Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending laws of:

21 March 2002 [shall come into force on 23 April 2002];

10 October 2002 [shall come into force on 7 November 2002];

4 November 2004 [shall come into force on 1 January 2005];

19 December 2006 [shall come into force on 1 January 2007];

1 December 2009 [shall come into force on 1 January 2010];

15 March 2012 [shall come into force on 5 April 2012].

If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima*1 has adopted and

the President has proclaimed the following law:

**State Forest Service Law**

**Chapter I**

**Structure and Functions of the State Forest Service**

**Section 1. State Forest Service**

(1) The State Forest Service (hereinafter – the Service) is an institution of direct administration subordinated to the Minister for Agriculture.

(2) [4 November 2004]

(3) [4 November 2004]

(4) [4 November 2004]

[*10 October 2002; 4 November 2004; 15 March 2012*]

**Section 2. Functions of the Service**

(1) Within the scope of its competence, the Service shall supervise compliance with the laws and regulations governing forest management and use and hunting, supervise and implement fire-fighting in a forest and participate in the development and implementation of the State forest policy. Other functions thereof are determined by the laws and regulations governing forest management and the competence of the Service.

(2) When performing the functions determined by the law, the Service may cooperate with institutions of direct and indirect administration of the State, non-governmental and international institutions and organisations, and also other representatives of society and institutions.

[*15 March 2012*]

**Chapter II**

**Rights and Legal Protection of Officials of the Service**

[*4 November 2004*]

**Section 3. Officials of the Service**

(1) The Service shall be managed by the Director General.

(2) The officials of the Service responsible for the performance of the functions of the Service shall be the Director General, chief foresters, directors, and also other officials of the Service.

(3) The Director General shall appoint heads of territorial units and other officials of the Service to office.

(4) [15 March 2012]

[*21 March 2002; 10 October 2002; 15 March 2012*]

**Section 4. Duties of Officials of the Service**

(1) Officials of the Service have the duty to ensure compliance with the requirements of laws and regulations governing forest management and use and hunting, to discontinue and prevent violations of laws and regulations governing forest management and use and hunting, and also any other activities harmful to forests and forest land.

(2) Taking into account the specific characteristics of work, the duration of working time of the officials of the Service shall not be measured or determined in advance.

[*10 October 2002; 15 March 2012*]

**Section 5. Director General of the Service**

[4 November 2004]

**Section 6. Head of Territorial Units of the Service (Chief Foresters, Directors)**

[4 November 2004]

**Section 7. Rights of Officials of the Service**

In monitoring compliance with the laws and regulations which govern forest management and use, officials of the Service within the scope of their competence, have the right:

1) to check on site, without hindrance, compliance with the requirements of the laws and regulations governing forest management and use;

2) to suspend or prohibit the activity of those legal persons and natural persons who violate laws and regulations and also to stop any other activity harmful to the forest and the environment that is specified in laws and regulations;

3) to check personal identity documents of violators, convey violators to the premises of the police or local government authorities, and also to transfer materials regarding forest offences to law enforcement institutions in order to hold the persons at fault liable in accordance with procedures laid down by law;

4) in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations, to check the locations of acquisition, storage, processing, and sale of products, vehicles, tools for the acquisition of products, personal property of the violators and to remove and confiscate illegally acquired forest resources, hunting products, tools for committing violations, documents, and other evidence;

5) to take decisions, provide opinions and issue orders, prepare reports (statements), examine materials regarding violation of laws and regulations within the competence of the Service and, if necessary, hold the persons at fault administratively liable and perform other activities laid down in by laws and regulations;

6) to request and receive, free of charge, written and oral information from legal persons and natural persons, and also to become acquainted with the relevant documents and the condition of the forest on site;

7) to cancel illegally obtained or used permits, certificates, licences, and certifications;

8) to check transportation records of timber, to suspend or prohibit the activities of those legal persons and natural persons who violate the requirements of the laws and regulations regarding the transportation of timber;

9) if the requirements of the laws and regulations governing forest management and use are violated, to stop vehicles on the roads of forestry and agricultural enterprises, and the vehicles used for the transportation of timber – also on municipal roads. The officials who stop vehicles shall wear a uniform;

10) examine administrative offence matters and impose administrative sanctions for such offences which are subject, in accordance with laws and regulations, to the jurisdiction of the Service.

[*10 October 2002; 4 November 2004; 15 March 2012*]

**Section 8. Legal Protection of Officials of the Service**

(1) For preventing officials of the Service from exercising their lawful rights, for infringement of their honour, for threats or violence directed towards officials, and also for endangering the life of officials in the course of their official duties, persons at fault shall be held liable as determined by law.

(2) The officials of the Service have the right to acquire, store, carry, and use weapons and special means of self-defence for the purpose of self-defence and also to carry and use hunting firearms registered with the State Police.

[*10 October 2002*]

**Chapter III**

**Compliance with Decisions Taken by Officials of the Service and Procedures for Contesting Thereof**

[*4 November 2004*]

**Section 9. Compliance with the Requirements of Officials of the Service**

Decisions taken and instructions given by officials of the Service within the scope of competence specified by law shall be mandatory for legal persons and natural persons subject to the control and supervision of the Service which are engaged in forest management, logging, timber transportation and the conduct of recreational events in forests, hunting or holding in captivity of wild game animals.

[*10 October 2002*]

**Section 10. Procedures for Contesting and Appealing Administrative Acts Issued by and Actual Action of Officials of the Service**

Administrative acts (except for decisions in administrative offence matters) issued by and actual action of officials of the Service may be contested and appealed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Law according to the following procedures:

1) decisions taken and orders issued by officials of territorial units of the Service shall be contested to the head of the relevant territorial unit (chief forester, director);

2) decisions taken and orders issued by the heads of the relevant territorial units (chief foresters, directors) shall be contested to the Director General;

3) decisions taken and orders issued by the Director General shall be appealed to the court.

[*4 November 2004; 15 March 2012*]

**Chapter IV**

**Service Provisions**

**Section 11. Social Benefits for Officials (Employees) of the Service**

[1 December 2009]

**Section 12. Service Provisions**

(1) The financial resources of the Service shall comprise:

1) a grant from the general revenue of the State budget;

2) income from the paid services provided by the Service and other own income.

(2) For the performance of its tasks, the Service shall be provided with the necessary technical means (transport, communications).

(3) The Service shall be exempted from the payment of court expenses regarding claims for the compensation of such losses arising from the violation of the laws and regulations governing forest management and use if such losses are recovered to the benefit of the State.

[*4 November 2004; 15 March 2012 /* *Amendments to Paragraph two shall come into force on 1 January 2013.* *See Paragraph 4 of Transitional Provisions*]

**Section 13. Identification Documents and Identification Insignia of Officials of the Service**

(1) Officials and employees of the Service shall have a service identification document.

(2) During performance of service duties the officials of the Service shall wear the service uniform or identification insignia. The uniform and identification insignia samples and procedures for wearing thereof shall be determined by the State Forest Service.

[*10 October 2002*]

**Transitional Provisions**

1. By 1 February 2000, the Cabinet shall adopt regulations with respect to the implementation of this Law.

2. With the coming into force of this Law, the State Forest Service shall be the successor of such duties and obligations of the State Forest Service as the State Forest Service had up to the day of coming into force of this Law, except for:

1) duties with respect to State forest management, sale of forest resources in State forests and forest regeneration in State forests;

2) obligations arising from logging contracts entered into up to 28 May 1998 in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 335 of 7 November 1995, Regulations Regarding the Procedures for Entering into Long-term Logging Contracts;

3) obligations arising from purchase contracts entered into in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 319 of 25 August 1998, Regulations Regarding Tendering Procedures for Felling Areas and Individual Trees;

4) obligations arising from forest regeneration works secured with a security deposit in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 25 of 24 January 1995, Regulations Regarding Forest Regeneration;

5) obligations arising from lease contracts of hunting areas entered into in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 251 of 6 August 1995, Hunting Regulations.

3. The obligations determined in Paragraph 2 of Transitional Provisions which are not taken over by the State Forest Service shall be taken over by *valsts akciju sabiedrība “Latvijas valsts meži”* [State stock company Latvian State Forests] in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations.

4. The amendment to Section 12, Paragraph two of this Law which provides for deletion of the words “and officials of the Service shall be provided with service firearms” shall come into force on 1 January 2013.

[*15 March 2012*]

The Law comes into force on 1 January 2000.

The Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 25 November 1999.

President V. Vīķe-Freiberga

Rīga, 15 December 1999