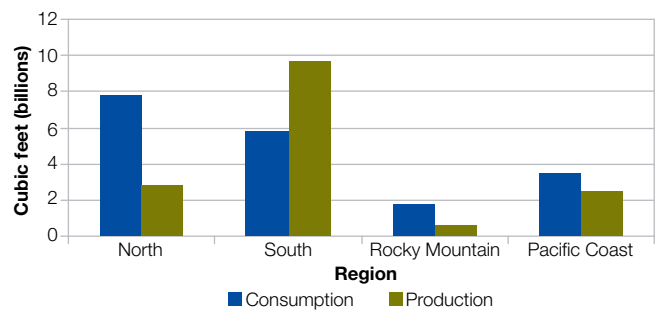
forests—benefits of employment and wages (Indicators 6.36 and 6.37), benefits in revenue to various groups (Indicator 6.40), and contribution to community resiliency (Indicator 6.38). Level and trend in import share of production also has an influence on the same indicators but in a direction opposite from export share. For example—for a given level on wood products consumption in the United States increased export share would increase employment and wages and increase import share would decrease employment and wages. The level of export and import shares are determined by the competitiveness of U.S. industries in relation to foreign industries which, in turn, is influenced—in the long run—by the level capital investment in new technology (Indicator 6.34), by levels of research and education in the United States (Indicator 6.35), and by the productivity of U.S. forests (Indicator 6.11).

Figure 32-4. Wood products exports as a share of production, 1965–2006 (cubic units exported per cubic unit produced).



Source: USDA Forest Service

Figure 32-6. Wood and paper products consumption and production by region in roundwood equivalents, 2006 (billions of cubic feet) (Regional consumption is estimated by assuming national per capita consumption of 63.5 cubic feet is uniform across regions).



Source: USDA Forest Service