

MASKAYU

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**UPDATE ON 40TH MEETING
OF ACCSQ WG1 ON STANDARDS**

**WOOD DRYING
TECHNOLOGY**



MALAYSIAN TIMBER INDUSTRY BOARD



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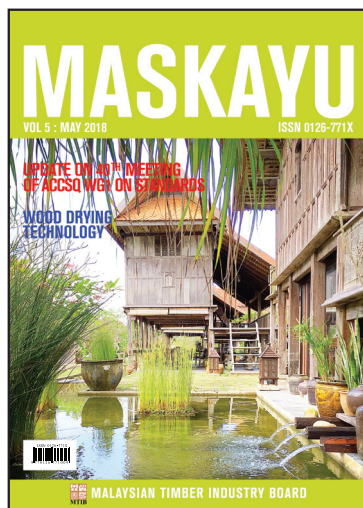
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UPDATE ON 40th MEETING OF ACCSQ WG 1 ON STANDARDS



news



Task Force Meeting on Wood-based Products.

The 40th Meeting of the ACCSQ WG 1 on Standards was held on 10-11 May in Singapore hosted by Enterprise Singapore. The Meeting was preceded by the following events at the same venue:

- 12th Meeting of the Task Force on Wood-based Products (TFWBP), held on 7 May
- Workshop on ISO/IEC Guide 21, held on 8 May
- 3rd Workshop on the Revision of the ASEAN Good Regulatory Practice (GRP) Guide, held on 9 May
- WG 1-PTB Workshop on Future Cooperation Activities, held on 9 May

The WG 1 Meeting was officially opened by Ms. Choy Sauw Kook, Assistant Chief Executive Officer and Director-General (Quality and Excellence) of Enterprise Singapore (ESG). Ms. Choy highlighted the significant contribution of WG 1 in reducing technical barriers in ASEAN through the harmonisation of standards across the 20 priority products. She further shared two initiatives adopted

by the ASEAN Leaders at the 32nd ASEAN Summit namely the formation of ASEAN Smart Cities Network and Regional Cooperation on Cybersecurity and their relevance with WG 1 works notably in quality and standards.

The Meeting was then updated on the outcome of the recent developments in the ASEAN economic integration effort and the relevant decisions made at the meetings of higher bodies on issues related to trade namely the criteria in exploring the three new product sectors which included the 48th ACCSQ Meeting that discussed trade volume (frequency of trade and dollar value in trade), degree of control (availability of existing regulations and potential impact on trade related to STRACAP) and readiness to implement (availability of technical infrastructure and availability of TF/WG/PWG/ASEAN structure), facilitation and standards and conformance. The meeting was also updated on the 8th Committee of the Whole (CoW) 2018 Deliverables – Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment



INDONESIA

Furniture Gaining Recognition in International Markets

Twenty-seven Indonesian designers attended the furniture and interior design exhibition 'Salone Internazionale del Mobile' in Milan between 17-22 April. The conclusion drawn from the event was that Indonesian furniture products and designs are increasingly gaining recognition in international markets and have a firm standing in Italy where there are several Indonesian furniture showrooms as well as online furniture sales businesses managed by Italian companies.

Aries Asriadi, from the Indonesian Embassy in Rome, commented that Indonesia furniture makers need to continue to promote products with high added value attract Italian buyers.

www.fordaq.com, 9 May



JAPAN

Housing Starts Rise Slightly

Housing starts in Japan rose slightly in April, the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism data revealed. Housing starts went up by 0.3% in April, after a sharp drop of 8.3% in March. The rise in April was the first in 10 months.

Annualised housing starts rose to 992,000 in April from 895,000 a month ago. Data also revealed that construction orders received by big 50 contractors advanced 4% annually, offsetting March's 4% decrease.

www.ihb.de, 31 May



INDIA

Discussions Continue on Forest Policy Revision

Discussions on the draft revision of the national forest policy continue. The draft proposes a 'green' cess to promote "ecologically responsible behavior" and says greater use of wood products has the potential to create employment opportunities by boosting indigenous manufacturing using domestic resources.

The draft policy is open for public comments until 30 June and the Ministry is emphasising that the country needs to change its mindset from forests to landscapes, from canopy cover to healthy ecosystems, from substituting wood to promoting sustainable wood use, from participatory approaches to empowerment and to greater community participation.

India has set an ambitious target of bringing 30% of its geographical area under forest cover within a decade (from the current 25%) and states that this be achieved by rehabilitating degraded land with native species.

www.panelsfurnitureasia.com, 6 May



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

2018 Will Not be a Costly Year for Construction

The cost of construction in the United Arab Emirates is forecast to not exceed above 1.8% in the next 12 months, despite the upward trend in construction material costs, according to a report by real estate services firm Colliers International.

The firm noted that with no major (construction) material inflation predicted and expected continuation of strong competition between contractors, "construction cost inflation is forecast to not exceed 1.8% for the next 12 months."

The report said that between the first quarters of 2017 and 2018, the average cost of construction materials increased by 3.1%, while overall construction costs increased in the range of 1.8% to 2.3%.

www.zawya.com, 28 May



EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

EU and Viet Nam Conclude VPA Negotiations

The EU and Viet Nam concluded negotiations on a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). The agreement will help improve forest governance, address illegal logging and promote trade in verified legal timber products from Viet Nam to the EU, as well as to other markets.

After nearly six years of negotiation, Director for Global Sustainable Development of the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment and Vietnamese Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development initialled the text of the FLEGT VPA. This marked the formal conclusion of the negotiations.

The two sides will now undertake a legal review of the negotiated text which will then be followed by the translation of the Agreement into the EU's official languages and Vietnamese. Before the agreement can enter into force, each Party will have to complete the procedure for signature and ratification of the Agreement in line with its internal procedures.

To implement the VPA, Viet Nam will develop a timber legality assurance system to ensure that its exports of timber and timber products come from legal sources, including systems to verify that imported timber has been legally harvested and traded in accordance with the relevant legislation in the country of harvest. The agreement also provides for the establishment of complaint mechanisms and independent evaluations, as well as commitments to involve stakeholders in its implementation and on disclosure of information.

A Joint Implementation Committee will oversee implementation of the agreement. Pending its entry into force, the Parties have also agreed on key elements for Interim governance arrangements and other measures to prepare for implementation of the Agreement.

Once the VPA is fully implemented, Viet Nam's shipments of timber and timber products to the EU

will have to be accompanied by a FLEGT licence, demonstrating their legality. Before the start of FLEGT licensing, there will be a period of implementation and assessment to verify that all the commitments outlined in the VPA have been fulfilled and that the system put in place meets the criteria to operational readiness as set out in a dedicated Annex to the agreement.

In addition to the variety of social, economic and environmental benefits associated with better management of the forestry sector in Viet Nam, FLEGT licensing will simplify business for timber traders, as FLEGT-licensed products automatically meet the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation, which prohibits the placing of illegal timber on the EU market. EU operators can therefore place FLEGT-licensed timber on the EU market without being subject to the due diligence provisions of the EU Timber Regulation.

www.fordaq.com, 16 May



EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Imports of Hardwood Mouldings Led by Indonesia and Brazil

EU imports of "continuously shaped" wood (HS code 4409) includes both decking products and interior decorative products like moulded skirting and beading. Total EU imports of hardwood products under this heading declined by just over 3% in 2017, to 122,800 metric tonnes (MT). However, imports from Indonesia and Brazil, the two largest suppliers, increased last year.

Indonesia's leading role as a supplier of this commodity group to the EU is due both to the popularity of Bangkirai for decking applications in Europe, and to Indonesia's ban on rough sawn exports which encouraged greater focus on profiled products. After a steep rise in 2014, imports from Indonesia remained broadly flat in the next three years and were 69,600 MT in 2017, 1% more than the previous year.

Brazil has access to several Amazonian species like Ipe, Garapa and Massaranduba that perform well as decking timbers. Following a 9% decline in 2016, EU imports from Brazil rebounded 6% to 56,600 MT in 2017.

China's trade in this commodity with the EU has been declining in recent years owing both to rising costs of production in China and declining availability of raw materials. Imports from China fell a further 10%

to 18,000 MT in 2017. China depends on imported tropical timber with a strong preference for Teak in the decking sector. China also supplies small quantities of interior hardwood mouldings to the EU market.

While total EU trade in decking and similar garden products has been gradually increasing in recent years due to a slow improvement in EU construction activities, tropical timber faces intense competition from substitute materials in this sector, notably wood plastic composites (WPC), thermally and chemically modified European hardwoods and softwoods, and preservative-treated softwoods.

Tropical hardwood decorative mouldings for interior use are also being replaced by European timbers and MDF.

www.fordaq.com, 7 May



FINLAND

Export and Import of Wood Products

In February 2018, the value of the exported Finnish forest industry products totalled EUR1.02 billion. The share of pulp and paper industry goods was 77% or equal to EUR0.78 billion, says Luke (Natural Resource Institute Finland) in its preliminary report for the respective month of the current year. The real export value in January-February 2018 totalled EUR 2.11 billion having increased by 6% over the same period of 2017.

Finland's wood imports totalled 0.70 million m³ in February. In January-February wood imports totalled 1.29 million m³. Compared to the same period of last year's wood imports decreased by 2%.

www.ihb.de, 7 May



RUSSIA

Plywood Exports Up

In January-March 2018, Russia increased its plywood exports, both in value and in volume terms, as indicated by the statistics published by the Russian

Federal Customs Office.

Thus, according to the latest data, in January-March 2018 Russian plywood export volume came up to 653,800 m³. That is 6.8% more than during the respective months of the previous year.

The total value of the Russian plywood exported in January-March 2018 came up to USD327 million and grew by 28.6% year-on-year. Thus, the Russian plywood average export price came up to slightly above USD500 per m³.

www.fordaq.com, 22 May



BRAZIL

Wood-based Panel Exports Increased

The value of wood-based panel exports in the first quarter of 2018 totalled USD73 million, a 14% rise compared to the same period last year.

Between January and March 2018 the main markets for wood-based panels were Latin America (up 11% to USD39 million) and North America (up 21% to USD17 million). In terms of volume, wood-based panel exports totalled 308,000 m³ in the first quarter, an increase of 8.5% compared to the same period in 2017. In the domestic market, 1.6 million m³ were sold, an increase of 3%. There was a sharp rise in the value of year-on-year Pine plywood exports in March (+49%). Exports increased from USD43 million to USD64 million year on year. The 22% increase in the volume of Pine plywood exports underlined the steady rise in prices. Exports increased from 159,300 m³ to 194,600 m³ year-on-year.

Brazil's tropical plywood exports were modest but in March export volumes and values rose; from 13,900 m³ (USD5.4 million) in March 2017 to 16,600 m³ (USD7.1 million) in March 2018.

www.lesprom.com, 22 May



GHANA

Timber Validation Committee Inaugurated

A Timber Validation Committee has been inaugurated by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR) to oversee the validation of licenses and other processes in the forestry sector. The Deputy Minister, Benito Owusu-Bio, instructed members of the committee to uphold the principle of good governance as enshrined in the Forest and Wildlife Policy.

The committee was tasked with enforcing regulations and ensuring transparency in the implementation of the Timber Resources Management and Legality Licensing Regulations through safeguarding the principles of transparency, credibility and independence in the operation of the country's Legality Assurance System.

The Deputy Minister was emphatic that the root cause of illegal logging in the country could be traced to weak law enforcement, inadequate monitoring and coordination. It was for this reason that the committee was established to address the existing inadequacies and enforce the legal and policy framework to deal with illegality in the forestry sector.

www.fordaq.com, 15 May

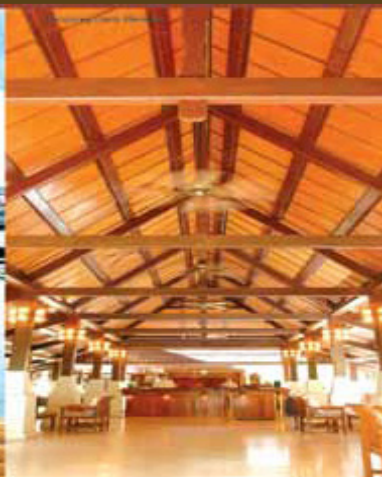
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From which publications have you received our information?



Malaysia: LBT Extends Tie-up with Lumut Maritime Terminal (LMT) with Three New Jetty Terminal OM Deals

Source: The Edge Financial Daily, 6 April

Lekir Bulk Terminal (LBT) of Malaysia is extending its business tie-up with affiliate Lumut Maritime Terminal (LMT), a unit of Perak Corp with the signing of three new agreements for operation and maintenance (OM) of jetty terminals. These new deals are expected to contribute revenues amounting to RM799.04 million (EUR167.77 million, USD206.76 million) to LMT. The first and second agreements cover OM services for LBT's new jetty terminals for 26 years each, with revenue from these deals being estimated at RM266.74 million and RM205.93 million respectively. Meanwhile, the third agreement is a 10 year extension of an existing 15 year contract signed in June 2000 with revenue from the extended contract being valued at RM326.37 million.

Malaysia: Westports Undertaking a Technical Study on an Expansion Plan

Source: The Edge Financial Daily, 18 April

In Malaysia, a technical study on an expansion

plan is being undertaken by Westports Holdings (Westports). The expansion is targeted at increasing Westports' container-handling capacity by two-fold. Westports has gained approval in principle from the government for the expansion plan. A long time would be consumed by the study because of terminal designs, environmental issues and the surrounding waters, said CEO Eddie Lee. The study is slated to consume 9 to 12 months time. The study will concentrate on a proposal to establish 10 new container terminals (CTs) at the group's wharf in Port Klang. The 10 new CTs would expand capacity by 16 million twenty foot equivalent units (TEUs) to increase total capacity to around 30 million TEUs.

Russia: NUTEP Terminal Increases Container Turnover by 49% in Q1 2018

Source: PortNews, 9 April

In the first quarter of 2018, NUTEP terminal (a subsidiary of Delo Group, operating in the port of Novorossiysk, South) raised its container turnover by 49% year-on-year to 106,820 million TEUs. In March, the terminal set a record for monthly container handling by handling 40,770 TEUs.

Shipments of Timber and Timber Products through Ports in Peninsular Malaysia, April 2018

Products	Port Klang		Kuantan		Pasir Gudang		Tanjung Pelepas		Penang		Total all Ports m ³	% Change Apr 2018/ Mar 2018
	m ³	% Change Apr 2018/ Mar 2018	m ³	% Change Apr 2018/ Mar 2018	m ³	% Change Apr 2018/ Mar 2018	m ³	% Change Apr 2018/ Mar 2018	m ³	% Change Apr 2018/ Mar 2018		
Sawntimber	66,997	-7	7,949	-28	1,626	10	1,234	14	10,909	-9	88,715	-9
MDF	33,455	17	482	7	8,584	4	4,920	29	26,627	95	74,068	35
Mouldings	13,294	-6	215	84	1,856	4	856	4	14,803	3	21,330	-3
Plywood	5,386	-19	590	9	87	58	464	4	14,803	-14	21,330	-15
Veneer	380	87	0	-100	0	-100	93	94	3,777	14	4,250	19
Particleboard	40,347	9	329	69	5,405	3	4,692	74	8,756	-29	59,529	4
TOTAL	159,859	1	9,565	-23	17,558	4	12,259	38	66,409	11	265,650	3

Source: MTIB



Russia: Ports Increase Container Handling by 12.6% in Q1 2018

Source: Gudok.ru, 10 April

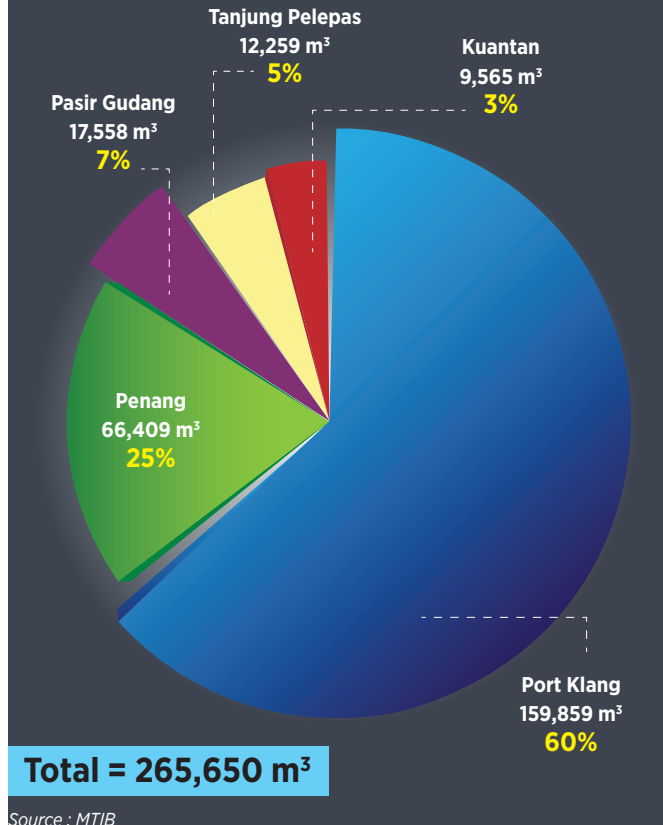
According to the Association of Sea Trade Ports, in the first quarter of 2018, the total container turnover of Russian ports grew by 12.6% year-on-year to 1.199 million TEUs). The volume of imported containers rose by 14.6% to 527,150 TEUs and of exported containers by 12.9% to 501,560 TEUs with cabotage rising by 7.9% to 156,540 TEUs. Transit decreased by 11.2% to 13,520 TEUs. Handling of refrigerated containers went up by 20.3% to 137,240 TEUs.

Japan: Wan Hai Inaugurates New Shipping Route from Osaka on 17 April 2018

Source: Commercial Times, 18 April

On 17 April 2018, a launching ceremony was held in Japan's port of Osaka, marking the advent of a new express shipping route by Wan Hai Lines Ltd (Wan Hai). Dubbed NS1, the line mainly serves to shorten the trip between Japan's Kanto region and Hong Kong, down to four days the fastest. NS1 is to travel from Osaka to Kobe, Nagoya, Kawasaki, Tokyo, Yokohama, Hong Kong, China's Nansha, Singapore, Malaysia's Port Klang, Viet Nam's Cai Mep, China's Shekou, Hong Kong, Yantian and back to Osaka. Now, the service is running for three times per week. Wan Hai is a Taiwan-based shipper.

Timber Shipment through Ports in Peninsular Malaysia, April 2018



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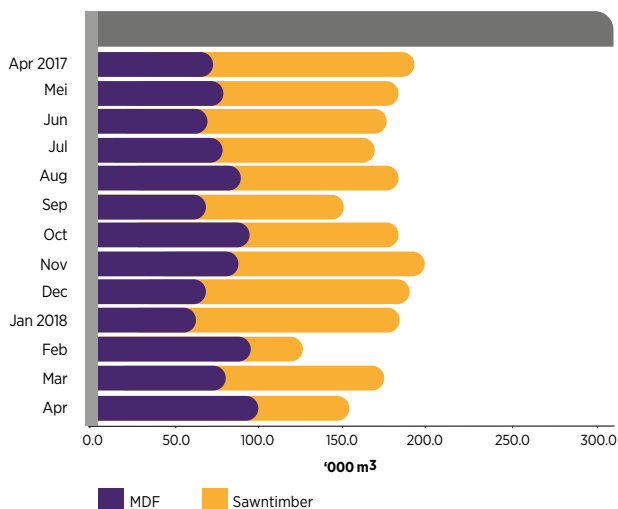
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Malaysia : Export of Sawntimber and MDF
(Apr 2017-Apr 2018/Volume ('000m³)



Total export of Malaysian timber and timber products in April 2018 decreased 5% in value to RM1.9 billion from the previous month. Cumulative export for January to April 2018 declined 7% to RM7.2 billion over the previous corresponding period.

SAWNTIMBER

Export of sawntimber in April 2018 decreased 14% in volume and 15% in value to 153,222 m³ with a value of RM284.6 million as compared to the previous month. Cumulative export for the first four months of 2018 also decreased 13% in volume and 7% in value to 641,727 m³ totalling RM1.2 billion over the previous corresponding period.

Export of sawntimber to the EU for the month decreased 21% to 9,915 m³ from 12,586 m³ in the previous month resulting from declining demand from major market in the region. Export to the Netherlands and UK decreased 24% and 40% to 4,015 m³ and 978 m³ respectively. Uncertainties over Brexit and subsequent currency fluctuation has affected construction activities in the UK as well as the demand for timber and timber products. Similarly, purchases made by France reduced 12% to 1,227 m³ followed by Germany with 10% to 1,654 m³ and Belgium with 30% to 943 m³.

Total exports to West Asia declined 21% to 21,312 m³ from 27,035 m³ recorded in the previous month. Export of sawntimber to Yemen decreased 24% to 6,082 m³ followed by the UAE with 28% to 5,268 m³ and Oman with 2% to 3,431 m³. Similarly, demand from Qatar and Saudi Arabia reduced by 7% to 1,575 m³ and 45% to 1,720 m³ respectively. However, export to Bahrain recorded an increase of 20% to 1,622 m³ from 1,349 m³ in the previous month.

Buying from ASEAN decreased 16% to 51,775 m³ from 61,569 m³ registered in the previous month. Export to the Philippines decreased 62% to 9,232 m³ from 24,445 m³ in the previous month. Likewise, export to Singapore and

Viet Nam declined 9% to 6,017 m³ and 20% to 1,882 m³ respectively. However, export of sawntimber to Thailand, major buyer of sawntimber from Malaysia improved 24% to 34,444 m³ from 27,812 m³ in the previous month.

Shipments to East Asia declined 6% to 37,840 m³ from 40,414 m³ in the previous month. Export of sawntimber to China decreased 11% to 21,919 m³ from 24,477 m³ recorded in the previous month. In the meanwhile, purchases by Taiwan and Japan increased 4% to 8,079 m³ and 22% to 5,851 m³ respectively. South Korea also resume purchases for the month to 1,855 m³.

Elsewhere, exports to the US increased 17% to 1,631 m³ whilst intake by Australia reduced 45% to 586 m³. Demand from South Africa increased 33% to 5,944 m³ from 4,455 m³ in the previous month.

The average FOB price of sawntimber decreased 1% to RM1,857 per m³ from RM1,872 per m³ in the previous month. Price of Dark Red Meranti (DRM) decreased 5% to RM2,595 per m³ from RM2,744 per m³ in the previous month. DRM to the Netherlands traded this month with a value of RM3,473 per m³. Keruing was traded at RM2,139 per m³, an increase of 5% from RM2,042 per m³ in the previous month.

MEDIUM DENSITY FIBREBOARD (MDF)

Malaysia's exports of MDF for April 2018 increased 31% in volume and 20% in value compared to previous month. Export totalled 100,383 m³ valued at RM111.2 million.

Exports to East Asia registered a decrease of 13 % to 11,397 m³ from 13,094 m³ in the previous month. Exports to South Korea show positive growth by 63% to 196 m³ followed by Taiwan at 4% increased to 765 m³. However, export to China including Hong Kong recorded negative growth with a decrease of 37% to 644 m³ followed by Japan with 13% to 9,792 m³.

Meanwhile, exports to West Asia increased 95% to 48,672 m³ from 24,934 m³ in the previous month. Export to the UAE recorded positive growth of 36% to 16,995 m³ followed by Saudi Arabia at 62% to 7,178 m³, Jordan at 97% to 358 m³ and Oman at 246% to 1,521 m³. In addition, Lebanon, Kuwait and Syria also show positive growth by 250% to 210 m³, 289% to 8,090 m³ and 1,361% to 11,793 m³ respectively. Whilst, export to Bahrain recorded negative growth by 33% to 1,154 m³, followed by Qatar at 57% to 970 m³. Iran did not make any purchase for the month.

Likewise, export to South Asia recorded negative growth by 20% to 9,979 m³. Export to Pakistan and Sri Lanka show a decrease of 9% to 4,212 and 13% to 1,021 m³ respectively. Export to India and Bangladesh also decreased 22% to 4,625 m³ and 87% to 103 m³ respectively.

Elsewhere, exports to the UK and Mauritius increase by 10% to 604 m³ and 81% to 257 m³ respectively. However, South Africa, Australia and the US show a negative growth

by 16% to 1,127 m³, 16% to 3,108 m³ and 20% to 1,681 m³.

In ASEAN, total export for the month of April decreased by 1% to 15,055 m³ from 15,243 m³ in the previous month. Export to the Philippines and Singapore decreased by 14% to 2,897 m³ and 45% to 86 m³ respectively. Meanwhile, export to Indonesia and Viet Nam increased by 1% to 4,136 m³ and 2% to 7,643 m³ respectively.

The FOB price of MDF decreased to RM1,108 per m³ from RM1,206 per m³, a decrease of 8% from the previous month.

PLYWOOD

Export of plywood in April 2018 increased by 7% in volume and 5% in value to 200,950 m³ at RM397.8 million compared to the previous month.

The EU have increased their intake of plywood by 17% to 11,726 m³. The biggest taker is the UK which increased its intake by 16% to 10,311 m³. Similarly Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands increased intake by 100%, 269% and 14% to 571 m³, 159 m³ and 339 m³, respectively. However, Belgium has decreased its intake by 38% to 346 m³. Meanwhile Denmark, France and Germany did not make any purchases for this month.

Exports to ASEAN and East Asia region reported an increase of 1% with 149,687 m³ compared to previous month. In East Asia region, Japan reduced its intake by 2% to 95,570 m³. Hong Kong and Taiwan also reduced their intake by 41% and 14% to 1,227 m³ and 12,152 m³ respectively. Contrarily, South Korea and China have increased their imports of plywood by 29% and 19% by 28,056 m³ and 2,715 m³ respectively.

Malaysia's plywood trade with its ASEAN partners also showed positive growth this month. While export to Thailand has reduced by 8% to 4,356 m³, export to other ASEAN members have increased. Exports to Singapore and the Philippines have increased by 14% and 25% to 2,457 m³ and 1,240 m³ respectively. Brunei Darussalam also has increased their intake by 1% to 772 m³. Elsewhere, Indonesia did not make any purchases this month.

Exports to West Asia countries decreased by 33% to 17,184 m³ as compared to the previous month. Export to Yemen has reduced by 12% to 11,270 m³ followed by the UAE at 5% to 1,341 m³. Exports to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait also have reduced by 14% and 10% to 1,146 m³ and 64 m³ respectively. In contrast, exports to Qatar and Bahrain increased by 473% and 172% to 739 m³ and 463 m³ respectively.

Export of plywood to the Americas region decreased by 15% to 16,689 m³ as compared to the previous month. The US and Canada have reduced its intake of plywood by 22% and 60% to 13,209 m³ and 128 m³ respectively. In contrast, Mexico has increased its import of plywood by 43% to 3,352 m³. Similarly, exports to Australia and New Zealand have decreased by 26% and 50% to 3,282 m³ and

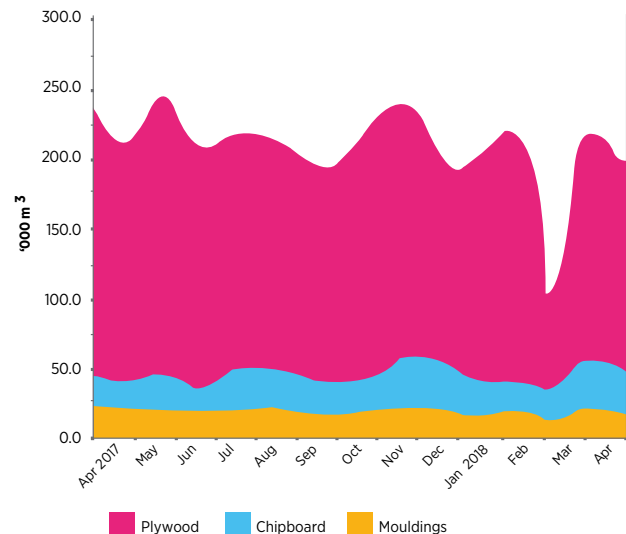
21 m³ respectively.

Exports to African continent have decreased significantly by 92% to 428 m³ for this month. South Africa has reduced its intake of plywood by 78% to 43 m³ while Algeria and Turkey did not make any purchases for this month.

The FOB price of plywood increased by 2% to RM1,979 per m³ from RM1,941 per m³ in the previous month.

Malaysia : Export of Plywood, Chipboard and Mouldings

(Apr 2017-Apr 2018/Volume ('000m³)



MOULDINGS

Exports of mouldings for the month decreased by 9% in volume and 12% in value to 21,696 m³ and RM76.8 million respectively. However, cumulative exports for the period of January to April 2018 increased by 1% in volume and 2% in value to 82,447 m³ and RM290.5 million respectively as compared to the previous corresponding period in 2017.

Exports to the EU for the month recorded at 8,146 m³, a decrease of 4% compared to the previous month. Germany and Belgium increased their purchased by 31% and 18% to 1,123 m³ and 690 m³. Meanwhile, the UK and Netherlands decreased their intakes by 22% and 10% to 560 m³ and 4,825 m³ compared to the previous month. However, Italy did not make any purchases.

Exports to ASEAN region increased as Viet Nam and Indonesia intake of mouldings increased by 42% and 14% to 202 m³ and 40 m³ respectively. Meanwhile, Singapore decreased their purchase by 3% to 1,291 m³ compared to the previous month.

Meanwhile, exports to China, Taiwan and Hong Kong increased by 100%, 18% and 5% to 1,216 m³, 197 m³ and 336 m³ respectively. Meanwhile, South Korea and Japan decreased their intakes by 34% and 2% to 1,453 and 1,908 m³ respectively.

Elsewhere, export to the Canada increased by 75% to 243 m³ compared to the previous month. However, the US and

APRIL 2018

The average domestic prices of logs for the month continued to be firm for most of the species.

LOGS

Log prices for the species of Chengal, Balau and Red Balau stood firm at RM4,500 per tonne, RM3,000 per tonne and RM2,200 per tonne respectively. Similarly, prices of Keruing, Kempas and Kapur continued to be traded at RM1,250 per tonne, RM1,750 per tonne and RM1,700 per tonne respectively. Prices of Dark Red Meranti and Red Meranti charted at RM2,100 per tonne and RM1,770 per tonne respectively. On the other hand, logs prices for Mixed Heavy Hardwood and Mixed Light Hardwood remained at RM973 per tonne and RM900 per tonne respectively.

PLYWOOD

The supply of plywood to the domestic market remained adequate for the month under review. The prices of plywood for 4 mm, 6 mm, 9 mm and 12 mm of thicknesses were continued to be traded at RM14.60, RM22.00, RM38.00 and RM48.00 per piece respectively.

According to the industry sources, the supply of MDF was sufficiently available as the demand of MDF particularly for export market slow down. However, the supply of MDF in the local market was reported to suffice the need of local market. Thus, the price of MDF dropped by 2% to 2.3% in average for the month under review. MDF of 4 mm, 6 mm, 9 mm and 12 mm of thicknesses were traded at RM13.50, RM17.15, RM23.30 and RM30.40 per piece respectively.

SAWNTIMBER

The average sawntimber prices for most of the species in the domestic market continued to firm whilst some of the species experiencing some price improvement.

The sawntimber prices of Chengal and Red Balau increased by 1% and 2.4% respectively to RM6,850 per m³ and RM3,001 per m³. Meanwhile, prices for Keruing, Kempas and Kapur stood firm at RM1,130 per m³, RM2,331 per m³ and RM1,746 per m³ respectively. Prices for Dark Red Meranti and Red Meranti were traded at RM2,036 per m³ and RM1,992 per m³ respectively. On the other hand, sawntimber prices of Mixed Heavy Hardwood charted at RM989 per m³ whilst Mixed Light Hardwood remained at RM918 per m³.

MEDIUM DENSITY FIBREBOARD (MDF)

INTRA-MALAYSIA TRADE - APRIL 2018

From	Product	MAR 2018		APR 2018		% Change In Volume Apr 2018 / Mar 2018	% Change In Value Apr 2018 / Mar 2018
		Volume (m ³)	Value (RM '000)	Volume (m ³)	Value (RM '000)		
SABAH	Logs	17	6	274	206	1,512	3,333
	Sawntimber	386	670	155	239	-60	-64
	Plywood	6,468	13,882	8,025	17,157	24	24
	Veneer	0	0	0	0	0	0
SARAWAK	Logs	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sawntimber	511	1,166	680	1,080	33	-7
	Plywood	7,240	10,407	5,723	9,002	-21	-14
	Veneer	7,582	11,752	3,890	6,424	-49	-45

Source : Department of Statistics, Malaysia

The shipments of the log from Sabah to Peninsular Malaysia increased tremendously, to 274 m³ from 17 m³ recorded last month worth at RM206,000. Meanwhile, trade of sawntimber decreased by 60% in volume 155 m³ worth at RM239,000. However, trade of plywood increased by 24% in volume to 8,025 m³ worth at RM17.2 million.

Trade of sawntimber from Sarawak to Peninsular Malaysia increased by 33% to 680 m³ from 511 m³

INTRA-MALAYSIA TRADE *

- APRIL 2018

recorded last month, worth at RM1.1 million. Meanwhile, trade of plywood decreased by 21% in volume at 5,723 m³ worth at RM9 million. Similarly, trade of veneer dropped to 3,890 m³ from 7,582 m³ recorded last month worth at RM6.4 million.

No intra trade from Peninsular Malaysia to Sabah and Sarawak was recorded in April 2018.

* Source: MTIB and Department of Statistics, Malaysia

*AVERAGE DOMESTIC PRICES OF LOGS, SAWNTIMBER, PLYWOOD AND MDF IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA APRIL 2018 (VALUE IN RM)

SPECIES	LOGS/tonne	SAWNTIMBER/m ³			
	18" UP	GMS	STRIPS	SCANTLINGS	
HEAVY HARDWOOD					
Chengal	4,500	6,850	5,403		7,451
Balau	3,000	3,178	2,684		2,743
Red Balau	2,200	3,001	2,613		3,284
Merbau	3,150	4,641	3,319		3,955
Mixed Heavy Hardwood	973	989	751		972
MEDIUM HARDWOOD					
Keruing	1,250	1,130	989		2,203
Kempas	1,750	2,331	2,253		2,331
Kapur	1,700	1,746	1,412		1,746
Mengkulang	1,350	2,119	996		2,119
Tualang	1,400	2,472	2,331		2,493
LIGHT HARDWOOD					
Dark Red Meranti	2,100	2,036	1,695		3,001
Red Meranti	1,770	1,992	1,801		2,119
Yellow Meranti	1,200	1,342	1,236		1,271
White Meranti	1,480	2,472	1,412		2,260
Mersawa	1,550	1,730	1,589		1,907
Nyatoh	1,300	1,518	1,059		1,130
Sepetir	1,370	1,695	918		1,695
Jelutong	1,100	1,780	1,215		1,730
Mixed Light Hardwood	900	918	847		1,130
MALAYSIAN RUBBERWOOD					
<i>Hevea brasiliensis</i>	LOGS/tonne	SAWNTIMBER/m ³			
		1" X 1"	2" X 2"	3" X 3"	4" X 4"
	190	1,120	1,359	1,530	1,768
PLYWOOD 4' X 8'					
(RM per piece)	4mm	6mm	9mm		12mm
	14.60	22.00	38.00		48.00
MDF 4' X 8'					
(RM per piece)	4mm	6mm	9mm		12mm
	13.50	17.15	23.30		30.40

Note: Log prices ex-batau. Sawntimber, plywood, MDF and Malaysian Rubberwood (*Hevea brasiliensis*) prices ex-mill

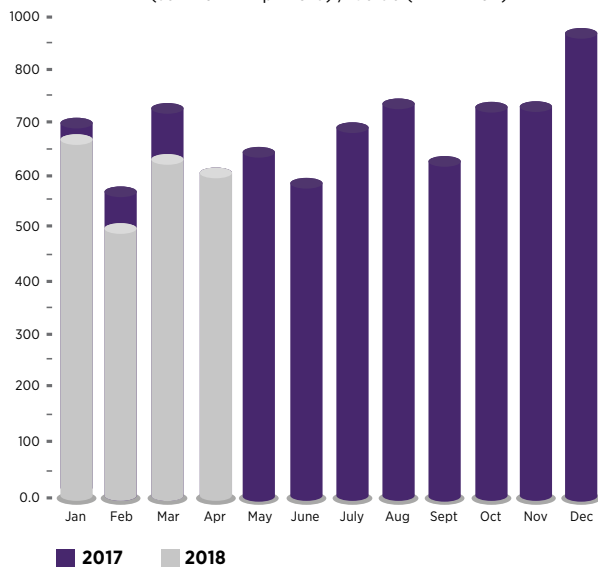
* Prices are only indicative

Cont. from page 11

Australia decreased their purchases by 28% and 22% to 2,167 m³ and 2,813 m³ respectively.

FOB unit value registered at RM3,542 per m³, a decrease of 3% compared to the previous month.

Malaysia : Export of Wooden Furniture
(Jan 2017 - Apr 2018) / Value (RM Million)



Source : Department of Statistics, Malaysia

VENEER

Export of veneer for April 2018 increased by 3% in volume and 15% in value to 14,742 m³ at RM 23.6 million as compared to the previous month. Exports to China and Taiwan have increased by 21% and 46% to 4,572 m³ and 3,022 m³ respectively. Similarly, Canada and Viet Nam also have increased their intake by 100% and 72% to 24 m³ and 55 m³ respectively. Contrarily, South Korea and the Philippines have decreased their intake of veneer by 12% and 28% to 4,981 m³ and 911 m³ respectively. Similarly, exports to Australia and India reduced by 25% and 50% to 21 m³ and 228 m³ respectively. On the other hand, Chile and Italy did not make any purchases this month.

The FOB price of veneer for March 2018 is at RM1,601 per m³, an increase of 12% from RM1,434 per m³ on the previous month.

BUILDERS JOINERY AND CARPENTRY (BJC)

Total BJC cumulative exports for the period of January to April 2018 decreased 14% to RM360.8 million as compared to RM419.4 million in the corresponding period last year. Export to the EU increased 8% to RM127.8 million. Export to the Netherlands, France, Denmark, Belgium and UK increased by 193%, 80%, 60%, 25% and 2% to RM8.1 million, RM14.2 million, RM12.8 million, RM18.8 million and RM55.5 million respectively. Meanwhile, export to Sweden, Turkey, Germany and Italy decreased by 88%, 37%, 31% and 14% to RM562 thousand, RM1.1 million, RM7.2 million and RM2.6 million compared to the previous year.

In Asia, exports to Viet Nam grew 26% to RM15.8 million

compared to the previous month. However, exports to Pakistan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Taiwan decreased by 93%, 85%, 65%, 40% valued at RM1.2 million, RM192 thousand, RM535 thousand, RM28.7 million and RM3.5 million respectively. Similarly, export to India, Thailand, the UAE and Japan reduced 37%, 30%, 14% and 12% to RM12.4 million, RM7.6 million, RM2.6 million and RM21.7 million respectively. Qatar and Bahrain did not make any purchases for the month.

Exports to Mauritius, Australia and South Africa decreased by 31%, 5% and 4% to RM70 thousand, RM72.2 million and RM5.3 million respectively. Likewise, the US increased its intake by 2% to RM36.5 million from RM35.8 million in the previous corresponding period. However, Reunion Island did not make any purchases.

FURNITURE

Exports of wooden and rattan furniture for the period of January to April 2018 decreased 7% compared to the corresponding period of 2017. Total shipment recorded at RM2.45 billion against RM2.63 billion in 2017.

The US reduced its consumption by 8% into RM904.9 million from RM985.8 million in the previous corresponding period. Similarly, demand from Canada and Australia decreased 10% to RM78 million and 12% to RM174.2 million respectively.

In East Asia, China and Taiwan boosted its wooden furniture consumption by 54% and 14% valued at RM74.9 million and RM17.4 million in 2018 from RM48.5 million and RM15.2 million in 2017. Meanwhile, Japan and South Korea reduced its consumption by 18% and 21% to RM182.9 million and RM32.8 million respectively.

On the other hand, shipments to ASEAN region such as Singapore improved by 4% to RM145.6 million. Similarly, the Philippines increased its intake by 42% to RM63.9 million.

Elsewhere, exports to the UAE and Saudi Arabia decreased by 21% and 7% to RM42.2 million and RM41.8 million respectively. Qatar and Bahrain also decreased their consumption by 2% and 21% to RM5.3 million and RM4.9 million respectively. In contrast, shipment to India recorded an increase of 13% to RM66.4 million.

In Europe, the UK and Belgium reduced its intake by 22% and 12% to RM129.2 million and RM11.8 million. France also reduced their import by 6% to RM19.5 million respectively. However, export to South Africa increased 25% to RM19.8 million compared to the previous year.

Meanwhile, rattan furniture shipments recorded a negative growth of 83% from RM12.9 million to RM2.2 million. Export to Singapore and Australia decreased by 98% and 99% to RM42 thousand and RM16 thousand respectively. Elsewhere, Belgium resumed import by RM44 thousand for the period under review.

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Procedures as well as outcome of the Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM) 2/49 which are related to the ASEAN-Australia Digital Trade Standards Cooperation Initiative, AEC 2025 Monitoring and Evaluation as well as the ASEAN Good Regulatory Practice.

The Meeting also witnessed the handover of the Chairmanship of WG 1 from Malaysia to Singapore as well as the handover of the Vice-Chairmanship from Singapore to Thailand. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to Puan Norhaliza Arifin from Department of Standards Malaysia for her valuable contributions as Chair of WG 1 and welcomed the new Chair, Mr. Steven Phua, Deputy Director, Standards (Infrastructure and Manufacturing), Enterprise Singapore as the new Vice Chair of the Meeting, Mr. Sathaporn Rungrattanaubol, Senior Professional Standards Officer, Thai Industrial Standards Institute (TISI), Thailand.

ASEAN GOOD REGULATORY PRACTICE

The Meeting noted that, in addition to the organisation of the 3rd Workshop on Revision of ASEAN GRP Guide held on 9 May in Singapore, which has resulted in the final draft of the ASEAN GRP Guide, the WG 1 - PTB Workshop on Future Cooperation Activities was also held on the same day. The summary of future cooperation areas of WG 1-PTB are as follows:

- Supporting effective harmonisation and application of standards in new areas (e.g. Digital Economy, Energy Efficiency, Smart Cities)
- Supporting implementation of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)
- Strengthening engagement of the private sector in standardisation
- Strengthening regional involvement in international standardisation
- CLM's perspective:
 - i. Preparing standards handbook and procedures for standards development and harmonisation
 - ii. Strengthening NSBs capacity to involve stakeholders in standards development and deliver standards related services
 - iii. Enabling TCs members to effectively participate in technical work

WORKSHOP ON ISO/IEC GUIDE 21

The Workshop was jointly organised by the International Organisation for Standardisation Regional Engagement Initiative-Asia (ISO REI-Asia) and the International Electrotechnical Commission Asia Pacific Regional Centre (IEC APRC)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WORKSHOP

Mr. Andrew Davis, Publishing and Content Solutions Manager, Standards Australia, gave an introduction



Workshop on Good Regulatory Practice by PTB Germany.

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to ISO/IEC Guide 21 covering the methods of adoption and the way to indicate degree of correspondence. He also shared information on the methods to adopt the international standards and the types of adoptions which can be categorised into:

i. Identical Adoptions (IDT)

The regional or national standards are identical to the International Standard under the following conditions:

- a. Identical in technical content, structure and wording;
- b. Identical in translation;
- c. Minimal editorial changes;
- d. The vice versa principle is fulfilled.

ii. Modified Adoptions (MOD)

Under this type of adoption, changes are permitted when an easy comparison is possible, deviations are identified and explained, and the national standards reflect the structure of the International Standards. A modified adoption also may contain less or more, changed parts of or provide an alternative choice to the parent International Standard.

iii. Not Equivalent (NEQ)

The regional or national standards are not equivalent to the International Standards in technical content and structure and the changes have not been clearly identified. This can also include the case where only a minority in number or significance of the international provisions remain in the regional or national standards. This degree of correspondence does not constitute an adoption.

Mr. Adrian Goh, Director, ISO REI-Asia, presented the topic on the Adoption of International Standards (IS) particularly on the using and referencing the ISO and IEC standards to support public policy and shared information about the ISO POCOSA 2017. ISO REI-Asia also presented information on ISO Standards supports on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and Ecommerce and how ISO standards can contribute to the achievement of each of the UN SDGs such as SGD 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, SGD 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SGD 13: Climate Change.

COOPERATION WITH ISO REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE - ASIA (ISO REI - ASIA) AND IEC ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL CENTRE (IEC APRC)

Representatives from ISO REI-Asia shared with the Meeting on activities by ISO and the technical assistance provided for WG/PWG under ACCSQ since the 1st ACCSQ-ISO Dialogue in April 2016 including the cooperation with the Task Force on Wood Based Products and Rubber Based Products Working Group.

HARMONISATION OF STANDARDS

Harmonisation of Standards for the Wood-based Products Sector

The Chair of the Task Force on Wood-based Products (TFWBP), Puan Hj. Mahsuri Mat Dris from MTIB updated the Meeting on the outcome of the 12th Meeting of the TFWBP held on 7 May in Singapore. With regard to the analysis on the list of prioritisation for harmonisation of wood-based standards, the Meeting noted the following:

- i. Outcome of the analysis are as follows:
 - 12 standards out of a total of 57 standards were identified as NEQ (not equivalent with the international standards);
 - 30 standards out of a total of 57 standards were identified as MOD (modified adoption of the international standards);
 - 15 standards out of a total of 57 standards were identified as IDT (identical adoption of the international standards) and DIR (direct use without adoption of the international standards).
- ii. Based on the outcome of the analysis, TFWBP agreed on the following:
 - The first priority of harmonising standards of wood-based products should be based on the standards that are coherent and have identical alignment with international standards;
 - The Meeting agreed to remove standards listed as NEQ from the list of prioritisation of harmonisation.

STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN FOR STANDARDISATION ON TIMBER, TIMBER PRODUCTS AND TIMBER STRUCTURES

news



YBhg Dato' Dr. Jalaluddin Harun FASc, MTIB Director-General delivering his opening speech.

The preparation of the strategic business plan for standardisation is an important measure which forms part of a major review of business activities, achievement, requirements, and expectations. These strategic plans aim to:

- align the work programmes of the Technical Committee (TC) on Timber, TC on Timber Structures, TC on Wood-based Panels as well as TC on Bamboo and Rattan, with business environment needs and trends,
- allow TCs to prioritise among different projects,
- identify the benefits expected from the availability of International Standards, and
- ensure adequate resources for projects throughout the development of the standards.

In line with the above requirements and MTIB's role as the Standards Development Agency (SDA) for timber, timber products and timber structures



YBhg Dato' Dr. Jalaluddin Harun FASc, MTIB Director-General (seated, third from left) posing with the workshop attendees.

Cont. from previous page

as appointed by Standards Malaysia in August 2013, MTIB has gathered the leaders of the national groups of experts known as Standards Development Committee (SDC) who are involved in the developing of the Malaysian Standards, in Bangi, Selangor on 9 April, for a one-day highly interactive forum to deliberate and establish the Strategic Business Plan for Standardisation on Timber, Timber Products and Timber Structures as well as Bamboo

and Rattan. The SDC members, comprising experts from the Industry Standards Committee (ISC), Technical Committees (TCs) and Working Groups (WGs) took advantage of roundtable discussions to discuss on core issues and challenges to standards development as well as the applications in order to develop the strategic business plan for the planning period of 2019 until 2025.

YBhg. Dato' Dr Jalaluddin Harun FASc, Director-General of MTIB was invited to deliver the opening remarks. He also served as Chairman during the roundtable discussion in line with his role as Chairman of ISC on Timber, Timber Products and Timber Structures. In his remarks he noted his appreciation towards the continuous contributions from the experts, representing various agencies, stakeholders, research institutions and higher learning institutions as well as the timber industry in the development of standards for timber, timber products and timber structures as well as bamboo and rattan.

He stated that the collective challenge is to develop relevant standards that are applicable to the industry and stakeholders and at the same time to continuously improve our speed to better serve market and customer needs. It is therefore important to develop and use the Strategic Business Plan for the period of 2019-2025 to ensure that standards that are being developed are able to meet the challenges ahead; in particular, current global market requirements on mandatory standard applications through products certification, technical regulations and other market requirements.



Attendees during the workshop.

He cited a few examples such as the implementation of the JAS/JIS by the Japanese market through the Japan Building Standards Law for panel-based products as well as the China Technical Regulations for panel-based products related to compliance requirements for certain levels of formaldehyde content which can affect consumer health, which will take effect starting 1 May 2018. In this context, Malaysia through MTIB is taking similar steps by implementing technical regulations for plywood products related to formaldehyde emission level by following WTO/TBT requirements.

During the discussion, the experts were divided into four groups namely Bamboo & Rattan, Timber, Timber Structures and Wood-based panels where they were tasked to prepare and present the strategic business plan for standardisation activities as outlined in **Table 1**, by the respective groups such as follows:

- Group 1: Timber by Assoc. Prof. Dr. H'ng Paik San (UPM)
- Group 2: Timber Structures by Prof. Dr. Zakiah Ahmad (UiTM)
- Group 3: Wood-based Panels by Prof. Dr. Paridah Md Tahir (UPM)
- Group 4: Bamboo & Rattan by Dr. Wan Tarmeze Wan Ariffin (FRIM)

In conclusion, identified tools in standardisation activities which include the forum and TC business plans, provided a unique opportunity for the

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Noting the difficulty in harmonising standards of wood-based products due to modification to the ISO standards, TFWBP will explore the option of developing relevant ISO standards with regional modification as reference standards, to be led by Malaysia. The Meeting discussed the initiatives in exploring the options of developing ISO plywood standards with regional modification as reference standards. The Meeting also discussed and adopted the revised TFWBP Action Plan 2017-2025. The Meeting reviewed and revised the term of office and agreed to endorse the ToR of TFWBP and noted the re-appointment of the current Chair, Malaysia, as the Chair of TFWBP for another three-year term, from 2018-2021. The Meeting also noted the appointment of Philippines for a three-year term as the Vice Chair of TFWBP from 2018-2021.

The Meeting was attended by the delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam as well as representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat. The representatives from Physikalische-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) Germany, ISO Regional Engagement Initiative - Asia (ISO REI - Asia) and IEC Asia Pacific Regional Centre (IEC APRC), and ASEAN Regional Integration Support by EU (ARISE Plus) also attended the Meeting under the specific agenda item. Malaysia was represented by two officials from MTIB namely Tuan Hj. Mahpar Atan, Director of Industry Development and Puan Hjh. Mahsuri Mat Dris, Senior Deputy Director. Thailand will be hosting the 41st WG 1 Meeting, tentatively scheduled on 19 November 2018 in Bangkok. 

Timber News

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experts of standards development committees to network and exchange views, experience and best practices with respect to the work-conduct of the standards development committee. This forum was more dynamic and interactive with the assistance of group discussions and other activities

whereby the experts/participants were requested to provide immediate input to key issues that directly concerned the development and application of standards as the solution for stakeholders and the industry and market access for timber-based products. 

Table 1: Summary of Strategic Business Plan for Each TC

Technical committee	No of MS (Present)	No of MS (2019-2025)		Remarks
		Development	Usage	
Bamboo & Rattan	0	18	0	
Timber	42	6	4	Application: Mandatory/Voluntary
Wood-based panels	29	22	4	Application: Mandatory/voluntary eg. MS 228
Timber structures	22	15	7	Application: Mandatory/Voluntary eg. MS 544 (Part 1-12) – under UBBL, CIS 5 (CIDB act)
Total	93	61	15	

TIMBER, AN ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY OPTION FOR PROPERTY CONSTRUCTION IN AUSTRALIA

news



Lendlease's wooden residential tower Forte in Melbourne's Docklands.

A material used in construction for centuries is making a comeback, as developers and builders take timber to new heights. However, we are not referring to conventional wood, but manufactured, engineered materials collectively known as mass timber.

One type of engineered material is cross-laminated timber (CLT) — layers of wood, glued together under high pressure with the grain of each perpendicular to the one before. CLT is not a new building material — its growing popularity in Australia is the result of recent changes to building regulations, which are in turn the result of lengthy performance testing and industry consultation.

In May 2017, Australia's National Construction Code was changed so timber products could be used in buildings up to 25 metres high, without developers having to go through costly additional processes such as getting fire engineering approval each time. Now, mid-rise buildings can be made of timber products, as long as sprinklers are installed in buildings over three storeys, and fire-resistant plasterboard covers all exposed wood.

Another driving force behind timber is the growing interest in environmentally-friendly and sustainable products. Advocates of mass timber are quick to

point to the material's green credentials, arguing it is a good insulator, which keeps down heating and cooling costs, and it is a store of carbon — unlike concrete and steel, which emit carbon during their production.

In Australia, the new material has already made its presence felt. The best known example is Lendlease's 10 storey CLT apartment tower, Forte, in Docklands, Victoria. NSW will soon be home to the largest CLT-built project in the country - a residential complex with 101 units over three apartment buildings. The Macarthur Gardens project, built by Strongbuild, will

have three towers of six, seven and eight storeys, for an affordable housing development.

Also in Sydney, retirement village operator Aveo is moving ahead at Norwest on a 449 unit project, with 10 buildings from four to nine storeys. The dwellings will be made with CLT.

Lendlease is investing further into this trend, setting up its own factory in Sydney with plans to create \$1 billion of pre-fabricated components required for the next wave of buildings over the next five years. New Zealand timber company, XLam, has opened Australia's first sole CLT manufacturing plant in the Albury-Wodonga region. A high-tech sustainable timber facility, it is slated to produce 60,000 m³ of CLT each year. However, there will still be opportunities for cross laminated timber, glulam, prefabricated flooring and other advanced engineered timber products for imports as these products are not manufactured in Australia.

As demand increases for inner-city dwellings, more developers will turn to timber, for a quicker, less-disruptive option for high-rise structures. 

Prepared by :
MATRADE Melbourne, Australia

TIMBER GRADING COURSE FOR BRUNEI FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

news



Practical session - Grading methods using Malaysian Grading Rules (MGR) at Kilang Papan Maju, Brunei Darussalam.

MTIB was invited by the Brunei Forestry Department, through WISDEC to conduct a course on Sawntimber Grading from 30 April to 3 May at the Tropical Biodiversity Centre, Brunei Darussalam. MTIB sent Encik Mohd Shairazi Yahya and Encik Abd Malek Idris, technical experts from WISDEC as trainers for the programme.

The main objective of the course was to provide basic knowledge, exposure and understanding of the level of sawntimber (Based on Malaysia Grading Rules - MGR) also basic skills on wood identification, types of wood defects and practical methods of wood grading. Malaysia is the first ASEAN country to have its own timber grading rules, MGR, which was designed by MTIB. As such, Brunei requested for a basic wood grading course to assist them to understand grading rules before attempting to develop their own. Other ASEAN countries that are currently using MGR as a guideline to grade timber is Viet Nam and Myanmar.

Five main topics were elaborated upon: Introduction to Tropical Hardwood, Wood Identification, Types of

Wood Defects, Malaysian Grading Rules (MGR) and Wood Grading.

A site visit to Kilang Papan Maju in Brunei was also held to practise grading methods using MGR. Sawntimber quality control based on MGR was further elaborated with topics such as General Market Specifications, Special Market Specifications and Limitation Acceptance, and Types of Defects in Each Grade.

A total of 40 participants including the Director and Deputy Director of Brunei Forestry Department successfully completed the course.



Participants posing at Tropical Biodiversity Centre, Brunei Darussalam.



Participants holding their certificates.

WOOD DRYING TECHNOLOGY

FEATURE

BACKGROUND

Recently, various issues are being raised by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) abroad, in particular, forest destruction and environmental pollution that will have a wider implication in the long run. In this context, the European Union has also raised the

issue of the use of certain chemicals in the process of wood treatment in Malaysia. For example, borate has been categorised as a toxic substance under the Dangerous Substances Directive. Hence, developed countries have since placed restrictions on international trade to ensure that the use

of environmentally-friendly products increase instead. In furniture manufacturing, Rubberwood sawntimber or the softwood species is normally used as a raw material that has been treated by using a strong chemical to ensure it lasts longer and repels attacks by insects

or pesticides such as beetles and fungus beetles. However, the use of chemicals as a preservative is allegedly capable of affecting human health. Hence, alternative wood treatments are crucial to ensure that the furniture industry continues to grow and is not affected by the ban on the use of chemicals.

ALTERNATIVE WOOD TREATED: HTD TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM

The HTD technology system is an alternative wood treatment that has been developed over the past 10 years. It has been improved by researchers from the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) in Kepong, Selangor - Encik Choo Kheng Ten and Dr. Sik Huei Shing.

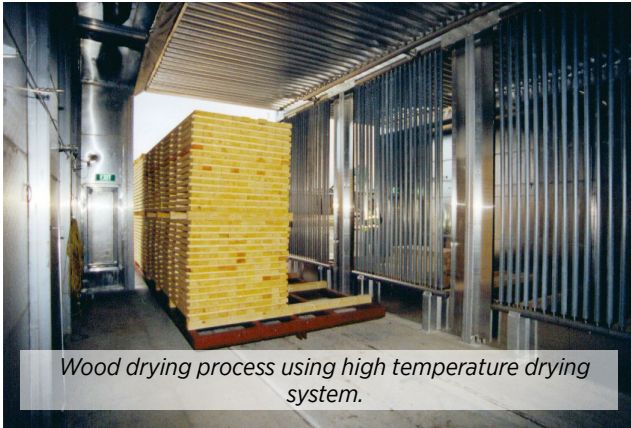
Dr. Huei Shing in one of her article said that, HTD uses steam heating methods to treat and dry wood. It does not require chemical treatment, but it can improve the stability of wood by reducing processing time. High-temperature kiln drying is operated at temperatures of 200 to 240 ° F and air velocities usually exceed 800 fpm. This type of kiln-dried system was first developed for softwoods. The commercial high-temperature kilns can dry large quantities of lumber in one day for a few species of hardwoods.

In addition, the HTD system helps the timber industry improve wood properties by using effective



High temperature drying kilns.

preservative treatments while the processing cycle time can be reduced by up to 75%. In terms of quality, the Rubberwood treated with HTD systems is generally better and the stability of the wood dimensions is proven to be higher compared to conventional methods.



Wood drying process using high temperature drying system.



Workers arranging wood after undergoing HTD/drying process at the timber factory.

USES OF HTD

The HTD technology developed by FRIM has been patented by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in March 2017. It has also been patented in Malaysia and six other countries namely Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, Indonesia, China and India. This technology has the potential to make Malaysia a leading country in offering better timber which is non-hazardous to human health and is environmentally friendly. The HTD system is a solution to the problems faced by the timber industry, especially the producers of Rubberwood-based furniture. The HTD system technology is also found to be used to treat low-density wood to medium-sized wood such as Sesendok, Jelutong, Yemane, Pine species.

A joint venture with Advanced Low Pressure System Sdn. Bhd. (ALPS) has commercialised HTD technology and has established two units of HTD systems in Telok Gong, Port Klang, Selangor. FRIM in collaboration with MTIB and Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) have promoted and launched the HTD system certification marks.

Apart from Rubberwood, FRIM also conducts further research on the use of the system against other timber species such as Acacia spp. species. and palm oil.



Central computer control and monitoring system for high temperature drying process.

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- http://ww1.utusan.com.my/utusan/Sains_&_Teknologi/20130708/st_01/Teknologi-rawat-kayu#ixzz5FQzakR3A © Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd.
- Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM)
- James E. Reeb, Wood Products and Utilisation Specialist University of Kentucky College of Agriculture



Jelutong Dyers spp.

Malaysian Wood
Standing on Excellence

Lukisan Seribu Makna, Kayu Eratkan Semua
A Picture Paints a Thousand Words. Wood Binds Them All



NATIONAL CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR PLYWOOD

The Product Certification Scheme for plywood is operated by the MTIB Certification Body (MTIB CB) which started in 2012. The scheme is essentially voluntary in nature, which determines conformity with product standards through initial testing and assessment of a Factory Quality Management System. It is followed by Surveillance that takes into account the Factory Quality Management System and the testing samples.

**Products Certification -
Towards Widen Market
Access and Trade
Facilitation**

We committed:

- To provide services to our customers consistently, efficiently and professionally
- To conform customers' needs and to all product certification requirements



Further enquiries or information kindly contact:

Product Certification Unit
Director-General Office
Malaysian Timber Industry Board
Level 13-17, Menara PGRM, No.8, Jalan Pudu Ulu, Cheras
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MS ISO/IEC 17065:2012
PC 03042012 CB 06

OMAN

EMERGING TIMBER MARKET IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Oman officially called the Sultanate of Oman is an Arab state in southwest Asia on the southeast coast of the Arabian Peninsula. It has a strategically important geographical position at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. It is bordered by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to the northwest, Saudi Arabia to the west, and Yemen to the southwest and also shares marine borders with Iran and Pakistan. The coast is formed by the Arabian Sea on the southeast and the Gulf of Oman on the northeast. The Madha and Musandam exclaves are surrounded by the UAE on their land borders, with the Strait of Hormuz and Gulf of Oman forming Musandam's coastal boundaries.

Oman's population is around 4.6 million of which 55% are Omani citizens and 45% are immigrants. Oman is an absolute monarchy of which the Sultan of Oman exercises ultimate authority, but its parliament has some legislative and oversight powers.

Oman is a member of the United Nations, Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In recent years, the Sultanate joined the Indian Ocean Rim Association for regional co-operation with the aim of improving trade links and investment between member countries. As a member of the GCC, Oman extends certain privileged rights to citizens and companies from other member countries and these are:

- General exemption from custom duty on imports of GCC origin
- Preference in government tenders for products originating in GCC
- GCC nationals are given equivalent status to Omani nationals in establishing legal entities
- GCC nationals working in private sector in Oman are treated at par with the locals
- Ownership of land in certain areas where GCC nationals enjoy advantages denied to other non-Omanis.

Economy

Oman is heavily dependent on oil and gas resources, which can generate between 68% and 85% of government revenue, depending on fluctuations in commodity prices. In 2016, low global oil prices drove Oman's budget deficit to USD13.8 billion, or

approximately 20% of GDP. However, the budget deficit is estimated to have reduced to 12% of GDP in 2017 as Oman reduced government subsidies. As of January 2018, Oman has sufficient foreign assets to support its currency's fixed exchange rates. It is issuing debts to cover its deficit.

Oman is using enhanced oil recovery techniques to boost production, and at the same time, is simultaneously pursuing a development plan that focuses on diversification, industrialisation, and privatisation, with the objective of reducing the oil sector's contribution to GDP. The key components of the government's diversification strategy are tourism, shipping and logistics, mining, manufacturing, and aquaculture.

Oman is the largest producer of crude oil (including condensate) in the Middle East that is not a member of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). As a result of both the enhanced oil recovery (EOR) techniques and new discoveries, Oman's oil production has increased each year since 2007 and it has been ranked seventh among Middle East oil producers and 21st in the world, since 2014 (the most recent full-year data). Production exceeded one million barrels per day in June 2015 for the first time since December 2000.

Oman is an important exporter of crude oil, with virtually all of the country's oil exports destined for countries in Asia. In 2014, Oman exported an estimated 800,000 barrels per day (b/d), or 80%, of its crude oil and condensate production, of which

72% went to China. Oman's hydrocarbon sector, which includes crude oil, natural gas, and other liquid fuels, accounts for 84% of government revenue and 47% of the country's gross domestic products.

Shipping

Today, Port of Sultan Qaboos in Muscat, the Salalah Port and the Port of Sohar are the premier sea ports in Oman. Port of Sultan Qaboos was established in 1974 and has been vital for the development of Oman. It has recently added a passenger terminal and has become a port for luxury cruise liners. In the near future, Port Sultan Qaboos will continue to support lighter commercial operations, and the port's shipyard will be converted into docking space for cruise ships. Meanwhile, Port of Sohar is expected to take on the bulk of Port of Sultan Qaboos' commercial business. In the few years since its inception, the Port has developed into one of the world's largest and most sophisticated container terminals.

The Port of Sohar, located just before the Strait

of Hormuz, is within easy reach of the booming economies of the Gulf and the Indian subcontinent, with great connectivity to Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Al Ain and Muscat. The Port of Sohar has developed into a world-class port, capable of receiving ships with a draught of up to 18 metres. The Port of Sohar will be linked by the railway to the internal container depot being developed at Barka.

Another port, Port of Duqm, located in central-eastern Oman, is being developed as a new port to provide safe, stable and business friendly destination for industrial and economic investments. Port of Duqm is an integral part of the effort to turn Oman's central Al Wusta region into a major transport and industrial centre.

In a bid to accelerate diversification and development of the economy, several free trade zones have been created, and these zones are regulated by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The zones included Salalah Free Zone, Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM), Al Mazunah Free Zone, and Sohar Free Zone.

Import of Timber and Timber Products

According to the United Nations latest statistics, Oman's imports of timber and timber products has decreased 17% to USD331.4 million. Furniture was the main product imported with a value of at USD156.6 million followed by plywood at USD58.8 million, sawntimber at USD53.3 million and

fibreboard at USD20.9 million.

The UAE was a major import partner for timber and timber products as well as furniture. Meanwhile, Malaysia ranked second as import partner for timber and timber products with 14% of the market share while furniture ranked eighth with 1.7% of market share.

Oman: Import of Timber & Timber Products, 2013 - 2017

(Value : USD'000)					
Product	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Furniture	163,630	202,432	216,066	188,767	156,599
Plywood	75,961	90,659	78,496	77,998	58,791
Sawntimber	83,353	99,287	86,220	62,436	53,328
Fibreboard	21,763	25,988	30,628	24,186	20,850
BJC	6,755	7,607	11,270	7,263	7,233
Logs	13,376	10,096	13,262	7,424	6,459
Veneer	3,042	6,358	3,648	2,294	2,785
Particleboard/ Chipboard	2,077	3,148	3,694	3,133	2,727
Mouldings	3,162	2,279	3,746	2,004	1,313
Wooden Frames	576	807	412	146	127
Others	28,352	33,130	38,283	23,070	21,145
Total	402,047	481,791	485,725	398,721	331,357

Source: ITC Stats

Export of Timber and Timber Products

Oman exports a small value of timber and timber products. In 2017, exports increased 35% to almost

USD44 million. Furniture was the main product exported valued at USD 21.1 million, followed by mouldings at USD13.6 million and BJC at USD2.2 million.

Oman: Export of Timber and Timber Products, 2013 - 2017

(Value : USD'000)

Product	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Furniture	26,778	30,632	27,718	22,341	21,143
Mouldings	910	40	1,500	1,200	13,637
BJC	522	1,977	2,790	1,309	2,212
Sawntimber	582	0	1,527	827	1,427
Fibreboard	2,464	110	572	833	1,353
Plywood	671	0	2,145	4,005	1,045
Veneer	120	1,351	630	47	284
Logs	14	2	140	105	119
Particleboard/ Chipboard	28	9	520	38	47
Wooden Frames	34	0	3	11	14
Others	3,555	2,689	2,920	2,247	3,195
Total	35,678	36,810	40,465	32,963	44,476

Source: ITC Stats

Malaysia's Export of Timber and Timber Products to Oman

In 2017, Malaysia's exports of timber and timber products to Oman increased 70% to RM164.9 million from RM96.8 million over the previous five

years. Oman as a market ranked 23rd with 0.7% of Malaysia's total market share. Sawntimber was the main product exported with a total value of RM92.1 million at 57,000 m³, followed by wooden furniture with RM25.4 million and plywood with RM24.7 million at 16,000 m³.

Malaysia: Export of Timber and Timber Products (by Value) to Oman, 2013-2017

(Value: FOB RM)

Products	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Sawntimber	49,016,777	64,238,733	80,793,704	111,889,431	92,105,080
Wooden Furniture	17,790,301	23,040,779	28,335,838	21,267,853	25,408,657
Plywood	8,786,868	26,481,790	19,032,772	26,775,378	24,726,048
MDF	19,014,567	22,269,515	20,738,694	17,718,094	19,825,784
Particleboard	2,074,000	2,114,055	2,089,139	2,012,185	2,278,412
BJC	129,059	1,857,045	566,421	1,509,867	243,850
Mouldings	0	0	190,306	146,423	159,411
Wooden Frame	0	0	0	9,137	0
Rattan Furniture	0	928,048	305,478	778,674	0
Logs	0	247,921	12,702,346	0	0
Others	0	0	6,221	0	204,569
Total	96,811,572	141,177,886	164,760,919	182,107,042	164,951,811

Source: MTIB and DOSM

Malaysia: Export of Timber and Timber Products to Oman (by Volume), 2013-2017

(Volume : m³)

Products	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Sawntimber	37,106	52,588	49,469	62,224	57,423
MDF	24,326	26,034	20,766	19,517	19,799
Plywood	6,216	17,881	12,193	18,300	15,979
Particleboard	2,451	2,425	2,031	2,101	2,109
Mouldings	0	0	35	28	89
Logs	0	95	4,327	0	0
Total	70,099	99,023	88,821	102,170	95,399

Source: MTIB and DOSM

Import Tariffs

Oman's import tariff on major timber and timber products are all ranged at 5%. Details are as follows:

HS Code	Products	Duty (%)
4403	Logs	5
4407	Sawntimber	5
4408	Veneer	5
4409	Mouldings	5
4410	Chipboard/Particleboard	5
4411	Fibreboard	5
4412	Plywood	5
4414	Wooden Frame	5
4418	Builders Joinery and Carpentry	5
9403	Wooden Furniture	5
9401	Seats	5

Source: WTO

Market Prospects

The Oman project market is as strong as ever. The Sultanate's five-year plan has embarked an annual allocation of USD6.5 billion for the construction sector, of which half of it is for infrastructure development such as tourism, infrastructure and commercial building. Oman's tourism has increased by 23% in the past five years and it has contribute to an increase in the GDP at 2.8% in 2016 with year-on-year inbound tourists increasing to 3.3 million by December 2017 since the launch of the 2040 Tourism Strategy of Oman.

Meanwhile, Oman's construction sector is expected to post a healthy growth in the coming years. The country's construction industry will continue to expand in real terms over the forecast period (2017-2021). In addition, the Omani construction industry registered an average annual growth rate of 9.4% during the review period (2012-2016). This growth was supported by the government's Eight-Five Year Development Plan 2010 - 2015.

Despite low oil prices, the government is focusing on the development of transport infrastructure, energy and utilities facilities, and affordable housing. Global investors, mainly from China, have begun to fill the fundraising gap caused by low oil prices and the subsequent cuts to government spending on infrastructure projects.

According to a report by the Oman Daily Observer, analysts predict that the Sino-Oman Industrial City - the result of the Omani government's efforts to involve private partnerships in major projects, will help underpin growth in the sultanate's construction industry. This will accelerate growth from an unexpected 2.4% in 2018, the lowest since 2000, to 4.9% by 2019, the analysts said.

As the country is not producing construction materials that are able to meet this exponential demand growth, Oman will need to source goods from import markets to guarantee prices and construction for its vast range of real estate projects. With a positive construction industry development and strong economy, Oman is seen to be a growing and emerging market for Malaysia's timber and timber products exports. Thus, Malaysian exporters are urged to take full advantage of the situation and

to further promote their timber products, focusing on the value-added products such as furniture, MDF and BJC to the market. In addition Malaysian manufacturers and exporters should also to promote building materials namely sawntimber and plywood and other panel products to the Oman's construction industry.

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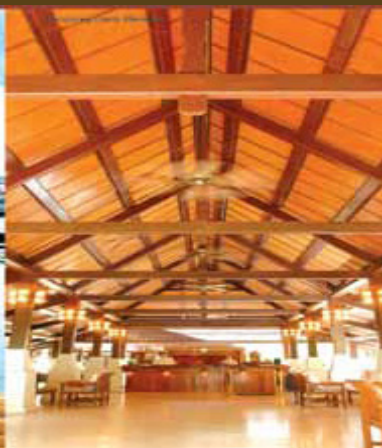
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Laran leaves

INTRODUCTION

Laran (*Neolamarckia cadamba*) is a tree species of the *Rubiaceae* family. Its botanical name of Laran is *Anthocephalus chinensis*. Vernacular names applied include Entipong (Sarawak), Kelampayan (Peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak), Kelempayan (Sabah), Limpoh (Sabah) and Sempayan (Sarawak). Other common names for Laran are Thkoow (Cambodia), Anthocephalus (Fiji), Kadam (India), Emajang, Jabon, Laran and Semama (Indonesia), Koo-somz and Sako (Loas), Maukadon, Mau-letten-she and Yemau (Myanmar), Kadam (Pakistan), Kaatoan bangkal (Philippines) and Ka Thum, Kra Thum, Krathum-bok and Taku (Thailand).



Laran tree

LARAN

SUITABLE FOR PLYWOOD MANUFACTURING

General Characteristics

The sapwood is not differentiated from the heartwood, which is white with a yellow tinge and darkens to creamy yellow on exposure. Vessels are medium-sized and open. They are few or moderately few, solitary and in radial groups of two to three, the groups predominating. The wood parenchyma is rather sparse, just visible with a hand lens as diffuse strands, occasionally in tangential series of two to a few strands associated with the vessels. The rays are moderately fine and the grain is straight.

Density

The timber is soft and light with a density of 290-465 kg/m³ air dry. It is classified under Light Hardwood in Malaysia.

Natural Durability

The timber is non-durable.

Preservative Treatment

It should be fairly easy to treat with preservatives.

Texture

The texture is moderately fine and even, with a straight grain.

Strength Properties

The timber falls into Strength Group D or SG7 (Burgess, 1958) or SG 7 (MS 544:Part 2:2001).

Strength Properties of Laran

Species	Test Condition	Modulus of Elasticity (MPa)	Modulus of Rupture (MPa)	Compression Parallel to Grain (MPa)	Compression Perpendicular to Grain (MPa)	Shear Strength (MPa)
<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Green	7,300	43	21.0	-	7.9
	Air dry	7,700	50	27.9	-	6.4

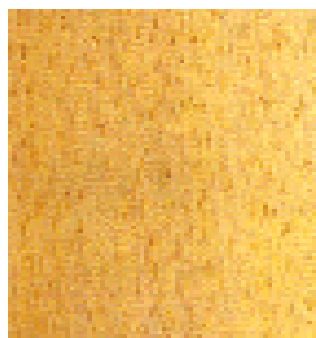
Machining Properties

Sawing and Woodworking Properties of Laran

Species Tested	Test Condition	Sawing		Planing		Boring		Turning	
		Re-sawing	Cross Cutting	Ease of Planing	Quality of Finish	Ease of Boring	Quality of Finish	Ease of Turning	Quality of Finish
<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Green	easy	easy	easy	smooth	easy	smooth	-	-
	Air dry	easy	easy	easy	smooth	easy	smooth	easy	slightly rough

Air Drying

The timber seasons fairly rapidly with slight end checks, splitting and insect attacks as the main sources of degrade. The timber is also moderately prone to sapstaining. Boards of 13 mm thick take approximately 2.5 months to air dry, while 38 mm thick boards take 3.5 months.



Wood colour and texture



Laran flower

Kiln-Drying Kiln Schedule H is recommended. Care must be taken to stack the timber properly as there is a strong tendency to cup. Boards of 25 mm thick are expected to kiln-dry in 14 days.

Kiln Schedule H

Moisture Content (%)	Temperature (Dry Bulb)		Temperature (Wet Bulb)		Relative Humidity (%) (approx.)
	° F	° C	° F	° C	
Green	135	57	127	53	80
50	135	57	126	52	75
40	140	60	126	52	65
30	150	65.5	129	54	55
20	170	76.5	136	58	40

The timber is suitable for the manufacture of plywood, packing boxes and crates, wooden sandals, disposable chopsticks, ladies shoe soles and possibly as a source of short fibre pulp. It is also suitable for dug-outs or canoes and less expensive furniture if properly seasoned.

Uses

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Talk on ICT Security Awareness and Information Security Management System (ISMS) organised by MTIB for its personnel on 5 April 2018 at MTIB, Kuala Lumpur.

A course on Key Box Making held at WISDEC Selangor in Banting on 14 May 2018 specially for clients of Agensi Anti-Dadah Kebangsaan (AADK). **Left** : Hands-on session. **Right** : Participants holding finished products.



Dr. Yeoh Beng Hoong, FIDEC officer, explaining about oil palm trunk (OPT) products during RTM documentary session. The shooting was held on 31 May 2018 at FIDEC, Banting, Selangor.

