

CONGO BASIN COMMUNITY REPORT #4

FEBRUARY 2020



LIBREVILLE ACTION POINTS

At the FSC Congo Basin Business Encounter 2018 held in Libreville Gabon 6 action points were identified to develop the market for sustainable tropical timber:

- Creating a Green Lane for FSC within EUTR.
- Developing LKTS.
- Reduce certification costs.
- Linking with Asian operators.
- Eco Services Payment action.
- Marketing tools to create awareness.

As a result of the Business Encounter and the action plan a working group is established called LKTS Congo Basin (LKTSCB). Members are from the leading European tropical timber markets and coordinated by FSC Netherlands.

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Dear members of the FSC Congo Basin Community

Welcome to our fourth report.

A new year, with new challenges. For our Community the main ones will be to increase demand of FSC certified tropical wood and Lesser Known Timber Species and to create opportunities for more hectares of sustainable managed FSC certified forests in the Congo Basin. In these efforts we are happy to see the newly reassurance by Minister of Forests of the Gabonese Republic that affirms obligations to implement FSC certification of the state forests through a partnership deal with FSC. (Read more)

The overall import figures of the European market are not positive. Tropical timber use is among other things hampered by a bad image. As far as we are concerned there keeps being a call for more common actions within the timber business to counter the bad image with facts. The business as a whole is not big and strong enough to match up with the promotion of the competitive materials. The main tool would be solidarity between companies with a joint strong sustainability message. FSC Netherlands in co-operation with the colleagues of FSC Denmark, France and Congo Basin are working on an communication and implementation plan for 2020.

In May FSC will be present at the Carrefour du Bois with the introduction of a number of LKTS species, and the message of the huge benefits of the use of sustainable FSC certified tropical timber and why concessionaires should make a choice in favour of FM-certification.

We will keep you updated about the initiatives that we take this year. Please also share your initiatives with the Community to find synergy.

/ Ben Romein

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GABON: NEW PARTNERSHIP DEAL TO SUPPORT HIGH AMBITIONS

Libreville, January 31, 2020: The Ministry of Water & Forests signs a cooperation agreement with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Back in September 2018, the President of Gabon - Ali Bongo Ondimba - took an important step towards sustainable forest management by declaring that as of 2022, all forest concessions operating in Gabon will have to be certified by FSC. As part of the implementation of its policy the Gabonese Minister of Water and Forests, Lee White, have now signed a cooperation agreement on with FSC, represented by Executive Director, Kim Carstensen.

Minister Lee White encouraged companies operating in the wood sector to proceed with the development certification to ensure reliability on the international market.

"I am convinced that FSC certification will help forestry companies at all levels to improve their practices in this sector. It will also represent a marketing asset for the sale of their products, because buyers will be sure that the wood doesn't come from illegal logging," said Minister Lee White.

The Gabonese government aims to gain economic benefits of the national forest sector and increase the income level from 500 million euros to 3000 billion euros in contribution to GDP by 2025.

"For us, it is very important to be a partner of the Gabonese government for the sustainable development of its forests. FSC is a unique facilitator whose mission is to bring together stakeholders to find solutions leading to positive development for forests and communities," said Kim Carstensen.

This agreement aims to promote the sustainable management of Gabonese forests and improve access to FSC certified wood products from Gabon to international markets.

GABON: With forests covering about 85 percent of the country – about 22 million hectares – half of which is destined to timber production. Over 2 million hectares, or 14 percent of total forestry concessions in Gabon are currently FSC-certified.



Source: WWF

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FSC & ATIBT FIND COMMON GROUND IN MARKETING COMMITTEE

Since its creation in 1951, ATIBT (Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux – International Tropical Timber Technical Association) aims to serve the tropical timber industry, from the forest to the end user. It plays a key role in the implementation of international projects dedicated to the sustainable responsible management of tropical forests.

FSC International has been a member of ATIBT since 2010 and as such as been closely collaborating with ATIBT. ATIBT is also a member of FSC International and of FSC France since 2016. Synergies between the two institutions are many.

Hence, FSC Netherlands and ATIBT are working closely to support the Congo basin operators to develop FSC's Business Community action plan. Actions around the promotion of Lesser Known Timber Species (LKTS) or initiatives around the development of the payment of Ecosystem services are a key priority for both organizations.

To support the collaboration between the two entities, FSC Africa's Regional Communication Manager, Nathalie Bouville attends each quarter the Marketing Committee Meeting and act as a focal point on all Marketing/Communication and Promotion of tropical timber with ATIBT.

With the financial support of the German and French cooperation, ATIBT runs a strong and ambitious marketing program to promote sustainable certified tropical timber. During the last edition of the quarterly "Marketing Committee" meeting in January 2020, Olam Serrano the new President of ATIBT was appointed President of the said "Marketing Committee".

ATIBT ACTIVITIES

One of the main components of ATIBT's Marketing program is the "Fair & Precious" campaign which was launched in 2017 with the objective of promoting the use of certified tropical timber. This communication campaign is deployed all-over Europe with the support of a specialized communication and PR agency. Press releases are sent regularly, and the agency manages all the social network and digital activities.

Besides this campaign, ATIBT Marketing Program supports numerous projects and develop many partnerships with institutions, private and public sectors all aiming at enhancing the image and the use of certified tropical timber.

In 2019, ATIBT participated in many trade shows and International events (STTC conference and IDH in Berlin amongst others). As panelists or active participants, ATIBT management team was able to express their views on the challenges and opportunities linked to tropical timber.

A major project is also a promising partnership with the SNCF (French railway company) which involves technical students and researchers to demonstrate how certified companies are key in protecting the Congo Basin biodiversity. This project will lead to the set-up of video and photo cameras in the forest to capture animals' whereabouts and organize streaming of this footage in French Railway stations. This is just one of the many projects that are discussed during the quarterly meeting of the marketing committee.

"Attending this meeting which welcomes around 20 participants representing the wide scope of ATIBT members (representatives from partners, timber companies, donors, institutions...) allows me to engage with all stakeholders at once in a very productive and positive manner", says Nathalie Bouville.

"I then make sure to engage with my counterparts at FSC to inform them of all the ATIBT marketing activities in order to increase the synergies between our associations".

Representatives from FSC France also regularly attend those meetings and in January 2020 during the first meeting of the year, Ben Romein from FSC Netherlands presented an update on the Business Community action plan. At the next ATIBT annual board meeting, Bertin Tchikangwa, FSC Congo Basin Coordinator will represent FSC.

With many challenges facing the certified companies of the Congo Basin and the strong need to develop sustainable forestry needless to say that the collaboration between both organizations must strive and continue in the months and years to come.



ATIBT Marketing Committee meeting, January 2020

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JOIN LINKEDIN GROUP ABOUT SUSTAINABLE TROPICAL TIMBER

By Kristian Jørgensen, FSC Denmark

A new [LinkedIn group](#) is set to gather up the good market stories and present tropical timber at its best.

Promotion of lesser used/known timber species (LKTS) is too often limited by the lack of knowledge to the qualities of the timber grounded in market experience. Where the traditional species are well represented with reference cases spread, we see that the good LKTS reference is hard to get.

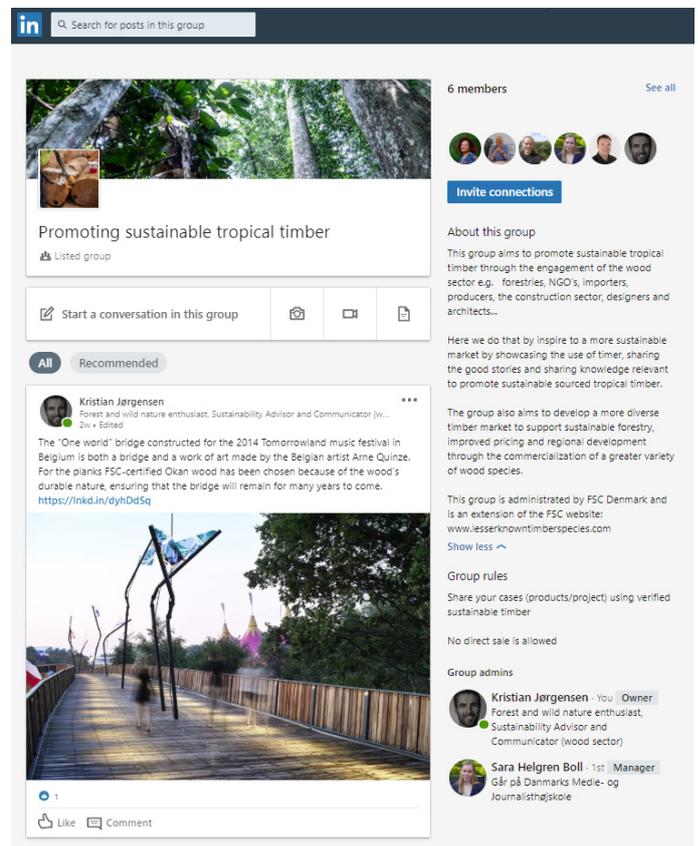
Gathering cases for some years now shows a clear tendency and a missing link in the chain from forest to the final product and key product information is lost. What did the timber become?

Too often importers and traders have missed the opportunity to follow the timber away from the yard and record the product it becomes.

Asking architects or producers often leaves more questions than answers when it comes down to the species used and a search on the internet hardly ever gives a result on a species name. Behind the generic term "Tropical Hardwood" we see many good reference cases hidden away. Seen from a promotional view there is no market interest from specifiers in pictures of logs or bundles piled up in a yard – we need structures, buildings and designs.

This LinkedIn group "Promoting sustainable tropical timber" is intending to be a platform for inspiration in the use of tropical timber and as an interactive extension of the site www.lesser-knownntimberspecies.com

Share your references, the good market stories and bring the good stories on a positive development in the tropics from the forests - through the yards - and into the markets.



ABOUT

This group aims to promote sustainable tropical timber through the engagement of the wood sector e.g. forestries, NGO's, importers, producers, the construction sector, designers and architects.

We do that by inspire to a more sustainable and divers market by showcasing the use of timer, sharing the good stories and knowledge relevant to promote sustainable sourced tropical timber.

- Bring good stories from the Tropics to the market
- Share your cases (products/project) using verified sustainable timber
- No direct sale is allowed

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YOUR AFRICAN CASES NEEDS TO BE SHOWN

WWW.LESSERKNOWNTIMBERSPECIES.COM



UN CITY - COPENHAGEN

The UN City of 16 stories is located in Copenhagen (Denmark). It opened on the 4th of July 2013 by Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen and the Mayor Viggo Bonje. It is designed by Danish architect Bjarke Ingels. The building is a prime example of sustainable architecture. It has a total area of 100,000 sqm and is designed to be a model for sustainable office buildings. The building is a prime example of sustainable architecture. It has a total area of 100,000 sqm and is designed to be a model for sustainable office buildings. The building is a prime example of sustainable architecture. It has a total area of 100,000 sqm and is designed to be a model for sustainable office buildings.

Category	Comment
Name of construction production	Copenhagen, Malmstrømvej
Year	2013
Construction/contractor	L. Ingels & Partners
Designed by	Ingels
Project contact	Ingels
Project location	Copenhagen (DK)

UN CITY in Copenhagen using Tali - your cases could be the next on:
www.lesserknowntimberspecies.com

SUBMIT: We are collecting examples of the use of lesser-known tropical timber species from a broad range of wood users, such as designers, architects, producers, businesses and project owners.

This database is your opportunity to promote your cases (products or projects?) with FSC certified LKTS species!

Provide us with a description and other details of the product/project such as:

- An overall description (50 - 150 words)
- Place of construction/ production
- Year of construction/production
- Constructer/producer
- Designer
- Project owner
- Timber supplier
- Species used and their use in the product/project

Remember to provide us with a variety of high-resolution images of your case.

Submit cases by contacting the website editor:
 Kristian Jørgensen, Projectcoordinator, FSC Denmark

Mail: kristian@fsc.dk

FSC GOES TO CARREFOUR DU BOIS 2020

With a record of 11500 visitors in 2018, the expectations for Carrefour International 2020 is high. This leading timber tradeshow which takes place over 3 days in Nantes (France) and groups over 550 exhibitors. The key themes for 2020 is among others "Bio sourced materials" and "Wood, health & well-being". Sustainable forest management and traceability, etc. will all be discussed during the Timber Techniques & Solutions Area Conferences.

"The show in 2020 will be an important moment for the trade with major themes being showcased: the resource and replanting, innovations, timber and climate change and of course national, European and international figures." Says Geraldine Cesbron, the Trade-show Manager.

The national FSC offices of France, the Netherlands and Denmark will together with the regional office in the Congo Basin organize a booth where we will be promoting tropical timber and LKTS species from the Congo Basin. Please inform your network and invite them to join us in Nantes. We look forward seeing you there!



AT THE
CARREFOUR INTERNATIONAL DU BOIS
 27 | 28 | 29 MAY 2020
 NANTES FRANCE
WWW.TIMBERSHOW.COM

www.lesserknowntimberspecies.com

