

**Letter to Madam Anne Hidalgo
President of SOLIDEO
Société de Livraison des Ouvrages Olympiques
18, rue de Londres
75009 Paris - France**

Subject: Alert on the exclusion of wood of exotic and boreal origin from outside the EU in the environmental excellence requirements for the Olympic Village

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14th of April 2021

Madam President,

The Olympic Village's environmental excellence specifications prohibit, except for specific constraints linked to fire safety (in such a case, 100% of the wood must be FSC-certified), wood of exotic and boreal origin outside the EU¹.

This SOLIDEO origin requirement seems to contravene the principle of free product competition (a founding principle of the EU) and is not based on clearly defined environmental protection requirements.

Indeed, SOLIDEO's position does not take into account the recommendations of the Ministry of Ecological Transition or of NGOs (e.g. WWF) which, in a largely globalised market and subject to the supply of wood from forests certified for their sustainable management, do not exclude geographical origin.

On the contrary, as the Ministry of Ecological Transition reminds us in the "zero deforestation" purchasing guide published in November 2020, "if wood is boycotted, tropical forests lose their

¹Nota : Tropical forests are those located between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. The three main massifs of tropical forests are the Amazon, the Congo Basin in Africa and Southeast Asia. These forests cover 18 million km² or 45% of the global forest area. Boreal forests are those located in the colder regions of the northern hemisphere and are mainly made up of coniferous species that are resistant to cold, such as spruce and fir. They mainly cross Canada, Russia and the Scandinavian countries and cover about 16 million km² or 40% of the world's forest area. Together, tropical and boreal forests account for about 85% of the world's forest area. The main sustainable forest management certification systems (FSC and PEFC) are present in all the major producer countries covered by these forests, hence the existence of an abundant supply of wood products from these certified forests with processing on site or in destination markets, including France.

production that can be converted into foreign currency and there is strong pressure to clear them for agropastoral or agro-industrial purposes (rubber, coconut, oil palm)¹².

To work most effectively to preserve and strengthen global ecosystems, the challenge is to promote the use of eco-certified wood, regardless of its origin.

This exclusion also undermines the investments made by many French industrialists in R&D, innovation and the development of a quality wood offer, in compliance with normative (RBUE in particular), regulatory or voluntary requirements (e.g. CTB marks) and integrating the traceability of these woods, which come from sustainable forest management.

In addition, the workers of forestry companies and the indigenous populations living near certified companies benefit greatly from the development of a sustainable timber industry. Promoting the purchase of sustainably managed tropical timber is therefore a way of maintaining their positive social and environmental impact, which deserves to be recognised by all.

The current specifications are therefore discriminatory both for exporting countries and for the many French processing companies that use this resource, while at the same time penalising jobs in the South and, in the long term, replacing this sector with other uses of the land, which we can be sure will not be neutral on the environment.

In a context of global tension on raw material supplies, the supply of exotic and boreal wood concerns numerous product families in construction as well as in interior and exterior fittings:

- Roof truss, traditional frame, glued laminated frame... made in France and using certified softwoods (spruce, fir...) from non-EU boreal forests;
- Wooden cladding made in France and incorporating renowned species such as Siberian larch or Canadian western red cedar;
- Exterior or interior woodwork and fittings made from plywood panels of okoumé from the Congo Basin or other non-EU species ;
- Wooden decks made of tropical wood, generally from Africa or South America (e.g. ipe, cumaru, macarenduba, padouk, itauba, etc.);
- Etc ;

Thus, a good number of the French companies concerned, whether they are manufacturers of plywood panels, decking, cladding or glued laminated timber frames, transform all or part of this wood in our territories, with undeniable local spin-offs.

In conclusion, our compliance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Ecological Transition³, as well as with the European Union's Timber Regulation, and particularly the requirement for certification and traceability of wood, which guarantees the preservation of the world's forests and their biodiversity while combating climate change (carbon challenge), confirms the relevant response provided by all of our products, whatever their origin, to the strongest environmental requirements and more broadly to the UN's sustainable development objectives.

²https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/Guide_politique_achat_public_zero_deforestation_18nov2020.pdf, p30

³ Zero Deforestation Purchasing Guide

We would therefore be happy to discuss with you and the people in your team in charge of environmental policy in relation to the construction of the Olympic facilities in order to find a solution that would satisfy the integration of this abundant and sustainable offer, carried out by mainly French companies, into the construction of the infrastructure of the Paris 2024 Summer Olympic Games.

Finally, we would like to inform you that we are currently exchanging views with the authorities of various tropical timber-producing countries (Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Malaysia), in anticipation of a concerted approach at the political level.

Yours sincerely

Signatories :

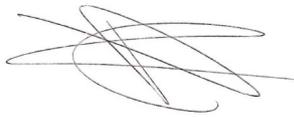
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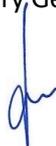
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With copy to :

- AFD, French Development Agency, France / Agence Française de Développement, France
- COMIFAC, Central African Forestry Commission
- FAO, Forestry Division. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- FFEM. French Global Environment Facility / Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial, France
- France Bois 2024
- ITTO, International Tropical Timber Organization
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food, France
- Ministry of Ecological Transition, France
- Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, France
- Ministry of Forest Economy of Republic of Congo
- Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife of Republic of Cameroon;
- Ministry of Territorial Cohesion, France
- Ministry of Water, Forests, Sea and Environment, in charge of the Climate Plan and Land Use Plan of Republic of Gabon
- Paris 2024
- Programme de Promotion de l'Exploitation Certifiée des Forêts, Yaoundé