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# Indian Wood & Allied Panels

Volume 14 • Issue 3

*A Quarterly Publication on Plywood / Wood & Bamboo Based Panel Products*

July - September 2020



**Global Forest Resources  
Assessment 2020 key findings**

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Volume 14 • Issue 3 Jul-Sep 2020

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# C O N T E N T S

## 16

**Designing the News Normal: What's in Store for Materials and Design**



## 18

**AHEC launches collaboration with five Indian furniture designers**



## 20

**Breathe a sigh of relief: wood is good for the climate – inside and out**



## 27

**WFH furniture to be \$3.49 billion industry by 2026**



Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 key findings	2
Wooden skyscrapers could transform construction	8
Central Govt Mulls Pvt Entry in Forestry Sector, Experts Wary	9
Identify & Recognise Farm Produced wood as farming produce under the farmers...	10
Public Grievance made by Mr. Sajjan Bhananka vide registration No.....	12
Meeting on “issues related to import of timber and furniture” held on 31st July...	13
Teak wood imports down by 50%, furniture prices shoot up	14
Century Ply expects to reach pre-Covid levels of turnover by fiscal-end	15
Bamboo to play crucial role in Post-COVID Economy	15
German log exports remain high in early 2020; almost 50% destined for China	19
Amulyamica Brand merging with Amul	22
Greenlam Industries Limited’s new TVC says ‘Shukar Hai, Greenlam Laminates...	23
New method of preserving lumber could replace pressure treating in the future	24
EPF stats show wood-based panel production declined in 2019	25
Study: Massive wood slabs market to exceed US\$2 billion by 2030	25
“Covid-19”: heavy impact on the first quarter for the wood-furniture technology...	26
Furniture companies eye organised sourcing ecosystem	26
Future-oriented cooperation between the Kumar Group and Siempelkamp	27
“Flame-resistant particleboard” national standard officially released	28
India to consider investing US\$10 to \$11 billion to boost domestic production of...	28

# Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 key findings

FAO's latest report shows that the world's forests are changing—with both encouraging and worrying signs



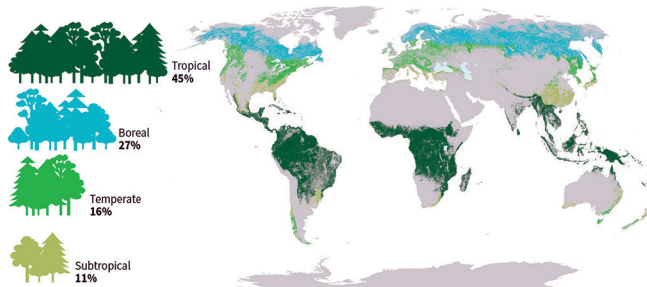
Forest view: A forest canopy in the Betung Kerihun National Park, Indonesia. Nearly half (45%) of the world's forests are in the tropical domain.

This article contains the main findings of the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 (FRA 2020), published in April 2020 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).<sup>1</sup> The data summarized herein, for most of the world's countries, have been obtained through a transparent, traceable reporting process and a well-established network of officially nominated national correspondents. The application of a standardized reporting methodology enables the monitoring of change over time in parameters such as forest area, management, ownership and use and the aggregation of data at the regional and global levels.

The information provided by FRA presents a comprehensive view of the world's forests and the ways in which the resource is changing. Such a clear global picture supports the development of sound policies, practices and investments affecting forests and forestry.

FRA is the mechanism for collecting data on two forest

## Proportion and distribution of global forest area by climatic domain, 2020.

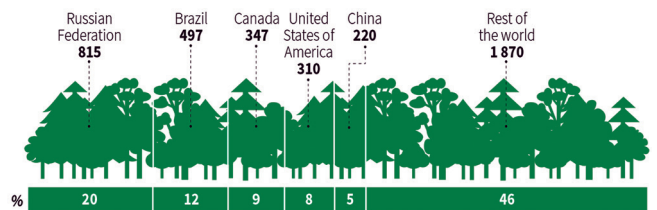


related indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which the United Nations General Assembly adopted in 2015. Specifically, data submitted to FRA contribute to reporting on SDG indicator 15.1.1 (forest area as a proportion of total land area in 2015) and indicator 15.2.1 (progress towards sustainable forest management).

## Forests cover nearly one-third of the land globally

The world has a total forest area of 4.06 billion hectares (ha), which is 31% of the total land area. This area is equivalent to 0.52 ha per person<sup>2</sup>—although forests are not distributed equally among the world's peoples or geographically. The tropical domain has the largest proportion of the world's forests (45%), followed by the boreal, temperate and subtropical domains.

### Top five countries for forest area, 2020 (million ha).



<sup>1</sup>This article reproduces text and figures contained in: FAO 2020. *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020—Key findings*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca8753en>.

<sup>2</sup>Calculated assuming a global population of 7.79 billion people, as estimated in United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division 2019. *World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition*.




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GHAR SAJAYE SAATH NIBHAYE

More than half (54%) of the world's forests is in only five countries the Russian Federation, Brazil, Canada, the United States of America and China.

### The world's forest area is decreasing, but the rate of loss has slowed

The world has lost 178 million ha of forest since 1990, which is an area about the size of Libya.

The rate of net forest loss decreased substantially over the period 1990–2020 due to a reduction in deforestation in some countries, plus increases in forest area in others through afforestation and the natural expansion of forests.

The rate of net forest loss declined from 7.8 million ha per year in the decade 1990–2000 to 5.2 million ha per year in 2000–2010 and 4.7 million ha per year in 2010–2020. The rate of decline of net forest loss slowed in the most recent decade due to a reduction in the rate of forest expansion.

### Africa has the highest net loss of forest area

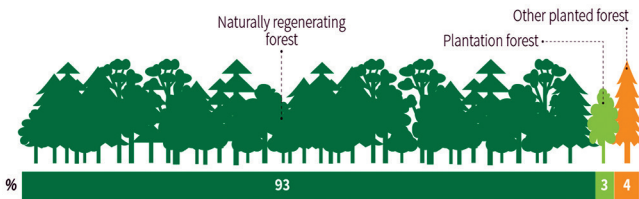
Africa had the largest annual rate of net forest loss in 2010–2020, at 3.9 million ha, followed by South America, at 2.6 million ha. The rate of net forest loss has increased in Africa in each of the three decades since 1990. It has declined substantially in South America, however, to about half the rate in 2010–2020 compared with 2000–2010.

Asia had the highest net gain of forest area in 2010–2020, followed by Oceania and Europe.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, both Europe and Asia recorded substantially lower rates of net gain in 2010–2020 than in 2000–2010. Oceania experienced net losses of forest area in the decades 1990–2000 and 2000–2010.

### More than 90% of the world's forests have regenerated naturally

Ninety-three percent (3.75 billion ha) of the forest area worldwide is composed of naturally regenerating forests and 7% (290 million ha) is planted.

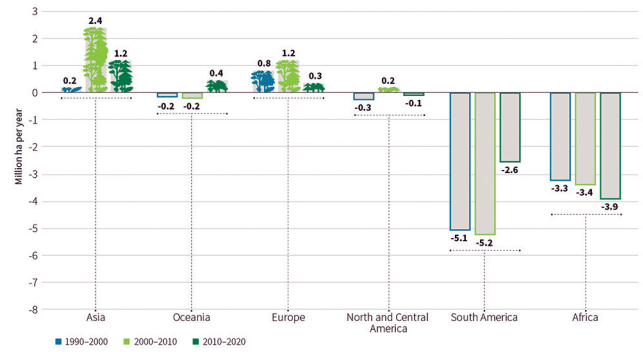
Naturally regenerating versus planted forests, 2020 (% of global forest area)



Annual net change in area of naturally regenerating and planted forest, by decade, 1990–2020



Annual forest area net change, by decade and region, 1990–2020



The area of naturally regenerating forests has decreased since 1990 (at a declining rate of loss), but the area of planted forests has increased by 123 million ha. The rate of increase in the area of planted forest has slowed in the last ten years.

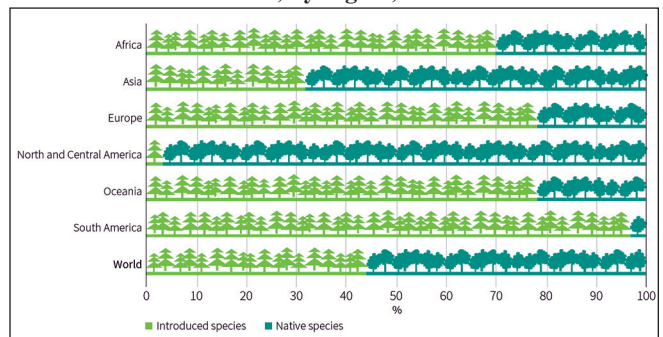
### Plantations account for about 3% of the world's forests

Plantation forests cover about 131 million ha, which is 3% of the global forest area and 45% of the total area of planted forests.

Plantation forests are intensively managed, composed of one or two species, even-aged, planted with regular spacing, and established mainly for productive purposes. Other planted forests, which comprise 55% of all planted forests, are not intensively managed, and they may resemble natural forests at stand maturity. The purposes of other planted forests may include ecosystem restoration and the protection of soil and water values. The highest share of plantation forest is in South America, where this forest type represents 99% of the total planted-forest area and 2% of the total forest area.

The lowest share of plantation forest is in Europe, where it represents 6% of the planted forest estate and 0.4% of the total forest area. Globally, 44% of plantation forests are composed mainly of introduced species. There are large differences between regions: for example, plantation forests in North and Central America mostly comprise native species and those in South America consist almost entirely of introduced species.

Proportion of introduced and native species in plantation forest, by region, 2020



### More than 700 million ha of forest is in legally established protected areas

There is an estimated 726 million ha of forest in protected areas worldwide.

<sup>3</sup>According to the regional breakdown used in FRA 2020, Europe includes the Russian Federation.

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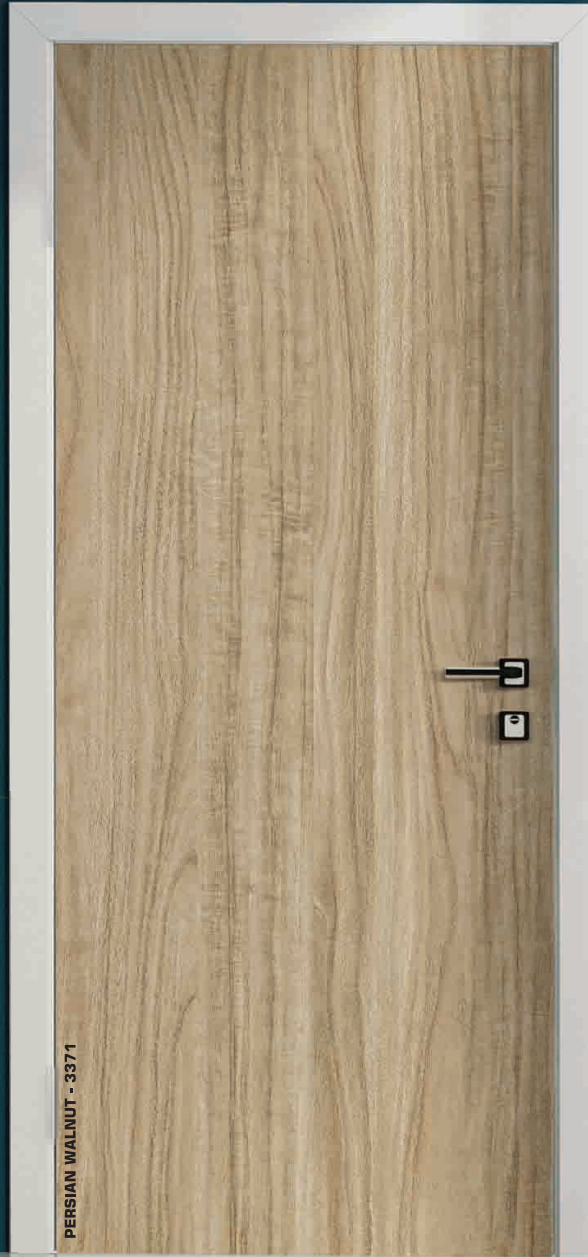
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42 & 45

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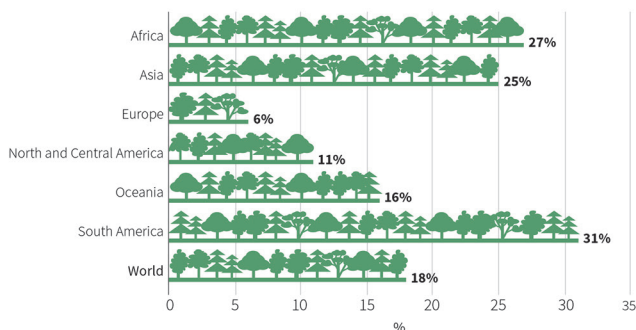
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Of the six major world regions, South America has the highest share of forests in protected areas, at 31%.

The area of forest in protected areas globally has increased by 191 million ha since 1990, but the rate of annual increase slowed in 2010–2020.

Proportion of forest in protected areas, by region, 2020



### Primary forests cover about 1 billion ha

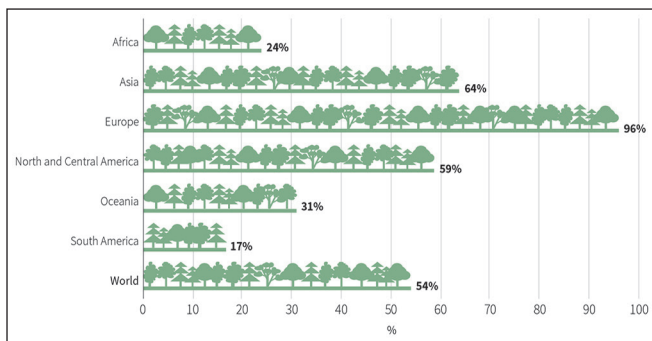
The world still has at least 1.11 billion ha of primary forest—that is, forests composed of native species in which there are no clearly visible indications of human activities and the ecological processes have not been significantly disturbed. Combined, three countries—Brazil, Canada and the Russian Federation—host more than half (61%) of the world’s primary forest.

The area of primary forest has decreased by 81 million ha since 1990, but the rate of loss more than halved in 2010–2020 compared with the previous decade.

### More than 2 billion ha of forest has management plans

Most of the forests in Europe have management plans; on the other hand, management plans exist for less than 25% of forests in Africa and less than 20% in South America. The area of forest under management plans is increasing in all regions—globally; it has increased by 233 million ha since 2000, reaching 2.05 billion ha in 2020.

Proportion of forest area with long-term management plans, by region, 2020.



### Fire is a prevalent forest disturbance in the tropics

Forests face many disturbances that can adversely affect their health and vitality and reduce their ability to provide a full range of goods and ecosystem services. About 98 million ha of forest were affected by fire in 2015;<sup>4</sup> this was mainly in the tropical domain, where fire burned about 4% of the total forest area in that year. More than two-thirds of the total forest area

affected was in Africa and South America.

Insects, diseases and severe weather events damaged about 40 million ha of forests in 2015, mainly in the temperate and boreal domains.

### The world’s forests are mostly publicly owned, but the share of privately owned forests has increased since 1990

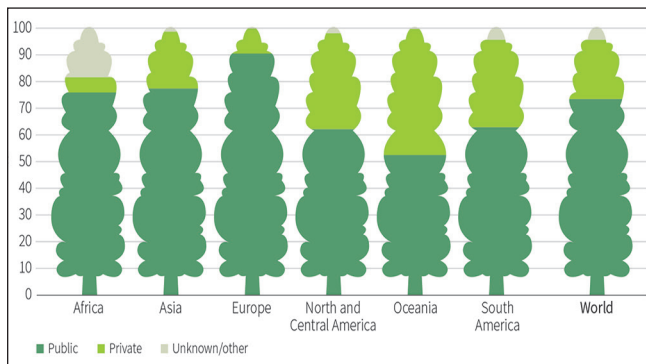
Seventy-three percent of the world’s forests is under public ownership,<sup>5</sup> 22% is privately owned, and the ownership of the remainder is categorized as either “unknown” or “other” (the latter mainly comprising forests where ownership is disputed or in transition).

Public ownership is predominant in all regions and most subregions.

Of the regions, Oceania, North and Central America and South America have the highest proportions of private forests.

Globally, the share of publicly owned forests has decreased since 1990 and the area of forest under private ownership has increased.

Forest ownership, by region, 2015



Public administrations hold management rights to 83% of the publicly owned forest area globally. Management by public administrations is particularly predominant in South America, where it accounts for 97% of management responsibility in publicly owned forests. The share of public administration management rights has decreased globally since 1990, with an increasing share of publicly owned forests managed by private businesses, entities and institutions and by indigenous and tribal communities.

### The world’s forest growing stock is declining

The world’s total growing stock of trees decreased slightly, from 560 billion m<sup>3</sup> in 1990 to 557 billion m<sup>3</sup> in 2020, due to a net decrease in forest area. On the other hand, growing stock is increasing per unit area globally and in all regions; it rose from 132 m<sup>3</sup> per ha in 1990 to 137 m<sup>3</sup> per ha in 2020. Growing stock per unit area is highest in the tropical forests of South and Central America and West and Central Africa.

The world’s forests contain about 606 gigatonnes of living biomass (above- and below-ground) and 59 gigatonnes of dead wood. The total biomass has decreased slightly since 1990 but biomass per unit area has increased.

<sup>4</sup>The latest year for which data are available.

<sup>5</sup>As of 2015, the latest year for which global data are available..



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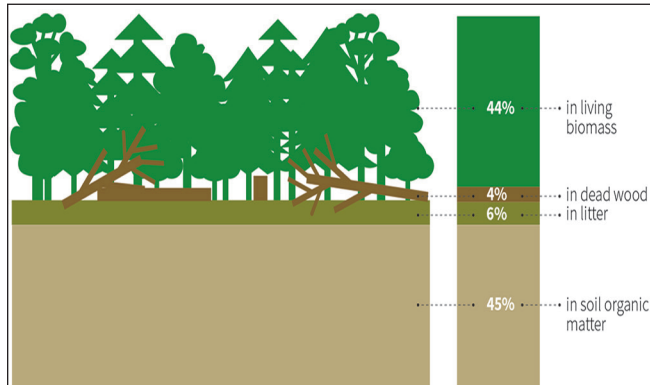
LAMINATE

*Banao apna jahaan*

## Total forest carbon stock is decreasing

Most forest carbon is found in the living biomass (44%) and soil organic matter (45%), with the remainder in dead wood and litter. The total carbon stock in forests decreased from 668 gigatonnes in 1990 to 662 gigatonnes in 2020; carbon density increased slightly over the same period, from 159 tonnes to 163 tonnes per ha.

Proportion of carbon stock in forest carbon pools, 2020



## About 30% of all forests is used primarily for production

Globally, about 1.15 billion ha of forest is managed primarily for the production of wood and non-wood forest products. In addition, 749 million ha is designated for multiple use, which often includes production. Worldwide, the area of forest designated primarily for production has been relatively stable

since 1990 but the area of multiple-use forest has decreased by about 71 million ha.

## About 10% of the world's forests is allocated for biodiversity conservation

Globally, 424 million ha of forest is designated primarily for biodiversity conservation. In total, 111 million ha has been so designated since 1990, of which the largest part was allocated between 2000 and 2010. The rate of increase in the area of forest designated primarily for biodiversity conservation has slowed in the last ten years.

## The area of forest designated primarily for soil and water protection is increasing

An estimated 398 million ha of forest is designated primarily for the protection of soil and water, an increase of 119 million ha since 1990. The rate of increase in the area of forest allocated for this purpose has grown over the entire period but especially in the last ten years.

## More than 180 million ha of forest is used mainly for social services

An area of 186 million ha of forest worldwide is allocated for social services such as recreation, tourism, education research and the conservation of cultural and spiritual sites. The area designated for this forest use has increased at a rate of 186 000 ha per year since 2010.

*Note that numbers may not sum to the totals indicated and percentages may not tally to 100 due to rounding. Not all countries reported on all parameters mentioned here.*

(Source:ITTO Tropical Forest update 29/2). □

# Wooden skyscrapers could transform construction

All over the world, architects and engineers are crafting cutting-edge skyscrapers from one of the most renewable and sustainable materials available to humanity — wood. For some, wood may seem an archaic and even dangerous choice for tall building construction compared to modern alternatives like concrete, steel and glass. But as emissions associated with tall buildings continue to rise, governments at all levels are looking for low-carbon, low-energy alternatives.

Structural wood products like CLT have a number of advantages in tall wooden building construction: they are lighter than conventional materials, require less energy to make than either steel or concrete (and thus produce lower emissions), and can sequester carbon. Their relative lightness makes it possible to assemble floor and wall sections off-site and ship them to the building site, significantly reducing the amount of building time required.

Canada has several tall wooden towers, including Brock Commons at the University of British Columbia (18 stories; 58 meters) and the Origine eco-condo development in Québec City (13 stories). A number of other projects, such as the 10-story Arbour at George Brown College's Waterfront Campus, are under development.

For the time being, the tallest wooden building in the world is the Mjøstårnet, an 18-story building north of Oslo that



houses offices, hotel rooms and apartments, and stands just over 85 meters in height. □

# Central Govt Mulls Pvt Entry in Forestry Sector, Experts Wary



The NITI Aayog, a policy think tank of the Central government, has developed a conceptual framework to allow public-private partnership (PPP) model in afforestation of degraded forests.

Open forests (canopy density between 10-40%) of about 3 lakh sq km and scrub forests of 0.40 lakh sq km (canopy density of less than 10%) together form 'degraded forests'. As per the plan, degraded forests are being targeted for afforestation under PPP model.

The conceptual note says phase-I will include scrub forests and phase-II open forests. Local community consultation will be mandatory prior to any bid process. Top forest officials seeking anonymity said, "The PPP model is one of the features of the draft National Forest Policy (NFP)-2018, but the basic idea is to hand over degraded forest to private parties."

The note also said four types of PPP models are being worked out. It includes consumption/supply chain-based afforestation, which will include timber and non-timber based forest products and organic cultivation with corporates, small and medium-scale harvesters and target partners.

"In this model, parties will have supply chain rights and mandatory afforestation targets. The concession period for all the models will be 25-30 years," they said.

The second model includes non-consumption based PPP and will have eco-camping, wilderness camps, recreation activities and volunteerism with niche tourism players, NGOs and corporates as target partners. The third PPP model will be combination of first and second model. The fourth PPP model includes hybrid afforestation, which will include output and performance based afforestation concession (OPAC).

Officials said as per draft guidelines eligible participants will include public listed companies, private firms, cooperatives, PSUs, forest development corporations, gram sabhas, village panchayats, joint forest management committees (JFMCs), autonomous district, village development board and NGOs.

When asked about safeguard for encroachments on forest land, officials said no change in legal status of land will be

allowed and suitable penalty mechanisms will be structured in concession. No misuse of land will be allowed and strict adherence to relevant laws, rules and regulations will be followed. "Any land capture will trigger termination and damages will be recovered from concessionaire," they said.

"Allowing private partnership can seriously jeopardize livelihood of tribal communities and forest dwellers. These areas can benefit a lot more in terms of ecological services if the government mandates the participation of the local community in the management of these areas," says Rajiva Sahay, a retired IFS official.

State wildlife board member Kishor Rithe said, "The PPA model on forest land is not new. First implemented by then environment minister Kamal Nath in MP, it generated a lot of criticism due to misuse of land."

Rithe added, "Why doesn't government implement such projects on private lands. Degraded forests need to be converted into best habitats as these lands are also used by wild animals. Experts need to be consulted before taking a decision."

"There have been demands from the industry to open up forests for afforestation for many years now but government never budged as it defeats the whole purpose of Forest Conservation Act (FCA), which explicitly prohibits leasing forest lands to private bodies," said environment lawyer Manish Jeswani.

"It is only logical that the industry's limited concern would be to source raw materials for themselves, and there could be an obvious loss of biodiversity as well as loss of livelihood of local populations because of that," Sahay said.

"This is nothing but pandering to demands of timber industry even while ignoring the traditional and cultural rights of tribal communities. If this policy is approved, then forest lands traditionally used by tribals will be leased to private parties, thereby violating FRA. It will also get manifested in social conflict and environmental disaster," Sahay pointed out.

As per the plan, state governments will identify forest land and concession granting authorities for afforestation or reforestation activities. Approval of Centre under Section 2 of the FCA, 1980 will be required. States will have to include such lands in their forest management plans.

Forest officials said, "The need for PPP model has been felt as the BJP government at the Centre feels ongoing national forestry programs have not made desired impact and hence there is need to ramp up investments by involving state-of-art technology and know-how to enhance capacity and skilled manpower."

The idea is to bring livelihood opportunities for locals, increase forest productivity and quality, import substitution for woodbased industries, enhanced forest financing, introduction of advance technological inputs etc and moreover enhance flow of ecosystem services including carbon sequestration benefits. □



# FEDERATION OF INDIAN PLYWOOD & PANEL INDUSTRY

REGISTERED UNDER THE SOCIETIES REGISTRATION ACT XXI OF 1860, REGN. NO. S/2985/1968-69 DT. 4.1.1969

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 Mr. Sajjan Bhajanka

**Vice-Presidents:**  
 Mr. S.P. Mittal / Mr. Deen Dayal Daga

**Secretary General:**  
 Mr. Jaydeep Chitlangia

September 12, 2020

A Representation was submitted ON 10/08/2020 by Shri Sajjan Bhajanka President Federation of Indian Plywood & Panel Industry (FIPPI) to Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar and Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change Shri Prakash Javadekar on the subject to identify & Recognise Farm Produced wood as farming produce under the Farmers (Endowment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance, 2020. The said representation submitted to Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change is reproduced herebelow. The copy of the Public Grievances made by President FIPPI and received in MOEFCC from Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is also reproduced.

To,  
 Shri Prakash Javadekar  
 Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change  
 Government of India, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,  
 Jor Bagh New Delhi- 110 003.

**SUB.: Identify & Recognise Farm Produced wood as farming produce under the farmers (Endowment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance, 2020.**

**Reference: Kindly refer Forest Policy Division letter F.NO7-2/2020-FP dated 11 Sept. 2020 (copy attached).**

Respected Sir,

First of all, I wish to congratulate your good self for a historical reform "National Transit Pass System (NTPS)" making wood trade and transit easy under "One Nation One Market Scheme" and also all the officials and administrators of MoAFW for promulgation of Ordinance No. 11 on Farming Agreement and Ordinance No. 10 on Trade and Commerce of Farmers' Produce. All these reforms provide a framework for agro forestry farmers to improve their income as well as farm productivity, and would go a long way in achieving the goal of doubling farmers income as enunciated by our Hon'ble Prime Minister.

**I am however drawing your kind attention at the following:**

The plywood and panel industry has completely shifted to farm produced wood (we may refer as farm wood) as raw material, after the implementation of National Forest Policy 1988 and in the light of subsequent judgements of Hon'ble Supreme Court, and the industry is now entirely independent of forests and forest based raw materials.

Today, entire wood procured by plywood and panel industries is from farmers having Agro-Forestry plantations, but wood grown on farmers' lands requires a certificate that the sourcing of such wood, is not from any forest origin. Such certifications are very costly and it has not been viable to handle the procedures involved, especially more so for the small and marginal farmers. This situation is becoming a problem to both farmers as well as the plywood industries – in order to achieve global competitiveness of Indian plywood products.

On close scrutiny, it is found that such a situation exists as following provisions of Indian Forest Act still treat farm wood as a forest produce.

The Indian Forest Act, 1927, Chapter 1, Section 2 – Interpretation clause, (4) (a) states – "forest produce" includes –

(a) the following whether found in, or brought from, a forest or not, that is to say :- timber, charcoal, caoutchouc, catechu, wood-oil, resin, natural varnish, bark, lac, mahua flowers, mahua seeds, and myrobalms, and.

and clause (6) states - "timber" includes trees, when they have fallen or have been felled, and all wood whether cut up or fashioned or hollowed out for any purpose or not.

It would be seen from above provisions of Indian Forest Act that any species of tree grown in farmer's land (farm wood), when felled becomes a timber by virtue of clause 6, and same becomes a forest produce by virtue of clause 4 (a), thereby bringing in lot of control, transit regulations and need for documentation, approval and certification of source of origin, thereby adversely affecting the growth of agro forestry, production and trade of farm wood/timber as well as growth of plywood and panel industry.

In this regard, I on behalf of FIPPI request you to consider the fact that how a tree grown by a farmer in his agricultural land can be considered as forest produce? Our country needs to immediately resolve this ambiguity of representation of raw material, in order to bring permanent clarity on the matter. With the promulgation of National Agroforestry 2014 and launch of Sub-Mission on Agroforestry, it is expected that this ambiguity is resolved for the benefit of farmers and plywood and particle industries, for which farm grown wood (which we may refer as farm wood) is major raw material component.

Further, with regard to importance of removing such ambiguity which would give a boost to the plywood and panel industry, I wish to highlight some significant inputs as below:

- This sector plays an important role as the primary income source of farm produced wood (Poplar, Eucalyptus, Rubber (cash crop residue), Silver oak, Melia Dubia, Kadam etc.). Farm produced wood is the only source of timber for the sector.
- After the announcement of Pradhan Manthri Awas Yojna & Self Reliance Vision (Atmanirbhar Bharath Mission) by Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji, the demand for timber increasing rapidly with positive interest shown by investors in this sector.
- The period during 2016-2019 has seen an Export-Import gap of 31,655 Crores in the wood-based industries sector, which is a big drain on our foreign currency resources. We believe this gap can be immediately arrested together, with timely action.

It is also relevant to mention here that legal clarity that farm wood should not be considered as a forest produce has implication for the objectives of the **The Farmers (Endowment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Ordinance, 2020**, as it will facilitate contract farming of agroforestry species such as Popular, Eucalyptus, Melia, Casuarina Ailentus, Kadamb, toona, mangium and such other species (Silver oak, rubberwood) as per the needs of plywood & panel sector industries. The ease of growing as well as trade of farm wood would also be able to tackle price fluctuation and demand and supply mismatch scenario as is existing today, to the mutual benefits of farmers and the industries as is enshrined in the objectives of the ordinance.

In view of the above, and to bring clarify to the matter that a tree grown by a farmer in his agricultural land should be considered as farm wood, and should not be considered as a forest produce, Indian Forest Act needs to be amended and a sub clause needs to be added under section 2, mentioning that-

***“13-species of timber which are farm produce and are indicated in annexure I shall not be considered as forest produce under the meaning of clause 4”***

The species as indicated in Annexure-I are also the same species of agro forestry which were recommended for regulatory relaxation by the Expert Committee constituted by the MoEF vide F.No.1-1/2018-FP dated 08/01/2018 under the chairmanship of Shri Abhijit Ghose, for increasing Green Cover under Tree outside Forests (ToF), and above proposed amendment is the only way that these species would be treated as farm wood, and would be relaxed from forest regulations across the country.

We are requesting for your kind & prompt action in this regard.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

**(Sajjan Bhajanka)**  
**President**  
**Federation of Indian Plywood & Panel Industry**  
**New Delhi.**

ANNEXURE-I-LIST OF TREE/TIMBER SPECIES TO BE TREATED AS NON-FOREST PRODUCT	
1.	Poplar
2.	Eucalyptus
3.	Kadam
4.	Silver Oak
5.	Lamboo
6.	Leucaena
7.	Casuarina
8.	Bombax
9.	Artocarpus
10.	Acacia spp.
11.	Shisham
12.	Neem
13	Siris

**F. No. 7-2/2020-FP**  
**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate**  
**Forest Policy Division**

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,  
Vayu Wing, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj  
New Delhi -110003  
Dated: 11.09.2020

To,

Shri Sajjan Bhajanka  
President, Federation of Indian Plywood and Panel Industry  
404, Vikrant Tower, 4, Rajevndra Place,  
New Delhi-110 008

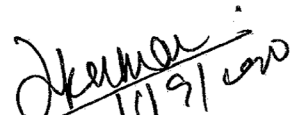
**Sub. Public Grievance made by Mr. Sajjan Bhajanka vide registration No. PMOPG/E/2020/0728127 dated 10.08.2020.**

Sir,

Please refer to your Public Grievance registered as No. PMOPG/E/2020/0728127 dated 10.08.2020 received in MOEFCC from Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare vide letter dated 09.09.2020 for necessary action.

2. In this regard, you are informed that the Indian Forest Act, 1927 defines timber as forest produce irrespective of its source whether found in or brought from a forest or not. However, Section 41 (3) of IFA, 1927 provides that “the State Government may direct that any rule made under this section shall not apply to any specified class of timber or other forest-produce or to any specified local area.” MOEFCC has already issued guidelines dated 18.11.2014 and 01.01.2020 to all States/UTs to take appropriate action in the matter as state government is empowered to take necessary action under section 41(3) of IFA, 1927. As of now, 28 states/UTs have already removed/ relaxed regulatory regimes for a number of commonly grown agroforestry species on non forest/ private lands. Bamboo has already been removed from definition of tree by amending Indian Forest Act, 1927 in 2017.

3. Further the suggestions regarding farm-produced timber to be classified as farming produce and not as a forest produce has been noted for consideration.

  
(Litesh Kumar)

Technical Officer (Forest Policy)

Copy to:

Shri Mehraj A. Shaikh  
Asstt. Commissioner (SMAF)  
DAC&FW  
Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare  
New Delhi

# Meeting on “issues related to import of timber and furniture” held on 31st July, 2020

A meeting to deliberate upon the issues concerning import of timber and furniture was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Ajay Srivastava, Economic Advisor, Department of Commerce, GoI, on 31st July, 2020 at 1430 hrs through Video Conferencing. Shri Sajjan Bhajanka President FIPPI and Dr. C.N. Pandey Principal Technical Adviser represented the meeting on behalf of Federation of Indian Plywood & Panel Industry

At the outset Shri Ajay Srivastava, Economic Adviser, briefed the participants about the issues concerning import of timber and furniture, which inter-alia included: a) use of harmful chemicals and additives in the imported furniture which may require imposition of technical regulations barriers to prevent inflow of these harmful imports into the country. b) Difficulties relating to quarantine requirements under the Plant Quarantine Order and also a need to simplify the testing facilities and certification processes to allow the import of timber which in turn would be beneficial for protecting the forest cover in India and c) issues relating to apparent inverted duty structure in the import of timber vis-à-vis furniture.

Shri Darpan Jain, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, elaborated upon the concerns relating to Sanitary and Phyto Sanitary (SPS) measures and the compliance requirements under the Plant Quarantine Act, especially those relating to the use of Methyl Bromide as a fumigant.

Industry Associations were requested to give their views on the issues flagged by the Chair and also raise any other issues/difficulties being faced by them in the import of timber/furniture. The issues raised, and suggestions given by the Associations during the meeting are summarized as below:

## **i) Use of Methyl Bromide for fumigation and removal of penal fees:**

The Plant Quarantine (Regulation of import in India), vide its order, 2016 requires that timber logs be fumigated with Methyl Bromide prior to exportation in the country of origin. But several countries including the EU member states, USA, Canada, China and African countries have prohibited the use of Methyl Bromide as a fumigant for quarantine and have approved the use of fumigant other than Methyl Bromide for timber logs, whereas in India it is mandatory to do the fumigation of logs/timbers with Methyl Bromide only.

The Department of Agriculture vide its letter no.-8-65/2012-PP.II dated 30.10.2014 allowed the import of all agricultural commodities without offshore Methyl Bromide fumigation from those countries subjected to Methyl Bromide fumigation in India at ports of entry and on payment of penal fees. This penal inspection fee is five times higher than the normal rates and thus, increases the cost of raw material and erodes the competitiveness of Indian industry. The industry has opined that charging of such fees is a violation of the India's obligation under the WTO SPS Agreement to impose fees that are “no higher than the actual cost of

the service”. It was also pointed out that D/o Commerce had, recommended in 2016, that such charges of penal inspection fee are unjustified and may be put to an end.

## **ii) Time bound action for relaxation cases:**

For all the relaxation cases, industry has suggested time bound decision in getting clearances from the port PQ Authority and an automatic exit route compared to lengthy time consuming and cost inflexible process of relaxation. It was further pointed out that many a times the amount of port demurrages and detention fee incurred is more than the value of the wood.

## **iii) The changing wood accessibility scenario (Including/Incorporating names of new plantation timber species which are available abundantly):**

Industry Associations pointed out that despite making available Pest risk analysis report (PRA) by the exporting countries to our Indian PQ department, the name of Larixdecidu (European Larch) has not been included in the list so far and the issue is pending for the last almost more than 3 years.

## **iv) Removal of additional declarations in Phytosanitary Certificate form:**

Requirement of Additional Declarations in Phytosanitary Certificate form need to be deleted. Despite Phytosanitary Certificate issued by the exporting country clearly stating that the plants or plant products have been inspected according to appropriate procedures and are considered to be free from quarantine pests and free from injurious pests and that they are considered to conform to the current Phytosanitary regulations at the importing country, the release of consignments are withheld for want of additional declarations which most of the exporting countries do not agree to provide. This defeats the overall objective underlying the PQ regulations to facilitate trade in wood free from quarantine risks.

## **v) Reduction in basic custom duty and removal of antidumping duty:**

The members suggested that the basic custom duties for timber logs, squares may be reduced from the current 5% to 0%. This shall make raw material available at cheaper rates for the construction, housing and furniture industry as well as boost the local employment of skilled and unskilled labour. This shall also give a boost to manufacturing of finished products in India under the Make in India Scheme and reduce import of finished products from countries like China, Vietnam and Malaysia. Further, it will add value to the forest policy which mandates and promotes the increase of India's forest cover.

It was also suggested by the members that Antidumping Duty on MDF and Particle Board be removed to

promote domestic furniture industry.

**vi) Relaxation of CAPEXIL Guidelines:**

As per current regulations of CAPEXIL, wood related products can be exported only by importer – manufacturer. The associations asserted that relaxations should be given for manufacturers/traders for exports even if materials are bought from other importers.

**vii) Flaw in the existing Assessment System:**

Industry Associations pointed out that the Customs officials at various ports around the country use different yardsticks to assess the value of imported timber. It is not understandable as to how the same origin consignment from the same supplier at the same rate gets assessed differently for example in Chennai as compared to for example in Mumbai. A request for standardization of custom valuation guidelines across ports has, therefore, been made by the Associations.

Further, it was pointed out that more than 80% of imported timber consignments are being subject to a Minimum Floor Price Value Based Assessment System. The Current Value addition/input-output norms for exports are difficult to achieve. They requested that permission for exports to be given with minimum 10% value addition on imported raw materials.

**viii) Higher rentals at ports:**

It was pointed out that the ground rent charge at New Mangalore Port Trust to stack timber at ports was raising the cost of imported basic timber and therefore requested for its reduction.

**ix) Other Suggestions by Associations:**

- a) Development of Agro Forestry Plantations and provision of production linked incentives (PLI) and institutional support for wood drying and treatment facilities in designated clusters and hubs.
- b) Development of Furniture parks at ports, establishment of a Timber Board, Quality Standardization, duty free imports for machinery required for the furniture industry, vocational training schools were other points mentioned.
- c) Exemption of the PQO order on import of wood samples (upto 1 cbm) which are imported as prototypes for Research and product development.

Ms Pooja Swaroop, Deputy Secretary, DPIIT stated that DPIIT has been engaging with the stakeholders from time to time and informed that several initiatives have been taken to reduce the impediments and promote the domestic timber and furniture industry, which included duty enhancement proposals on furniture and proposals for reduction of duty on wood chip, charcoal, round log, which were sent to DoR. It was also informed that a meeting has also been planned with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to amend the Forest Policy and efforts to ease the certification process in timber and that Development of furniture cluster is being taken up by DPIIT.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair. □

## Teak wood imports down by 50%, furniture prices shoot up



Despite dip in sales, wooden furniture is still priced quite high. The reason behind this is almost fifty percent reduction in import of teak wood, which is primarily used in making these furniture, for the past four months. Kutch's timber industry, India's biggest timber production hub, is facing acute shortage of teak wood after it resumed operations since the unlock. Their imports have been halved owing to non-availability of this particular wood in the countries exporting it. This has pushed up prices by 10 to 15 percent.

Teak wood is used in the manufacture of furniture, doors, window frames and other household materials. It's preferred as the base material for furniture owing to its tensile strength and low stiffness. India imports the teak wood mostly from African and Latin American countries besides New Zealand. According to rough estimates India imports 90,000 cubic metres teak wood every year. The import price ranges between \$250 to 300 per cubic metre.

President of Kandla timber association, Navneet Gajjar, said "Generally we used to import 5,000 containers of teak wood every month. This has now reduced to 2,500 containers for the past three to four months, which is pushing up the market prices by 10 to 15 percent." With the lockdown and labour shortage, the demand for teak wood in India had also reduced considerably but has now picked up since last month after construction work has resumed.

Keyur Thakkar, a custom house agent associated with timber industry, said that all the backlog import orders were completed by June. "Wood harvesting in forest areas of the exporting countries too had got suspended because of Covid. The entire process – from harvesting of the logs to these reaching India – takes more than two months. So, the cycle between June to August remained disturbed. We are hoping the import cycle normalizes soon."

Proximity to the port has made Kandla a suitable furniture hub of the country as 70 percent timber of country gets imported through Deendayal Port. The 2,000-odd saw mills and 100 plywood factories in and around Gandhidham town of Kutch imports more than Rs 7,000 crore timber annually. □

## Century Ply expects to reach pre-Covid levels of turnover by fiscal-end



Century Ply, the country's largest plyboard maker, expects turnover to hit pre-Covid levels by the end of Q4 of this fiscal. The company is seeing some slowdown in August sales, primarily on account of localised lockdowns. However, overall Q2 numbers are expected to be at 75 per cent of pre-Covid levels, led by recovery in demand in suburban and upcountry markets. According to Keshav Bhajanka, Executive Director, Century Plyboards Ltd, good recoveries were noticed beginning July. This came after a 'near washout' in the first three months of the fiscal, with sales plunging 25-30 per cent. The plyboard and veneer industry had been witnessing a slowdown even in the pre-Covid days. "We previously expected turnover to be 50 per cent of pre-Covid levels for Q2. July sales were good, at 75 per cent recovery (in turnover)," Bhajanka told BusinessLine.

"In August, we are seeing some slowdown due to localised lockdowns. However, we should end Q2 at 75 per cent levels. So, by Q4 of this fiscal, we are expecting to be back at pre-Covid levels," he added. Century Ply reported a net loss of over Rs. 8 crore in the June quarter; while the turnover stood at Rs. 201 crore. It reported a cash profit during the quarter.

**Upcountry markets:** Recoveries are led by suburban or upcountry markets that have so far seen a lesser load of the virus. For instance, the upcountry markets of Bihar, Odisha and

Haryana, and the suburban areas around Lucknow are back to pre-Covid levels in terms of demand and turnover.

The replacement markets in urban areas are still slow but are expected to pick up as fears over the virus subside. Normalisation in production, supply and demand will help margins improve. Margins are expected to remain around 16 per cent levels for the full year, Bhajanka said. Collection from debtors is normalising and debt level is coming down, the company maintained in an investor presentation. The company will also look at gaining market share as it plans ad-spends for its 'VIROKILL' technology-imbibed plywood and laminates.

**Capex plans:** Meanwhile, Century Ply will reconsider investment plans. The Rs. 450-crore proposed Sitapur project in Uttar Pradesh has been kept in abeyance since there are issues with licences. Alternative options being explored include an investment of Rs. 150 crore for additional expansion of facilities at its Hoshiarpur (Punjab) unit. "Additional investments in Hoshiarpur will be mostly through internal accruals. We are still in the process of finalising them," Bhajanka said. □

### Bamboo to play crucial role in Post-COVID Economy



The Narendra Modi government is planning to promote domestic bamboo industry which is going to play a critical role in shaping the post-COVID economy of India. The central government has raised the import duty by 25 per cent on raw bamboo items which will help the domestic bamboo industries like bamboo furniture in a big way and promote use of bamboo as building material. Northeastern region will be one of the favourite business destinations of India post-COVID-19 and bamboo is going to be the key pillar of economic activities. It will help in shaping the economy of the Northeast and the entire country in post-COVID era. □

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## "INDIAN WOOD & ALLIED PANELS"

Quarterly Journal - FIPPI

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# Designing the News Normal: *What's in Store for Materials and Design*

By Bill Esler



**B**usinesses in all sectors including architecture and design, are recalculating how to accommodate the “new normal.” Undoubtedly the configuration of interior spaces will change and along with that the material being used to fabricate them.

In the initial weeks, as more people began working from home, the shortcomings of makeshift office spaces became readily apparent, and not just for those at home, but for those viewing their colleagues from similar settings: bad lighting, noise and clutter in the background.

When it comes to trends in materials, analyst Ken Bush, founder of Material Intelligence, shared a list of trends likely to endure in the post-pandemic environment. Busch will also moderate a symposium of Materials in Design at the International Woodworking Fair in Atlanta in August.

“Seamless surfaces with fewer voids are an obvious solution, as are materials that can withstand rigorous cleaning, with sometimes harsh compounds.” He said. “The jury is out on the real-world effectiveness on antimicrobial surfaces, which of course still need to be cleaned. There are nano textures that are resistant to bacterial growth, but we aren’t hearing much about them in furniture yet.”

Busch also touched on the importance of biophilic design and how there’s growing interest in what might best be called “climate and human health,” both in commercial purchases and A&D specification.

“Biophilic design has been linked to higher productivity, lower stress, less fatigue and happier people. The U.S. EPA discovered that working within one meter of a living plant increases productivity by 15%.”

Busch continued, “Biophilic design encompasses anything that evoked nature. This includes use of colour (blue ceilings, green walls), wood, woodgrain laminates, prints with natural these etc.



## SUGGESTIONS FOR BOOSTING MOOD PROMOTING COMFORT, AND ENHANCING CONCENTRATION IN HOME WORK SPACES

- Tailor your workspace to the way you work.
- Size the desk or worktable to your way of working.
- Set the work surface off-center in the room (not facing a wall just to save space).
- Use light, soothing palettes.
- Employ natural elements and colors.



Here's something interesting: Researchers surveyed people placed in curtained-off areas in two different rooms, one with wood walls, one with concrete walls. People felt calmer and had lower blood pressure in the room with wood walls. So, there might be more to biophilic design than meets the eye. Literally!"

Given the immediacy of the work-at-home imperative, individuals have been making their own room arrangements. But designer Daun Curry offers some practical advice rooted in contemporary office design trends.

The biophilic design trend of the past decade, which promotes natural lighting and natural materials in interiors "is here to stay." According to Curry, Indeed, two arbiters of biophilic design have quickly moved to incorporate the effects of the pandemic in their initiatives. The International Living Building Institute, managers of the Declare Label, have rest many programs to address COVID-19. And the WELL Building Institute just created a Task Force on Coronavirus that it expects will "create enhancements to the WELL Building Standard itself."

"Your workspace should be tailored on the way you work", she said. According to Curry, who last year was named the Andrew Martin Interior Designer of the Year, "many of us find ourselves working in utilitarian or makeshift spaces that forego comfort, function, and livability – but without these elements people are hard-pressed truly be able to get into the zone."

Curry suggests the same guidance she would offer in planning professionally advising those workers from home to add "elements I regularly employ to boost mood, promote comfort, and enhance concentration when I get to work. The more positive the energy around you, the more inclined you are to be protective." Among the suggestions: size the desk or worktable to your way of working, then set that work surface off-center in the room (not facing a wall just to save space). Instead, put the side against the wall, and face the worktable into the center of the room. Use light, soothing palettes, and employ natural elements and colors.

Although the work-at-home phenomenon was already on the rise even before the pandemic arose, it's something Formica design guru Renee Hytry Derrington calls the "resimercial" design aesthetic. "The definition of 'home' is changing, as humans are blurring their time between work, home and play." Hytry Derrington said. "The concept of 'resimercial' is now the new norm for bridging between public and private life." The changes accompanying the business lockdown gave millions of people a rapid immersions in that transition.

**VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL PLACES ARE MERGING:** With homes doubling as workspaces and video studios where we collaborate, lighting and background settings must now be part of the planning for the home office.

**PUBLIC INTERIORS PROVIDE NATURAL "BUBBLES" FOR GROUP DISTANCING:** Hotel lobbies and restaurants will accommodate small groups staying together, but apart from each other. In retail, product displays will be further apart, so people won't be crowded.

**COMMON AREAS IN MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENCES WILL ALLOW GROUPS TO BE SEPARATE:** Passageways between such species will allow movement, but at more of a distance from others.

**MATERIALS, LIGHTING, ACOUSTICS WILL PLAY KEY ROLES:** Designers will use them to support mental health through interior environments.

So what exactly will this "new normal" look like? Some experts will say that almost everything will change with the workplace, but others might ask if the traditional cubicle setting will still be around. "As they've been romanticized in every movie ever made about Silicon Valley, yes", said Busch. "But we may not be handed back into cubicles right away. There will be more separation of work areas, more planned social distancing, more use of screens and dividers, and more furniture solutions that are easy to configure and achieve the previous points."

(Source: Surface & Panel, June 2020). □

# AHEC launches collaboration with five Indian furniture designers

*REMAKE was conceived as a response to the need for hands-on experience with American hardwoods in India's furniture manufacturing sector*

The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), the leading international trade association for the American hardwood industry, has announced the launch of 'REMAKE', its first design collaboration with five Indian furniture designers. The project challenges the leading designer-makers to each select three pieces from their existing furniture range and to remake them using American hardwoods. This is the first design collaboration by AHEC involving Indian designers and it builds on prior initiatives, which have aimed at creatively promoting American hardwoods, and have involved the likes of Zaha Hadid, David Adjaye, Matteo Thun, Sou Fujimoto, Norman Foster and Paul Smith amongst others.

REMAKE was conceived as a response to the need for hands-on experience with American hardwoods in India's furniture manufacturing sector. The designers involved with the project include Studio Wood, Bram Woodcrafting Studio, Kam Ce Kam, Esvee Atelier and Studio SFDW. In response to the brief, the designers have been asked to choose three of their own existing pieces and remake them using American red oak, white oak, cherry, hard maple, tulipwood or hickory. AHEC will be supplying all the lumber for the project from a stock of American hardwood species held in India, which was donated to AHEC by Allegheny Wood Products at the beginning of this year.



**KALUVA Coffee Table (Esvee Atelier)**



**Mausam Desk (Kam Ce Kam)**



**Ionic (Bram Woodcrafting Studio)**



**Trays (Studio SFDW)**

“Running an effective American hardwood promotion programme in India sometimes presents challenges due to the size of the market and the unorganized nature of much of the trade and industry. However, despite not being able to travel to India since the beginning of the year, AHEC has been able to remotely launch this exciting new project with five furniture



Sweep Study (Studio Wood)

manufacturers,” said Roderick Wiles, AHEC Regional Director. “The wealth of legally-harvested and sustainably-managed hardwoods that the United States has to offer is of increasing interest to India’s furniture manufacturers, as they seek to explore new materials, look for long-term alternatives to traditional furniture hardwoods and also widen their appeal to their intended markets, be they in India itself or overseas.”

The onset of COVID-19 and the enforced lockdown

actually enabled AHEC to spend a lot of time conducting in-depth research into India’s furniture manufacturing sector and to identify a significant number of companies previously unknown. Many of these companies are already using imported temperate hardwoods for their production, which is primarily targeted at India’s domestic market. In most cases, these companies are using European oak, ash and beech. However, American hardwoods are not yet well-known and understood in India and only a handful of manufacturers have hands-on experience with working with them. This lack of experience and lack of collective knowledge means that, to most manufacturers (and consumers), American hardwoods remain somewhat unknown.

“We’re very excited, not only by the caliber of the designers involved in this project, but also by the fabulous pieces that we look forward to seeing in these versatile, yet less well-known American hardwood species. REMAKE will explore how these designers champion a beautiful and sustainable material - American hardwood - in a market that holds tremendous potential. Whilst we do not currently have any plans to hold a physical exhibition of the finished pieces from this project, we are certainly exploring suitable opportunities in the next 6-12 months. Looking ahead, we hope that this collaboration will inspire the next generation of furniture designers and help the Indian market discover the untapped potential of U.S. hardwoods,” concluded Wiles. □

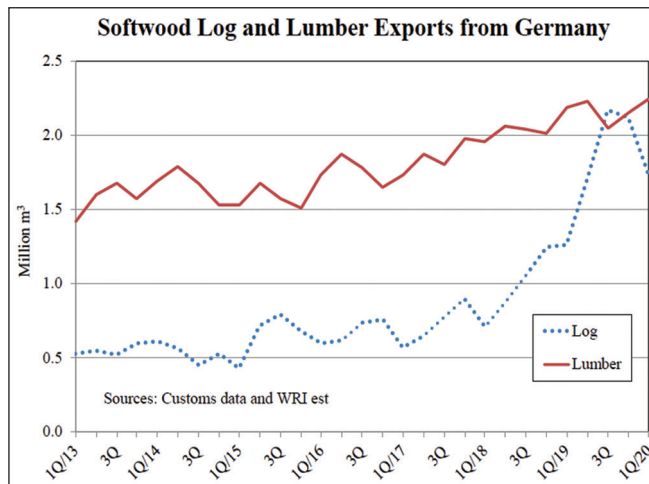
## German log exports remain high in early 2020; almost 50% destined for China

Wood Resources International reports that the log market in Germany has been extremely volatile in the first half of 2020, with high demand from the export market and a tight supply of fresh green logs. When COVID-19 forced sawmills to close in March, domestic demand for sawlogs fell and the price increases seen earlier in the quarter reversed – resulting in both domestic and export prices falling.

Sawlog prices varied throughout the country depending on the level of local supply, the quality of the beetle-killed timber, the availability of fresh logs, and the competition from log exporters. Log prices also varied due to contract volumes and spot purchases. Towards the end of the quarter, spot prices fell to levels that barely covered the costs for logging and hauling the timber. The 1Q/20’s estimated average sawlog price was an increase from the previous quarter but substantially lower than the 1Q/19, according to Wood Resource Quarterly.

Softwood log exports from Germany have increased dramatically over the past five years, from 2.1 million cubic metres in 2014 to 7.4 million cubic metres in 2019. The oversupply of logs resulted in record high exports in the 3Q/19 followed by two quarters of q-o-q declines (see chart). Despite the reduction in exports during the winter months, total shipments during the first four months of 2020 were up 38% as compared to the same period in 2019.

China has quickly become the largest market for German logs, accounting for almost 50% of all exported logs so far in 2020. From January to April this year, almost 2.4 million cubic metres of softwood logs were shipped to China. Log exportation from Europe to Asia is a recent trend. As late as 2017, there were



practically no shipments of German logs outside of Europe.

Log export prices were fairly stable during most of 2019 but started to decline in late 2019 and early 2020. In March and April 2020, average prices were down about 14% as compared to the same months in 2019. Prices for logs destined for China have also declined substantially from early 2019 but are still nominally higher than the prices for logs shipped to other markets.

The large supply of logs in Germany has had little impact on the consumption of logs by the domestic sawmilling industry. The increase in lumber exports has been less dramatic than that of logs, with the y-o-y rate of change actually falling the past three years, from 12% (2015 to 2016) to 6% (2018 to 2019). □

# Breathe a sigh of relief: wood is good for the climate – inside and out

By Ken Hickson

*Architects and builders like working with wood as it allows for creativity in design. It is strong, flexible, attractive and easy to work with. But wood means even more than that. It has a positive influence on the climate, both for the planet and for the indoors, as well as for the well-being and health of the people who live or work in buildings.*

As we are seeing a growing appreciation for wood as a superior and sustainable building material for tall buildings as well as smaller projects, we now need to pay much closer attention to what wood gets specified and where it comes from. European Union member countries, for example, will no longer allow the import of timber from Asia if it isn't responsibly sourced, with legal certification and a verifiable sustainable supply chain.

That's where an internationally preferred label for sustainable forest management comes in to play.



Yusof Ishak Secondary School's sports hall is expected to be among the first Venturer building projects to be PEFC-certified in Singapore.

Besides working to reduce harmful deforestation, illegal logging and forest fires around the world, the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) actively promotes the use of responsibly sourced, sustainable timber for buildings. This is not only good for the environment but also important for the people who depend on forests for their livelihood (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification 2020).

Utilising certified timber in construction also makes it possible to attain some of the sought-after standards companies want their buildings to have, such as Green Mark Platinum issued by the Singapore Green Building Council and the Building and Construction Authority (Singapore Green Building Council 2015). The World Green Building Council, for example, recognises that materials which make up a building are key to determining its sustainability. Thus, the building industry, along with its supply chains, has a major role to play to use responsibly sourced materials, which is also in line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (World Green Building Council 2017). Two Singapore-based businesses are leading the way to help make this happen, by making sure that all projects they're involved in – whether in Singapore, Asia or even further afield – are certified alongside PEFC's internationally recognised forest

management standards. One of these businesses is Venturer Timberwork, run by Kevin Hill, who has lived in Singapore for many years. The other is Double Helix Tracking Technologies, managed by Darren Thomas.

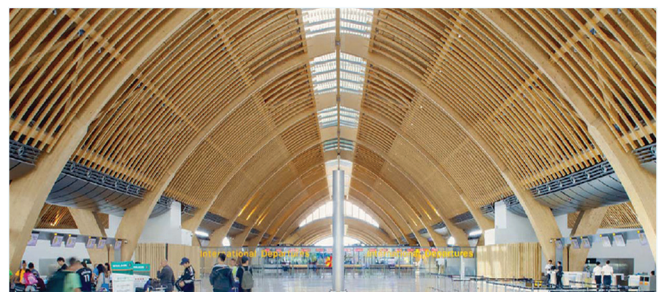
Hill has for a long time been advocating the "Chain of Custody" (CoC) as a way of verifying the source of timber he uses in his building projects in Singapore, Asia and elsewhere, while Thomas has been leading the charge for Double Helix's DNA-based wood verification in South East Asia and further afield since the company was set up here in 2008.

Venturer has long been a leading user of cross-laminated timber (CLT) and glue-laminated timber from certified European sources in a number of projects in Singapore and the region (Venturer Timberwork 2020). It is now the first Singapore business to obtain PEFC CoC certification, which is in turn accredited by the Singapore Accreditation Council (SAC). With several building projects lined up, Venturer is the first company in Singapore to be PEFC project certified and is also believed to be the first timber construction contractor in Asia to be CoC certified.

Acknowledging that the construction industry faces specific challenges, Hill says that it is not always easy to prove that the timber specified and supplied for individual construction projects is from certified sustainable sources. PEFC solved this challenge with the CoC certification – or "project certification" – for specified projects – a mechanism for gaining independent verification of the use of certified timber in a one-off project with a limited duration.

Venturer is going through the process of making sure all its building projects are PEFC certified, including a tropical timber resort for Singapore-based real estate developer Pontiac Land on the Fari Islands in the Maldives, which is set to open later this year (Chin, 2020).

Located in the North Malé Atoll, the resort will feature three hotels – managed by luxury hotel operators Capella Hotels & Resorts, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company and Patina Hotels



Mactan-Cebu International Airport in the Philippines with a gigantic roof made of PEFC-certified timber.

& Resorts – a marina and a village campus. The properties are designed by architects Studio MK27 (by Marcio Kogan), Kengo Kuma & Associates and Kerry Hill Architects.

Hill recently reported that his company is also involved in producing the first James Turrell Skyspace in Asia, to be located in the Maldives (Turrell 2020). It is the first Skyspace built with PEFC-certified timber components and is what Hill calls “a truly sustainable tribute to one of the greatest living artists of our time”. With PEFC project certification, it’s now possible to clearly and reliably demonstrate that the decision to build with responsibly sourced sustainable timber is the right way to go.

That’s where Double Helix comes in. Already involved around the world in verifying and certifying the source and characteristics of timber products, they now offer PEFC CoC certification to companies across the Asia-Pacific region (Double Helix 2020).

As the first company to be accredited to the PEFC scheme by the SAC – a leading member of the International Accreditation Forum – Double Helix’s service standards are now recognised equally all over the world. It was announced last year when SAC – part of Enterprise Singapore – told PEFC stakeholders that this scheme provides the industry with greater support to meet the Green Mark requirement for mass-engineered timber to be sourced from sustainably managed forests (Enterprise Singapore 2019).



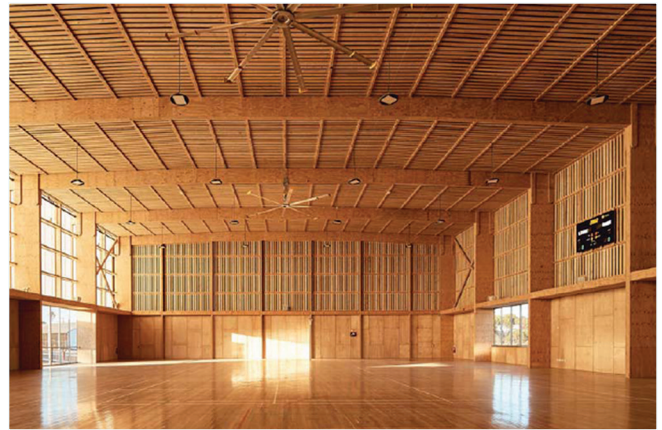
**Ocean Cay Marina in the Bahamas features certified timber.**

SAC provides internationally recognized accreditation which facilitates trade harmonisation and acceptance of certified wood products from Singapore’s key trading partners, notably Indonesia, Malaysia and China, all of which have PEFC endorsed forest certification systems.

The CoC certification shows that forest products like paper, wood flooring, furniture (or even non-timber forest products like rubber), originate from well managed forests and exclude material associated with conflict or land clearance. It is a valuable tool to communicate the environmental credentials of organizations bringing such products into the market.

PEFC’s claim and label is widely recognized across the world and is synonymous with sustainability. With over 320 million hectares of PEFC-certified forest and more than 20,000 companies with PEFC CoC certification, businesses are able to meet legality issues, as well as customer expectations, by introducing traceability solutions into the supply chain.

During his visit to South East Asia last September, Ben



**Winner of the World Architecture Festival prize in 2019 for best use of PEFC-certified timber was the Pingelly Recreation and Cultural Centre in Perth, Australia.**

Gunneberg, chief executive officer of PEFC, pointed out that Singapore has already made its mark in the region by accrediting Double Helix to provide certification in Myanmar to meet stringent regulations for the export of teak to the European Union and United States (US) (PEFC 2019). The Myanmar project, coordinated by PEFC, is supported by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation as part of its commitment to tackle deforestation (Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation 2020).

PEFC takes its commitment to wood and design to another level through its partnership with the World Architecture Festival (WAF), offering the annual prize for the Best Use of Certified Timber, which is open to architects and builders around the world (PEFC 2020).

What’s more, PEFC certification assists in meeting regulatory requirements, such as the European Union Timber Regulation and the US Lacey Act. By gaining PEFC certification, companies can sell their timber products and maintain access to these environmentally conscious and demanding markets (EU FLEGT Facility 2020).

Wood from certified sources is not only good for people’s health and the environment, but also vital for businesses that could well miss out on the next big order if they cannot clearly show a certificate verifying where their material comes from.

It can help business meet other worthy objectives too, by reducing rampant deforestation in South East Asia and stopping unscrupulous operators from engaging in illegal logging and the export of protected timber species. Wood is good in more ways than one. (Source: *Wood in Architecture Issue 2, 2020*). □

## Indian Wood & Allied Panels

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## Amulyamica Brand merging with Amul



**Mr. Rakesh Agarwal, Founder and Managing Director, Amul Boards Pvt Ltd.**

**A**mul Boards Pvt Ltd., a company set up in 1998 at Gandhidham, Kutch, Gujarat manufactures wide range of products ranging from Plywood, Block Board, Flush Doors, Fire Retardant Doors, Laminated Doors. It markets its products under the brand name of “Amul”.

Company’s products are competitively priced and of unmatched quality. “Offer the customer, the best” is the philosophy of the people behind Amul Boards, and hence all products pass through stringent quality checks at every stage of manufacturing. Mr. Rakesh Agarwal, Founder and Managing Director of the company states, that quality for us, begins from Raw Material. He opines, we source best timber from all over the world and being close to ports of Kandla and Mundra gives the company added advantage of lower logistic costs, which it invests into sourcing best raw material.

Amul Boards products are specially treated to withstand attack of borer and termite, by impregnating raw material by specially formulated resins at the starting stage of manufacture.

Amul Boards has been one of the pioneers in this part of the country that has an on-going process of improving its manufacturing and quality. It has invested into state of the art machines, which aid in manufacturing quality products. It has secured various certificates which prove the quality consciousness aspect of the company. To list a few;

- ISO:9001 Quality Management system
- ISO: 14001 Environmental Management System
- ISO; 45001 Occupational Health and Safety

Amul Board products meet the BIS specifications and offers it’s consumers different grades of products as per their need to choose from. The product grades are specified by BIS, which we manufacture are;

- IS:710
- IS: 2202
- IS: 303
- IS:1659
- IS: 5509

Amul Board Products have been tested and certified by various bodies such as;

- Tested for Fire Retardant properties by CBRI, Roorkee, highly reputed body.
- FSC Certification received from SGS, which assures that source of timber is from a forest that are managed in a responsible & sustainable manner.

In addition, Amul Board has secured CE Marking, which is mandatory for exports, and IGBC Certification issued by CII, and is becoming another must for supplying in projects in India.

Amul Boards inspite of being into the business of use of natural product – timber which is the raw material for all its products, yet they are very conscious of their responsibility towards conservation of environment. To maintain environmental balance, the company has pledged to Plant ONE Tree for every 36 sheets of Plywood it manufactures. The company has been working alongwith various NGO’s to fulfil its ambitious desire to plant ONE LAKH Trees.

Amul Boards other group companies include Purbanchal Laminates Pvt Ltd., which manufactures and markets wide variety of Laminates under the brand of Amulyamica. Amulyamica over the years has become a household name and is available all throughout the country besides being exported to almost 30 nations.

Amul Boards are introducing it’s complete range of products under the name of “Amulyamica Plywood”, “Amulyamica Doors”. This shall help synergise the branding for the Group and customer will get the confidence of purchasing a known and trusted brand.

The range of Plywood and Doors under the brand of Amulyamica are as follows;

- Plywood:
  - o PF Platinum +:
    - Comes with life time warranty
    - Makes use of Garjan face and imported hardwood as its core
    - MAP and ATAFT Treated
    - Fire-retardant properties
  - o PF Gold:
    - Uses Okume face and offers imported hardwood and/or Garjan core
    - Comes with 25 years warranty
  - o PF Classic Plywood:
    - Okume Face
    - White core
    - Balanced imported hardwood
    - 15 years warranty offered
  - o Fire Retardant Plywood:
    - Uses Okume for face
    - Core is of Garjan/imported hardwood

- MAP treated
- Block Board:
  - PF Platinum/PF Gold:
    - Makes use of 100% New Zealand Pine for its frame & even as filler
    - Single core of 2.5 mm of Garjan/Imported hard wood and Garjan face
    - Comes with 10 years warranty
- Doors:
  - Fire Retardant Doors:
    - Known as Fire Fighter
    - Makes use of Okume Face
    - New Zealand pine for frame
    - Meranti wood as filler and in frame
    - Double core imported hardwood
    - Barrier sheet on both sides
    - Intumescent strip all around
    - Special MAP & Nano chemical treatment
  - PF Flush Door Gold +:
    - Uses Okume for face, New Zealand Pine for

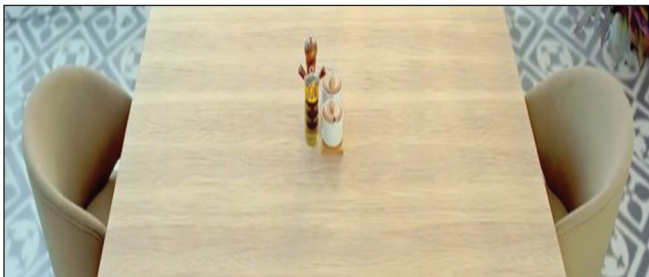
- frame
- Double core of imported hardwood
- Comes with 10 years warranty
- Laminated Flush Door:
  - Okume as face
  - New Zealand pine frame
  - Meranti wood as filler
  - Double core of imported hardwood
  - Amulyamica 0.8mm or 1.0 mm lamination
  - 10 years warranty

Amul Boards manufactures all its products using MAT process. Calibration of plywood is one of the latest addition in the process of manufacturing of plywood and this additional process cost is being absorbed by the company and is not being passed on to the customers.

All the products of Amul Boards are available at the four warehouses of the company based at Delhi, Kolkata, Ahmedabad and Bangalore, thus making the products available at short notice.

*For any further details, visit [www.amulyamica.com](http://www.amulyamica.com) or [www.amulboards.com](http://www.amulboards.com) write to [crm@amulyamica.com](mailto:crm@amulyamica.com) or can call at Toll Free #: 1800 233 1468. □*

## Greenlam Industries Limited's new TVC says 'Shukar Hai, Greenlam Laminates Anti-bacterial Hai'



**G**reenlam Laminates is back with their new TV commercial focusing on one of its key product feature of Anti-bacterial surface for a healthy and safe environment. Greenlam Industries Ltd. is among the top 3 laminate manufactures in the world and largest in Asia. Under its flagship brand Greenlam Laminates and Greenlam Compacts, it is offering surfaces that are anti-bacterial, anti-microbial, anti-fungal and food contact safe so that customers can be rest assured of a hygienic space for all age-groups. At a time when brands are relooking at their marketing initiatives and investments due to COVID-19, Greenlam is reaching out to the entire nation with its TVC 'Shukar Hai, Greenlam Laminates Anti-bacterial Hai'.

The current situation has made people more cognizant of their well-being which has also led to an increase in the demand for anti-bacterial surfaces. Hence, whether at home, office or public place, anti-bacterial property has become a preferred choice for everyone. Now, through this new TVC, Greenlam is bringing awareness about its anti-bacterial laminates which are highly effective in retarding the growth of common bacteria up to 99.99%\*. Greenlam is the first laminate brand to introduce

anti-bacterial surfaces over 10 years ago and is committed to help people keep their spaces germ-free and devoid of unhealthy contaminants.

Conceptualised by ADK Fortune, a WPP agency, the TV Commercial features two characters and captures a moment that looks completely unacceptable in the current COVID scenario. But everything suddenly seems fine when the realisation sinks in that all this is happening around Greenlam Anti-Bacterial Laminates

Speaking on the occasion Ms. Parul Mittal, Director, Greenlam Industries Ltd. said, "Today, the world is slowly adapting to a new normal lifestyle with a greater emphasis on personal health. If COVID has taught us anything, it is our obsession with hygiene. Rightly so, only a germ-free surface at home and workplace are our first line of defense. Keeping this in mind, Greenlam's anti-bacterial laminate property becomes utmost important in current scenario. The latest TV campaign is launched with an objective to reach out to a larger audience highlighting the key benefit of anti-bacterial property in Greenlam Laminates and to communicate that the laminate does not just look beautiful but is also effective in retarding bacteria to keep the surface hygienic."

Throwing light on the thought process behind this campaign, Nakul Sharma, VP & Executive Creative Director, ADK Fortune (a WPP agency), said, "We wanted to keep the moment very relatable and slice of life. The aim is to tell people that the need to take precautions around our health exists inside our homes on a day to day basis. And Greenlam with its anti-bacterial range brings ultimate peace of mind to everyone in the house." □

# New method of preserving lumber could replace pressure treating in the future

Pressure treating – which involves putting lumber inside a pressurized watertight tank and forcing chemicals into the boards – has been used for more than a century to help stave off the fungus that causes wood rot in wet environments. Now researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology have developed a new method that could one day replace conventional pressure treating as a way to make lumber not only fungal-resistance but also nearly impervious to water-and more thermally insulating.

The new method, in the journal *Langmuir* and jointly sponsored by the Department of Defense, the Gulf Research Programme, and the Westendorf Undergraduate Research Fund, involves applying a protective coating of metal oxide that is only a few atoms thick throughout the entire cellular structure of the wood.

This process, known as atomic layer deposition, is already frequently used in manufacturing microelectronics for computers and cell phones but now is being explored for new applications in commodity products such as wood. Like pressure treatments, the process is performed in an airtight chamber, but in this case the chamber is at low pressures to help the gas molecules permeate the entire wood structure.

“It was really important that this coating be applied throughout the interior of the wood and not just on the surface,” said Mark Losego, an assistant professor in the School of Materials Science and Engineering. “Wood has pores that are about the width of a human hair or a little smaller, and we used these holes as our pathways for the gases to travel throughout the wood’s structure.”

As the gas molecules travel down those pathways, they react with the pore’s surfaces to deposit a conformal, atomic-scale coating of metal oxide throughout the interior of the wood. The result is wood that sheds water off its surface and resists absorbing water even when submerged.

In their experiments, the researchers took finished pine 2x4s and cut them into one inch pieces. They then tested infusing the lumber with three different kinds of metal oxides: titanium oxide. With each, they compared the water absorption after holding the lumber under water for a period of time. Of the three, titanium oxide performed the best by helping the wood absorb the least amount of water. By comparison, untreated lumber absorbed three times as much water.

“Of the three chemistries that we tried, titanium oxide proved the most effective at creating the hydrophobic barrier.” Said Shawn Gregory, a graduate student at Georgia Tech and lead author on the paper. “We hypothesize that this is likely because of how the precursor chemicals for titanium dioxide react less readily with the pore surfaces and therefore have an easier time penetrating deep within the pores of the wood.”

Losego said that the same phenomena exist in atomic layer deposition processes used for microelectronic devices.

“These same titanium oxide precursor chemistries are known

to better penetrate and conformally coat complex nanostructures in microelectronics just like we see in the wood,” Losego said. “These commonalities in understanding fundamental physical phenomena – even in what appear to be very different systems – is what makes science so elegant and powerful.”

In addition to being hydrophobic, lumber treated with the new vapor process also resists the mold that eventually leads to rot.

“Interestingly, when we left these blocks sit in a humid environment for several months, we noticed that the titanium oxide treated blocks were much more resistant to mold growth than the untreated lumber,” Gregory added. “We suspect that this has something to do with its hydrophobic nature, although there could be other chemical effects associated with the new treatment process that could also be responsible. That’s something we could want to investigate in future research.”

Yet another benefit of the new process: vapor-treated wood was far less thermally conductive compared to untreated wood.

“A lot of attention is paid in home building to insulating the cavities between the structural components of a home, but a massive amount of the thermal losses are caused by the wood studs themselves,” said Shannon Yee, an associate professor in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering and a co-author on the paper with expertise in thermal systems. “Lumber treated with this new process can be up to 30 per cent less conductive, which could translate to a savings of as much as two million BTUs of energy per dwelling per year.”

Materials provided by Georgia Institute of Technology. Original written by Josh Brown.

Journal Reference:

Shawn A. Gregory, Connor P. McGettigan, Emily K. McGuinness, David Misha Rodin, Shannon K. Yee, Mark D. Losego. Single-Cycle Atomic Layer Deposition on Bulk Wood Lumber for Managing Moisture Content, Mold Growth, and Thermal Conductivity. *Langmuir*, 2020; DOI: 10.1021/acs.langmuir.9b03273

Source: *Wood In Architecture*. □

## Indian Wood & Allied Panels

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## EPF stats show wood-based panel production declined in 2019



European panel production growth was halted in its tracks in 2019

Wood-based panel production in European Panel Federation (EPF) countries has dipped for the first time in four years. The 1.8% contraction in 2019 to nearly 59.2 million m<sup>3</sup> was recorded by the EPF in its annual report for 2019-2020. The EPF said it was not making forecasts for 2020 due to the uncertainties of the current coronavirus crisis.

The EPF said the current consumption of wood-based panels followed a similar trend, reducing by 0.7% to nearly 61 million m<sup>3</sup>. With consumption in EPF countries exceeding the domestic production level, the trade deficit position grew to nearly 1.8 million m<sup>3</sup>.

This position is largely driven by the level of plywood

imports, which reached more than 60% of apparent plywood consumption in 2019. This offset the net export position in other wood-based panel products such as particleboard, MDF, OSB and fibreboard.

In terms of production, particleboard was the one bright spot in EPF countries during 2019, registering a 0.5% growth to 32.095 million m<sup>3</sup>.

MDF production contracted by 3.7% to 12.136 million m<sup>3</sup>, while OSB production saw a more modest reverse at 0.8% to 6.771 million m<sup>3</sup>.

Plywood production dipped by 7.8% to 2.954 million m<sup>3</sup>, while hardboard output was down to 491,000m<sup>3</sup> – a 7.3% drop. Even softboard, a star performer in terms of production growth in recent years, saw output reduce by 8.6% in 2019 to 4.738 million m<sup>3</sup>. This was due to capacity closures.

The furniture industry remains the biggest end-use destination for wood-based panels output in EPF countries, accounting for 49% of overall production in Europe in 2019. Construction was the number two destination sector with 38% of production (up from 34% in 2018), with the remaining 3% and 10% of production going into packaging and other applications respectively.

In the particleboard sector, Poland registered the largest production growth in 2019, increasing by 11.5% to 3.607 million m<sup>3</sup>, with the UK and Belgium second in the growth stakes by recording a 5.4% rise to 3.249 million m<sup>3</sup> (combined figure for both countries).□

## Study: Massive wood slabs market to exceed US\$2 billion by 2030

According to a recent report published by Fact.MR, the global demand for massive wood slabs will see a significant increment due to an increasing preference for wooden furniture. Set to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5%, the massive wood slabs market will be valued at more than US\$2 billion by 2030.

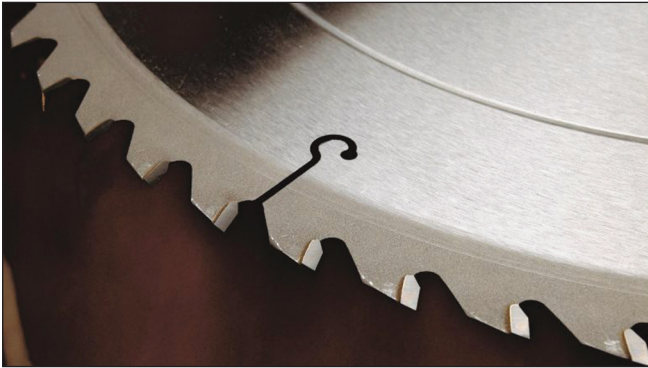
Owing to urbanisation and improved lifestyles of consumers in developed regions, manufacturers have thus increased production of massive wood slabs and wooden products. For instance, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in 2018, production of forest products increased by around 5% and international wood trade value was 11% higher compared to 2017.

### Key takeaways from the study

- The global massive wood slabs market is expected to progress at a CAGR of nearly 3% in terms of volume, and is anticipated to expand 1.3X (volume) from 2020 to 2030.
- Mahogany wood type will hold the highest share in terms of value, and is projected to create an absolute dollar opportunity of US\$124 million during the forecast period.

- Rough milled slab type is expected to expand at a CAGR of 5% in terms of value, but is expected to lose 22 BPS from its market share by the end of the forecast period.
- Massive wood slabs with width over 30 inches are expected to account for a majority share in terms of value, projected to create an absolute \$ opportunity of around US\$195 million during the forecast period.
- Coffee table applications are expected to hold a majority value share in the global massive wood slabs market, and is expected to be valued 2.7X as compared to bench applications by the end of the forecast period.
- The timber wholesaler sales channel is expected to progress at a CAGR of 5%, and be valued 2.5X more than the timber online store sales channel by the end of the forecast period.
- Europe is expected to hold maximum share in terms of value. However, the massive wood slabs market in the region is expected to lose 36 BPS from its market share in terms of value by the end of the forecast period.□

## “Covid-19”: heavy impact on the first quarter for the wood-furniture technology industry



Unfortunately, the analysis of data collected by the Studies Office of Acimall, the Confindustria-member association representing the Italian wood-furniture technology industry, was not surprising and confirmed an immediate impact of the lockdown caused by the Covid19 pandemic. The first quarter 2020 closed with a widespread reduction of woodworking machinery and tool orders, a two-digit decrease that involved all global markets, though with some delay.

The quarterly survey – which involves a representative sample of the entire industry – has revealed a strong reduction of orders, by 21.1 percent compared to the same period of 2019. The slight delays mentioned above have probably mitigated the impact for international customers, down by 19.4 percent, which is not so bad as the minus 25.3 result recorded by domestic demand. “It is clear that the widespread shrinkage and later lockdown of production activities has impacted the results, causing a demand crisis that will probably influence the entire year. The actions of national, European and global governments

and institutions to support the economy and each industry will be critical in the near future,” said Dario Corbetta, general director of Acimall.

The book of orders is at 2.6 months, while prices have been increasing by 0.8 percent. In a situation that is not just “difficult”, the revenues in Q1 obviously show a very different trend from orders, down by “only” 8.8 percent. Basically, industry companies could finalize and deliver all pending orders, but the worries for the future have led too many customers to postpone all investment decisions, waiting for a safer outlook.

The quality survey reveals all the fears of industry entrepreneurs: 69 percent expect dropping production, 19 percent predict some stability and only 12 percent believe in a positive trend. A “stationary” trend is also expected for employment according to 75 percent of the sample, while 6 percent expect an increase and 19 percent fear shrinkage. Available stocks are stationary according to 44 percent, increasing according to 37 percent and falling according to the remaining 19 percent.

Last but not least, the figure that is traditionally presented by the quarterly survey of the Acimall Studies office, namely the sentiment for the near future. Well, the forecast survey shows a situation dominated by worries, both for the trend of domestic demand and for the poor chances to find compensation abroad: 13 percent of the interviewees expect an increase in foreign orders, but 31 percent believe there will be no change and 56 percent fear that the worst is yet to come (negative balance 43). No business owner is optimistic about incoming orders from the Italian wood and furniture industry: 37 percent hope for some stability while 63 percent believe the downward trend will continue (negative balance 63). □

## Furniture companies eye organised sourcing ecosystem

Major furniture companies in India, including Ikea, Pepperfry, Urban Ladder and Godrej Interio, have come together to discuss ways for an organised sourcing ecosystem. “These companies are in talks with government officials. They want to figure out new ways to build an organised ecosystem for the Indian furniture industry, which is highly fragmented currently,” sources said. The move, which is expected to help these organised furniture retailers to not only increase local sourcing but boost exports from India too, comes against the backdrop of the government’s intention to license furniture imports in an effort to provide a fillip to domestic manufacturing.

Swedish retailer Ikea is looking to source FSC-certified wood for its furniture from India, which will ensure that the raw material comes from responsibly-managed forests. “That kind of certification for wood is hard to come by in India, so Ikea, which imports products from around 40 countries globally, is trying to work out ways in which that ecosystem can be established here,” said a person familiar with the development. Ikea India country commercial head Kavitha Rao said, “This collaboration



will provide a greater impetus to Indian furniture manufacturing industry to move towards global standards.” Godrej Interio senior VP (B2C) Subodh Mehta said the government is interested in the project. “Our goal is to turn India into a self-reliant furniture manufacturing hub,” Mehta told TOI. □

## WFH furniture to be \$3.49 billion industry by 2026



The Indian Work From Home (WFH) Furniture Market is forecast to grow from an estimated \$2.22 billion in FY2021 to \$3.49 billion by FY2026, majorly on account of a rising number of companies providing an option of doing work from home to their employees coupled with growing number of IT companies adopting cloud based solutions. Moreover, consumer preference for good and premium quality products, increasing urban population, growing internet connectivity and rising disposable income are few other factors that are positively influencing the market.

Changing lifestyle of consumers, especially due to COVID-19 lockdown, are some other major drivers of the WFH furniture market in India.

The Indian Work From Home (WFH) Furniture Market is categorized into By Type, By Material, By Distribution Channel, and By Region. In terms of Type, the market is divided into Sofa, Study Table & Tables, Chairs, Beanbag, Pouffe, Ottoman, Storage, Recliners and Others. Among these, Study Tables &

Tables segment accounted for the largest share in the India WFH Furniture Market in FY 2020, followed by Chairs, and both of these segment would continue to dominate the market during the forecast period. In terms of Material, the market is segmented into Wood, Plastics, Metal and Others. The Wood segment grabbed the majority market share in the India WFH Furniture Market in FY2020, followed by metal and plastic segments.

In terms of distribution channel, the India WFH Furniture Market is segmented into Exclusive Showrooms, Supermarkets/Hypermarkets, Online and Other Furniture Retail Outlets. Out of these segments, Other Furniture Retail Outlets account for more than 70% of the market share in the India WFH Furniture Market in FY 2020.

However, during the forecast period, the share of Other Furniture Retail Outlets segment is expected to decline on account of increasing focus of companies to make their products reach exclusive showrooms, supermarkets & hypermarkets, and online channels across the country. □

## Future-oriented cooperation between the Kumar Group and Siempelkamp

*The internationally operating Kumar Group and Siempelkamp Maschinen- und Anlagenbau GmbH sign a cooperation agreement for an innovative sustainability project in India on July 8, 2020*

Since spring 2020, representatives of the Kumar Group have been in contact with experts from the Siempelkamp Group to discuss potential future projects with a main focus on ecology, sustainability, and partnership.

Both sides see future-oriented and promising approaches and, despite the challenges posed by travel restrictions due to COVID-19, were able to develop the joint project into a concrete basis for cooperation. On July 8, 2020, a first cooperation agreement for a project in India has been signed, which both parties will now start with a feasibility study.

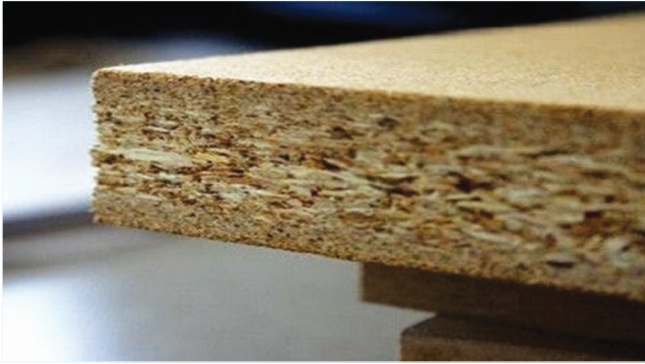
Both Kumar and Siempelkamp see considerable potential in the Indian market. The focus will lie on the area of "Green Products" by combining resource-saving production processes with high product quality - exactly what demanding customers expect today. At the same time, entire regions could benefit from the joint cooperation through significant job creation initiatives



**Unterzeichnung Frankfurt (v. l. n. r.): Oliver Kaiser (Chairman AFK Kumar Group), Nikolaos Tonidis (CEO AFK Kumar Group), Samiron Mondal (Geschäftsführer Siempelkamp Maschinen- und Anlagenbau GmbH), Ulrich Kaiser (Vertriebsleiter Siempelkamp Maschinen- und Anlagenbau GmbH).**

for a large number of India's rural population. □

# “Flame-resistant particleboard” national standard officially released



According to the National Standards Announcement of the People’s Republic of China issued by the State Administration for Market Regulation and the National Standardization Administration on July 21, 2020, 199 recommended national standards and 3 national standards, such as the approval of the “base paper size for printing, writing and drawing” “Announcement of the Amendment List” (No. 17 of 2020), the national standard GB/T 39032?2020 “Flame-Resistant Particleboard” managed by the National Wood-based Panel Standardization Technical Committee was officially released and will be implemented on February 1, 2021.

Flame-retardant particleboard is a kind of chips (shavings) of certain specifications that are cut into various branch materials, small diameter wood, fast-growing forest wood, wood chips, etc., which are made by flame retardant, drying, glue mixing, paving, hot pressing, etc. Wood-based panels have been widely used in construction and interior decoration, furniture, ship and vehicle interior decoration, etc., and standards and regulations are urgently needed.

The GB 50222?2017 “Code for Fire Protection Design of Building Interior Decoration” formally implemented on April 1, 2018, puts forward new requirements for fire protection and building materials for civil buildings and venues, exhibition venues and residential buildings. In order to promote the application of flame-retardant particleboard, the National Standardization Management Committee issued the national standard “Flame-resistant Particleboard” (plan number 20173676-T-432) in 2017. The standard was jointly formulated by 18 units including the Wood Industry Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Forestry and the Sichuan Fire Research Institute of the Ministry of Emergency Management. The national standard of “Flame-resistant Particleboard” is a national key research and development project of “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan”, “Important Agricultural and Forestry Products Modern Processing Quality Improvement Common Technical Standards” (Project Number: 2016YFF 0201900) Project 3 “Research on Common Technical Standards for Deep Processing of New and Special Wood” The transformation and application of project research results.

GB/T 39032? 2020 “Flame-resistant particleboard” stipulates the terms and definitions, product classification and model, requirements, measurement and test methods, inspection rules and markings, packaging, transportation and storage of

flame-retardant particleboard, applicable to flame-retardant properties Common type, furniture type, load-bearing type and heavy-duty particleboard used in the dry state and wet state. China has an average of more than 20,000 fires every year, more than 2,000 casualties, and a direct economic loss of about 1.5 billion yuan. The development of flame retardant technology for wood-based panels with high flame-retardant efficiency and reduced fire risk and the development of urgently-needed flame-retardant wood-based panel standards are against the norms The production, sales and application of non-combustible wood-based panels are of great significance to reduce the risk of fire in public places and ensure the safety of people’s lives and properties.

The promulgation and implementation of this standard is of great significance to standardizing the production, sales and application of flame-retardant particleboard products, promoting the application of flame-retardant particleboard in the field of interior decoration, promoting industrial technological progress and improving the overall competitiveness of the industry. At the same time, this standard is a supporting standard of the mandatory national standard GB 50222? 2017 “Code for Fire Protection Design of Building Interior Decoration” officially implemented on April 1, 2018. It is enriching and improving China’s fire safety application standards, reducing fire risks, and protecting the people. The safety of life and property is also of great significance. □

## India to consider investing US\$10 to \$11 billion to boost domestic production of furniture

INDIA’S government is considering proposals to invest US\$16 to \$17 billion to boost domestic production of various consumer items, including furniture, air conditioners and its components, and leather footwear. This is to reduce import dependence and increase exports, other measures may include duty hikes, reported Times of India on 3 June.

Among the priority sectors that will be receiving support from the government, the furniture sector may receive one of the largest amount of investment amounting to US\$10 to \$11 billion to set up three to four clusters or hubs near ports, that are also close to the wood producing areas. In recent years, India’s furniture market size is worth US\$10 to \$12 billion, with imports valued at US\$1.5 to \$2 billion. Over 50% of imports come from China.

**Duty hikes and a new forestry policy:** Duty hikes on wood products are also being considered by the government, as well as the long-term solution for a forestry policy that supports the environment and the economy, referring to Vietnam as a successful example. □

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