

**ATIBT INTERNATIONAL FORUM AND DUBAI WOODSHOW  
RAPPORT**



**Tropical forest : timber, and so much more**



Under the patronage of  
Minister of Climate and  
Environment United  
Arab Emirates



Organized by IATIBT  
in collaboration with  
Dubai Wood Show



FOREST  
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*To find the presentations and the speeches delivered during the two days, click on their wording in this document, or find them grouped on the website of the ATIBT: [www.atibt.org](http://www.atibt.org). Some of the studies mentioned during the exchanges are also available on the ATIBT website or on the websites of the donors or partners of the ATIBT.*

## GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE FORUM

### **Context**

ATIBT's International Forum was held on 5 and 6 March 2017 in Dubai, thereby coinciding with the Dubai WoodShow (DWS), a major trade fair for the Middle East's timber industry that was held on 7, 8 and 9 March.

ATIBT and Dubai WoodShow had decided one year before to establish a partnership to join forces to create synergies between the two events and mutually benefit from their collective expertise and their network.



During this biennial event, ATIBT highlighted its missions, which above all are: to promote the tropical timber industry's professions, to be a facilitator and source of improvements in the management of tropical forests, to act as a marketing and communications tool and - lastly - to be a source of expertise.

### **Theme**

The theme that was selected for this edition is *“Tropical forest : timber and so much more”*, which complements and is consistent with the slogan of the Fair & Precious communication campaign *“African timber : much more than timber”* (one of the components that ATIBT is currently implementing via the marketing program it initiated in 2015 with support from the AFD). This message aims to highlight the overall approach of tropical forest management, with a commitment that takes into account economic, social and environmental issues, as well as profitability, the preservation of the resource, biodiversity and consideration for local populations.

As such, ATIBT is positioned as follows: our association aims to promote a tropical timber industry that is sustainable, ethical and legal, where timber is a natural raw material that is renewable and essential for the socio-economic development of producer countries.

One issue was central during the Forum: **the legality of tropical timber trade at the global scale**. As they are anxious for the UAE to commit in this direction, the authorities of the host country wanted this theme to be explored in depth. It was therefore the subject of an entire meeting, but it was also discussed during other sessions, as market and logistics issues are strongly influenced by the FLEGT and EUTR regulations.

### **Content and sessions**

Given the Forum's ambitious objectives, it was divided into 5 sessions:

1. The future of the tropical forest and its inhabitants
2. Training in timber trade
3. Legality, certification and global warming
4. Logistics in Dubai: challenges and opportunities
5. Worldwide African timber market, especially in the Middle East

In this report, which summarizes the main points of the presentations, we have endeavoured to propose a conclusion for each of the themes, thereby outlining areas of work for the future.

### **Participants**

The Forum brought together 135 participants, from the civil society, public administrations and private sector. These participants were representatives from the countries of Congo Basin (Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Republic of Congo), Western Africa (Ivory Coast), du Nigeria,

Vietnam, United Arab Emirates, Greece, Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Italy, Holland, Switzerland.

A strong attendance of syndicates representing forest companies in the producing countries is to be noted: UFIGA (Gabon), Unibois (Congo), SPIB (Ivory Coast), FIB (DRC) and GFBC (Cameroon), but also the participation of Cameroon and Gabon's Ministry of Water and Forests, as well as COMIFAC, PEFC, PAFC and FSC.

To be noted, the official participation of:

- Ministry of Economy from the United Arab Emirates, with the Deputy Under-Secretary, S.E. Juma Al Kait, **welcoming authority who opened the Forum**, representing H.E. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of United Arab Emirates' Climate Change and Environment;
- H.E. Mrs. Estelle Ondo, Gabon's Ministry of Forest Economy, Fishing and Environment, in charge of the preservation and sustainable management of ecosystems;
- Mrs. Lucie Berger, from the European Union Delegation in Abu Dhabi.

They all delivered an opening speech, presenting the commitments of their countries or regions regarding environment, climate change or legality in the timber trade.

### Thanks

ATIBT would like to thank all the people who made possible this Forum by hosting us in Dubai, and in particular:

- H.E. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of United Arab Emirates' Climate Change and Environment, and H.E. Juma Al Kait, Deputy Under-Secretary of the United Arab Emirates' Ministry of Economy,
- Mr. Dawood Al Shezawi, President of Annual Investment Meeting and of Dubai WoodShow
- Mr. Walid Farghal, Managing Director of Annual Investment Meeting and of Dubai WoodShow, along with his team.

We would also like to extend our warmest thanks to the official authorities and delegations who attended the Forum and who contributed a great deal thanks to their presence and contributions. In addition to the above-mentioned hosting authorities, we would like to mention:

- Gabon's Ministry of Water and Forests delegation, led by H.E. Mrs. Estelle Ondo, Mr. Simplicie Nteme, Deputy Managing Director of Forests and Mrs. Nathalie Nyare, FLEGT Focal Point,
- COMIFAC's authorities, Mr. Raymond Ndomba Ngoye, Executive Secretary, and Mr. Gervais Ludovic Itsoua Madzous, Deputy Executive Secretary,
- Cameroon's Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife delegation, Mr. Mahamat Habibou, Director of Timber Promotion and Processing, Mr. Justin Gerard Atangana, Director of the Timber Promotion Centre and Mr. Frederic Vasseur, Head technical consultant,
- the European Union delegation, Lucie Berger, Head of the Trade/Economic Department in Abu Dhabi.

Donors, NGOs and research centres were also important partners of this Forum. All of them provided financial assistance as well as proactive proposals. Thus, the European Union (EU), the French Development Agency (AFD), the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and the Programme for the Promotion of Certified Forest Operations (PPECF), itself financed by the KFW, were top-tier supporters in terms of donors. Thanks to their varied contributions, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC), the University of Gembloux and the CIRAD, in particular, enabled this event to be held and the debates to be rich in terms of information.

### Hosting and languages of the debates

The debates were moderated by Jean-Marie Noiraud and simultaneously translated into both French and English.

### Forum duration: 2.5 days

On Saturday 4 March, the eve of the Forum, the ATIBT board of directors meeting was held, followed by a welcome cocktail at the Conrad Hotel, the Forum's venue, to welcome participants and facilitate contacts.

ATIBT's General Assembly meeting was held on Sunday 5 March. The Forum then started at 10:45.

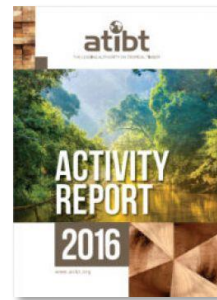
### Items and documents handed out to participants

In terms of communications, and in addition to a "forum" kit (entry badge, computer pouch, etc.), participants were given a number of documents:

- **ATIBT 2016 Activity report**, A 60-page (x2), bilingual French/English publication presenting ATIBT and its achievements in 2016, prefaced by Robert Hunink, President of ATIBT, and Benoît Jobbé Duval, General Manager of ATIBT.

This report presents the Association's work team, ATIBT's various work programmes, with a focus on its technical activities, the marketing of tropical timber, the sustainable management of tropical forests and the FLEGT-EUTR mechanisms, which, once again, were key during the Dubai Forum.

[Download ATIBT 2016 Activity report](#)



- The **ATIBT 2017 Directory**, a 80-page bilingual French/English publication presenting the 120 ATIBT members by category and with great detail: logo, country, activity, contact info. ATIBT's members come from a variety of backgrounds, both professionally and geographically. They are professionals in tropical forest management, engineering and consulting firms, trade unions, as well as donors, and some states (Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Central African Republic).

[Download 2017 ATIBT Directory](#)

- The **bilingue Guide of the Forum**, 24 pages, with the program and practical information on the Forum and the Dubai WoodShow, prefaced by His Excellency Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates and Mr. Robert Hunink, President of the ATIBT.
- This guide offers a review of the history of the forum and the reasons why this 20<sup>th</sup> edition was held in the United Arab Emirates.

[Download the Guide of the Forum ATIBT](#)



Other documents were distributed during the Forum, including a brochure published by ATIBT (as part of the FLEGT-REDD project) outlining the opportunities REDD+ presents for the private sector. This study, which was conducted by ONFi, reviews the steps that are required to set up a REDD+ project and to obtain certification for the voluntary carbon markets. In addition, it presents some case studies, including both obstacles and opportunities, and it also provides advice for those who want to be a part of this system.

[Download the study \(in French\)](#)

## A REVIEW OF THE DISCUSSIONS

The Technical Forum was held on Sunday 5 March, with the presence of H.E. Mrs. Estelle Ondo, Gabon's Ministry of Forest Economy, Fishing and Environment, in charge of the preservation and sustainable management of ecosystems.

The official opening of the Forum took place on Monday 6 March in the presence of H.E. Juma Al Kait, Deputy Under-Secretary of the United Arab Emirates' Ministry of Economy.

### SUNDAY 5 MARCH: TECHNICAL FORUM

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#### OPENING BY ROBERT HUNINK, PRESIDENT OF ATIBT



In his welcoming speech, Robert Hunink welcomed the joint organization of the Forum with the Dubai WoodShow, an excellent opportunity to strengthen existing commercial contacts and to enter into new business relationships. He recalled that Dubai would be hosting the World Expo 2020 and that this could be an opportunity for ATIBT African producer members to introduce the lesser known species. He also pointed out that the Emirati authorities were particularly interested in the issue of the legality in the timber trade. Robert Hunink then recalled the economic value of forests to

governments, people, businesses, service providers, National Park managers and universities to insist on the fact that the implementation of sustainable and responsible forest management was the only guarantee of forest preservation.

In this context, he explained that Motion 65 on Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL) was the biggest challenge for FSC-certified companies because its application as such would endanger them, and cause a decline in employment and infrastructures, and thus social tensions, and a reduction of financial resources for the states, and the villages and surrounding populations. This motion could lead to the abandonment of FSC certification, which is today synonymous with excellence. The ATIBT, together with the group of certified companies in the Congo Basin, is conducting a discussion to find a solution with the FSC.

Robert Hunink ended his speech by encouraging all participants to take an active part in the debate on the theme **"Tropical forests: timber, and so much more"**

[See the text in its entirety](#)

#### SPEECH OF H.E. MRS. ESTELLE ONDO, GABON'S MINISTRY OF FOREST ECONOMY, FISHING AND ENVIRONMENT, IN CHARGE OF THE PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF ECOSYSTEMS.



H.E. Mrs. Estelle Ondo thanked the United Arab Emirates for this invitation and went on to remind us of Gabon's initiatives in terms of the sustainable management of tropical forests and the development of its products. The Minister referred to the Yaounde Declaration, which established the Commission of Central African Forest (COMIFAC) in order to harmonise policies, institutions, standards and taxation among member states. Gabon is highly concerned, as 88% of it is covered by forest, and the Head of State places great emphasis on the forest-timber sector in the Strategic Plan for Emerging Gabon (PSGE), via the "Green Gabon" and "Industrial Gabon" cornerstones, in order to make Gabon a "world leader in certified timber". With its forestry

code in effect since 2001, the country has committed itself to the sustainable management of its forest concessions, inciting loggers to become planners, and pursuing a production conversion objective that is increasing from 75% to 100%. Since 2009, the export of logs is prohibited, which means that loggers must at least proceed with a primary transformation of their production. Among other measures, a fund of 20 billion CFA francs was created to accelerate the industrialisation of the timber sector, which benefits companies that have an approved management or industrialisation plan. As a result, timber industry sales tripled between 2009 and 2014. The same growth was observed in terms of the production of sawing and veneering units. The furniture cluster in Nkok's Special Economic Zone should also boost the output of processed timber. The Minister reminded us of Gabon's commitment to the European Union's FLEGT negotiations to improve the governance of the forest-timber sector, and the generalisation of environmental impact studies for large-scale projects. Forest resources must also benefit the local communities. This is the Economy-Ecology-Social triptych. Mrs. Estelle Ondo also brought up the fact that forest stakeholders are Gabon's full partners in its approach, in particular to combat illegal timber and develop the industrial base. Among other things, the new forestry code will be implemented and a private centre for the promotion of Gabonese timber - including secondary species - will be created. As part of a "win-win" scenario, Estelle Ondo calls on ATIBT and technical and financial partners to support the implementation of training frameworks that aim to support a more extensive policy of timber industrialisation.

[See the speech in its entirety \(French\)](#)

## SESSION 1 – THE FUTURE OF TROPICAL FOREST AND ITS POPULATION

### Theme 1.1 – The new challenges of forest management in Central Africa



#### **Roland POURTIER, Paris 1 – Sorbonne University**

##### [Populations and forests in the Congo Basin](#)

Forests are dynamic eco-anthroposystems. In addition to trees, they also represent humans, and they therefore require a holistic approach. Those in the Congo Basin are relatively protected by low human densities. Between pygmy hunter-gatherers, Bantu growers, conservation NGOs and loggers, complementarities of use are possible when a governance adapted to multi-player systems allows for the sustainable exploitation of resources on shared spaces. This is possible as long as demographic pressure and land coveting do not jeopardise fundamental ecosystem balances. Thanks to their experience (and ecological awareness, for some), loggers can play a leading role in a renewed approach to the exploitation of forest resources, from the local scale to the global scale.

**Jean-Louis DOUCET, Gembloux Agro-BioTech Liège University**

[To more sustainable logging rules: a synthesis of first operational results of the DynAfFor project](#)

The life of a tree does not resemble that of a quiet, peaceful river... the results of the DynAfFor project show that at every stage of its development, a tree is subjected to many constraints. By reconstructing their growth history, it has been demonstrated that commercial heliophilic species were mainly regenerated in fields that were opened in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their growth, their age of maturity, their pollination and their dispersal are aspects that are significantly influenced by environmental conditions. Consequently, the use of management parameters and management methods adapted to the various types of forests should be advocated.

**Gijs BREUKINK, WWF**

[Vision of WWF on forest management and IFL](#)

Mr. Breukink presented the 2020 targets for WWF: a natural forest degradation rate approaching zero, the end of greenhouse gas emissions from forests, protection of at least 17% of Forest areas and 260 million hectares certified or well managed.

In Congo Basin, the main cause of deforestation is coal production and smallholders agriculture. The exploitation of wood is of course another, especially if it is illegal. There is a need to transform the forest sector by improving the management of timber production and using it more reasonably to meet the needs of humanity while limiting the carbon footprint. The lines of work are varied: encourage responsible procurement, strengthen rules to improve forest management, increase audit and certification, improve the carbon footprint of timber production and have more responsible consumption. WWF believes in the high conservation value inherent in IFLs and is committed to improving their protection in FSC forests, but this should be done in order to maintain the sustainability of this certification system in countries with a high proportion of IFLs.

## **Theme 1.2 – Model of the forest concessions in the Congo basin – Current considerations and debates**



**Alain KARSENTY, CIRAD**

[The concept of concessions 2.0](#)

In Central Africa, concessions lead to the development of specialised spaces where concessionaires and local populations are mutually exclusive. Faced with this practice, the CIRAD sees the possibility of a new type of multi-purpose and multi-user forest concession: a "Concession 2.0". It recognises the customary spaces within and around the concession through participatory mapping. It organises the sharing of revenues from logging according to the size of the customary areas and the contracts signed with the communities. It is authorised to develop non-lumber resources in association with the local populations. It establishes a governance that is shared between the various players. Lastly, it favours the emergence of community concessions, exclusive spaces that can potentially be associated with industrial concessions. In order to see an evolution of this new vision of territorial forest development, which combines inclusive management and exclusive rights, one must mobilise the support of public assistance for its development and for the laws to be updated.



**Emmanuel GROUTEL, Wale**

[A certain vision of concessions. Assessment of opportunities](#)

What are the opportunities and challenges that concessionaires are exposed to? What recommendations should be made to ensure that concessions meet current challenges: profitability, respect of communities and biodiversity, climate change, demographics, local market needs, and even the completion of tasks normally undertaken by governments?

Contextualising the subject, taking into account demographic aspects, local needs and other land uses, Emmanuel Groutel shared his vision based on feedback from both professionals and stakeholders.

If the need to improve the concession system and the development of these concessions is indeed established, one must be able to proceed gradually, without rushing, by putting the States at the heart of the debates. The subject is highly technical, and the situation cannot progress if it is subject to any sort of pressure. Care must be taken to ensure that the State's services, which are usually kept in place by the concessionaires, are not destroyed by hazardous measures. In order for this to be possible, concessions must be economically viable in order to create wealth for the communities, preserve research efforts and organise logistics (roads, railways, bridges, etc.). The idea is to preserve the environment while creating value.

**Hervé BOURGUIGNON, Moringa**

[Agroforest projects associated with forest concessions](#)

Forest concessions can play an important role in preserving the social and environmental value of forests. However, this role is not yet fully recognized and concessions must replace the States. Redistribution for payment of environmental services is difficult to obtain and concessions may have limited profitability. However, within or adjacent to concessions, available land (degraded forest, communal land or even undeveloped land) offering opportunities. Agroforestry projects should be seen as improving the use of land because:

- they provide more wood, cash and stable harvests, and allow the involvement of communities;
- a plantation of 1000 hectares can produce 20 000 m3 per year. Transformation is less complicated;
- Communities can provide production without having to buy land.

**Signing of the Convention of the P3FAC projet between FFEM and ATIBT with Mrs. Aurélie AHMIM RICHARD (Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial – French Facility for Global Environment)**



FFEM and ATIBT signed a financing agreement of 2 million euros for the implementation of the P3FAC project, a public-private partnership to sustainably manage the forests of Central Africa. The project will consolidate five years of new scientific data on forest dynamics and mobilize the public and private actors of the sector around the results of this research in favor of more sustainable forestry policies.

[More info and download the FFEM-ATIBT press release of 27 February 2017](#)

### Theme 1.3 – Valuation of related products



#### Patrick MARTIN, ATIBT Technical Expert

##### [Introduction](#)

Related products are an environmental as well as an economic issue. Today, 50% of the timber volumes extracted from the forest are not processed in sawmills (the waste may even be expensive for the company), or are poorly exploited (related products). The conventional qualitative African timber classification rules, which are rarely observed, could however improve material yields, especially with the [SATA rules](#). Unfortunately, professionals have not adopted these rather revolutionary rules, which require decisive marketing support. The production of new products from smaller elements (finger-jointed timber, glued laminated finger joints, reconstituted floorboards, etc.) only increases material yields by a few percent and the markets are difficult. The recycling of energy is carried out either by making a fuel that is transportable and, if possible, exportable (chips, briquettes, pellets, coal, etc.) or by producing energy that can be used on site by the sawmill through cogeneration. In the long term, this technology can save a lot of money by getting rid of cumbersome materials, but its implementation also represents an important investment.

#### Vincent MANAUT, Cabinet MERLIN

##### [Cogeneration projects in Africa](#)

Two possibilities for the recycling of timber industry by-products are the production of energy and the production of fuel. In terms of energy production, the steam turbine and the ORC module are the most suitable technologies for the needs of Africa's timber players. Autonomous energy production reduces the production costs of timber companies and it generates additional revenues. The amortisation of the investment and the regulatory context are key points that determine the feasibility of such installations. For the production of fuels, the markets for industrial chips and pellets are the most favourable. However, full control of product quality and the establishment of a logistics chain, as well as the need to find prospects for the sale of the fuel, are key success factors that need to be rigorously evaluated.

#### Alexandre VALETTE, Science

##### [Production of charcoal and outlook](#)

SCIENCE Sprl (a private limited liability company) launched in 1973, specialising in the promotion and management of technology transfers in the fields of renewable energies and energy savings from trade between Europe and the ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean and Asia-Pacific). In 1993, it expanded its activities to charcoal production and import into Europe. At present, timber waste is burned in the open air. A significant portion of this timber waste can be directly recycled into charcoal and exported,

provided that it is calibrated and labelled. The carbonisation technology advocated by Science Sprl has advantages over the metal furnaces that are traditionally used: a limited investment, higher yields, greater control and it is safer for the environment. This technology enables one to control the flow of timber charcoal production (via flow sheets). Due to the low density of charcoal, containers can be completely filled. Although Europe's charcoal market has several constraints - packaging, local legislation, transport, traceability - it nevertheless remains profitable.

### CONCLUSIONS OF THE SESSION 1 THE FUTURE OF THE TROPICAL FOREST AND IST POPULATION

How can we effectively address the issues brought up during the discussions, in particular the effective preservation of tropical forests, while taking into account needs linked to employment, timber and social and economic development?

As highlighted in the exchanges of this session, **scientific work must be pursued** within the timber industry to ensure that it is always more exemplary and constantly improve its principles for the sustainable management of tropical forests, with the greatest respect for its population and its future. **The development of forest plantations, agroforestry, but also the best valorisation of related products are also plans for the future to make this activity more diversified and robust.** There is no doubt that many opportunities exist, but it is also necessary to ensure that they are profitable.

More generally, **a vision at the level of the territory is necessary.** The integration of the political, social, environmental and entrepreneurial aspects of the various sectors must be pursued. The work must be carried out under the aegis of the States and be inclusive through dialogue between different sectors and other actors in the private sector and civil society. It should be noted, however, that the negotiations on the FLEGT, which will be discussed in detail later, have allowed these parties to know each other better and learn to talk to each other over the last few years, but these exchanges must continue intensively. **Planning and planning are fundamental in helping to map forest areas** and designate optimal areas where sustainable forest management, agroforestry, forest plantations and other man-made productions can coexist while protecting what is agreed upon 'High Conservation Values'. In this way, the difficult question of PFI / IFL, or "intact forest landscapes", which is currently being debated, can be dealt with effectively.

**Thus, ATIBT and WWF (Russia) recently proposed to the FSC a landscape Motion** so that reflection on development or conservation issues ceases to be purely on a "mosaic" level. This is a new approach based on the identification and conservation of High Conservation Values throughout the territory and not only in FSC-certified forest management areas. This approach must be comprehensive and balance the environmental, social and economic objectives of sustainable forest management. It must lead to the best choices in the development and protection of higher value forest areas. A rapprochement must take place between forestry sector and other sectors, to exchange on this subject.

This will enable us to move forward towards a "green forest economy".

## SESSION 2 – TRAINING IN THE TIMBER PROFESSIONS



### **Christophe DU CASTEL, AFD**

#### ***Analysis of the situation. The PARAFE program.***

Mr. Du Castel delivered an introduction on the indisputable needs for vocational training in the timber industry. The AFD has supported several projects in this area over the past few years, notably the PARAFE project, in partnership with the RIFFEAC. This system needs to be re-examined and benefit from greater involvement by the private sector.

### **Patrick MARTIN, ATIBT**

#### **Training by professionals**

ATIBT members provide many training courses in order to meet the needs of professionals. ATIBT is able to directly offer training on general knowledge about tropical timber, CE marking and timber classification. Among the institutions and people who are ATIBT members and who conduct training activities, at the university level, are the following: the University of Gembloux, the CIRAD and the ERAIFT. Some suppliers of materials and products also provide training services: FOREZIEENNE (sharpening), TERMOLEGNO (dryer operating), LONZA (processing), IA'S (forest inventories). ONFI, FRM and TERE, all of which are service providers, also provide training (forest planning, low-impact logging, etc.). In addition, a few individual ATIBT members provide training at various levels: Mr. Anquetil (carpentry), Mr. De La Rochefordiere (forestry, certification, EUTR compliance), Mr. Creti (industrial installations and processes), Mr. Devillard (classification), Mr. Jamet (decking and cladding) and Mr. Le Flécher (sharpening). Lastly, due to a lack of qualified technicians in the market that can meet their needs, all forestry companies carry out professional in-house training. The establishment of training centres specialising in timber in Africa is difficult. As such E-learning courses (remote training) are an option that needs to be seriously considered.

### **Patrick CHARPENTIER, ENSTIB**

#### **The possible support from ENSTIB to vocational timber training in Africa**

The "Trades and Qualifications Campuses" are training modules that bring together, in a single location or within a network, secondary and higher education establishments, as well as initial or continuing training schools. They are built around a cutting-edge sector of activity that is associated with a national or regional economic stake that is supported by the community and companies. The first Campus of trades and qualifications specialised in timber was established in Lorraine, with a focal point at the ENSTIB, in Epinal (France), which steers the training activities. It includes Apprenticeship Training Centres, Vocational Schools, Adult Continuing Education Centres, University Institutes of Technology and Engineering Schools. All of the industry's professional sectors are covered: silviculture and forestry, primary and secondary processing, crafts, construction, timber energy and thermal performance of buildings. For each of these sectors, training at all levels is provided, in particular training courses that lead to certification, vocational baccalaureate diplomas and higher technician certificates. These courses are taught in vocational schools or in Apprenticeship Training Centres. Other types of training

are nevertheless available such as professional licenses or engineering degrees, with 2 engineering schools located in France (AgroParisTech and ENSTIB). Currently, there are 52 diploma courses provided to 4,000 learners!

**Pierre-Jean DUREL, Forézienne**

[The sharpening training](#)

With over 40 years of experience, the Forézienne company is a world leader in the supply of timber cutting equipment and a sharpening specialist. Forézienne's strengths lie in the diagnoses, support and follow-up of its clients. In light of this policy, training needs were quickly identified and a team of 6 trainers was established. One of the leading causes of sawing problems is that tools are damaged because they remain too long on the machine. At one point, the wear becomes exponential and leads to an increase in power consumption, a reduction in material yields, a declining quality of the sawing and the overall productivity of the sawmill. A sharpener must not only be familiar with the equipment, he or she must also know how to adjust it and master sharpening technique, and also, above all, estimate the duration of use before re-sharpening. Communication between the sharpener and the sawyer is therefore crucial. The training courses provided by Forézienne are based on trainee involvement: a trainee needs to be able to comment on his or her actions in order to retain "know-how". Training in sharpening, which focuses on active teaching, is split into 8 progressive modules to help sawmill owners control their sharpening costs and increase their sawing volumes per blade.

**Christian HUBER, Ecowood**

[Vocational diploma training courses in Gabon](#)

Christian Huber discussed the development of the timber economy and other high-priority economic sectors through the introduction of a market-oriented vocational training system, in accordance with the principles of dual training. Initial dual training encourages the professional integration of young Gabonese trainees and is in line with the needs of the private sector for well-trained polyvalent professionals. Technician and engineer training contributes both to a greater attractiveness of vocational training and to the development of the Gabonese economy. In 2009, Gabonese authorities expressed their willingness to transform timber locally by prohibiting the export of logs. The timber sector (forestry and processing) is Gabon's largest private sector employer (in terms of number of jobs). Vocational training is identified as a key component in the broadening of the value chain.

The 2010 forum in Libreville promoted the dual learning system, due to its focus on the needs of the labour market. Three conventions were signed in 2010:

- Implementation of the dual system in timber professions with the BFH in Bienne (Switzerland)
- Transfer of know-how and technologies with various Swiss companies
- Construction of the Technical College for Timber Professions (ESBB) in Booué

The significant benefits obtained over the last three years may be lost, though, given the lack of ongoing financing (100% by the State).

**Blandine OUOGUIA, GFBC (Groupement de la Filière Bois au Cameroun)**

***Cameroon experience***

The forest logging and processing industry represents a significant source of employment in Congo Basin countries and it contributes approximately 7% to the GDP. Since 2015, the Cameroon Timber Industry Group (GFBC) is working with the RIFFEAC to implement the PARAFE project to carry out a study on the analysis of the sector's training needs. The project has yet to establish the needed training courses and the benefits of the project are highly mixed at this time. Training in the forestry sector has long been provided by the companies themselves ("on-the-job training") to respond urgently to internal needs or to market requirements. Beyond formal and long-term training, companies need customised training solutions that take into account the profiles of the workers (10% of the workforce consists of indigenous workers with very little skills). There are a variety of needs in the following areas: Logging, Processing, Hygiene/Safety/Environment, Transport, Road Construction and Maintenance.

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE SESSION 2 TRAINING IN THE TIMBER PROFESSIONS

**Vocational training - mentioned as a priority** in the speech by Gabon's Minister of the Forest Economy - conditions the viability of investments in the timber sector. It is crucial to further develop skills in the timber sector, especially in countries where the oil sector offers more attractive salaries. The programmes implemented in recent years have not delivered the expected results.

Traditionally, ATIBT members have been providing training to meet the needs of professionals. In order to fill the training gap in the Congo Basin, **the recently formed ATIBT Training Committee will match "supply" and "demand"** by means of simple and pragmatic systems, as part of a training engineering approach.

A work programme will be proposed by ATIBT's Training Committee, which will address the following main objectives: to confirm the short/medium-term training needs of companies in the sector and enhance the training engineering capabilities of a team of local experts in order to ensure the quality of future training, **meet the needs of companies through the establishment of appropriate training courses and work in collaboration with guardianships in charge of public training policies.**



### SESSION 3 – LEGALITY, CERTIFICATION, GLOBAL WARMING AND RESPONSIBLE PURCHASE OF TIMBER

#### ATIBT/FFEM film “How to preserve tropical forests” (3 min)

*This video shows, in a simple and pedagogical way, the challenges of sustainable and responsible forest management, the certification of the forest companies exercising this management and the role of each player in the preservation of tropical forests.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UNPGIJBjVc>

#### Theme 3.1 – Legality

#### General presentation of FLEGT program and its interest for UAE authorities

#### H.E. JUMA AL KAIT, Deputy Under-Secretary of the United Arab Emirates’ Ministry of Economy

[The objectives of UAE on the regulation of the timber trade](#)



HE Mr. Juma Al Kait made a reminder about international initiatives in favor of the environment and sustainable development in recent years, which had led to very positive results, particularly in combating illegal logging, and implementing policies and regulations on timber imports. In the United States the Lacey Act in 2008, in the European Union the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) action plan, the implementation of the EUTR and the due diligence system in 2013, and In Japan, the "Green Konyuho" or "Goho Wood" system, to guarantee the legal provenance of the wood.

The United Arab Emirates are a regional and global trading platform that offers many advantages for business: strategic location between East and West, at the crossroads of markets in the Middle East, North and South Africa, Asia Pacific and the Community of Independent States (CIS), world-class infrastructure, skilled labor, easy of access by air. This also applies to the trade in timber and its products, which are direct imports, or re-exported to ports and industrial areas.

According to the International Trade Center, the UAE ranks among the 30 largest importers of timber in 2015, with \$ 1.33 billion in imports (+ 10% from 2014), of which \$ 250 million are re-exported. For the first nine months of 2016, this amounts to \$ 920 million and \$ 147 million, respectively. Its main partners are China, Malaysia, Romania, Germany, Thailand, Oman and Austria. Over the past five years,

the timber trade has increased by an average of 3% and in 2016 it is estimated at \$ 138 billion. The UAE and its partners in the Gulf countries are committed to ensuring that all timber is legal and certified, and appreciate the contribution of the various stakeholders present today in advancing this issue in the Middle East, mainly on traceability.

**Lucie BERGER, European Delegation in Abu Dhabi**

[FLEGT action plan](#)

Lucie Berger was pleased that the discussion had taken place on the link between forest governance and illegal logging, deforestation and climate change, which is important in the context of the development agenda of 2030 and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

According to FAO estimates 2015, about 7.6 million hectares of forests are destroyed every year in the world, which has an environmental, social and economic impact. It is estimated that more than 1.6 billion people depend on forest resources. Forests are wood, fiber and food, as well as diverse ecosystems with high biodiversity, with a significant role in the carbon cycle.



Over one year, deforestation represents more greenhouse gas emissions than the total economy of the European Union. Deforestation in tropical areas is often the result of poor land use governance, linked to an insufficient legal and institutional framework. More than 80% of tropical deforestation is due to agricultural expansion for staple commodities (soya, palm oil, rubber, cocoa and livestock products), of which the EU is a major consumer. This conversion is often illegal. It is therefore necessary to improve forest governance in order to achieve the REDD +, EU and Paris Agreement objectives, which are sometimes overlooked by countries in the context of climate change.

Lucie Berger then summarized the EU's Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, which was adopted in May 2003 to combat illegal logging by supporting governance in producing countries and combating illegal timber trade in EU consumer countries, but also more widely. One of the core elements of FLEGT is the VPA (Voluntary Partnership Agreements) requiring the implementation of a FLEGT licensing scheme for legal verified timber. To date, 6 countries have committed to these agreements and Indonesia is the first country to export wood with FLEGT licenses to the EU (Ghana could follow soon). Another key element of the FLEGT action plan is the EUTR (EU Timber Regulation), which obliges operators to put in place a system of due diligence to reduce the risk of illegal wood in their supply chain (the FLEGT license simplifies this requirement since it is recognized as proof of legality). An evaluation by the European Court of Auditors and by an independent body showed that FLEGT action plan produced significant results, and could still be more effective with adjustments. One lesson is that the participatory and multi-stakeholder approach is fundamental.



## European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR)



**Ed PEPKE, EU FLEGT Facility, European Forest Institute (EFI) – Dovetail Partners, Inc**

[Timber trade and FLEGT action plan : impact of the market forces and of the government policies on the trade of tropical timber](#)

Tropical timber exports, both globally and to the EU, fluctuated between 1990 and 2004 and then began to decline even before the global economic crisis of 2008, which accelerated the decline. Since the low point in 2009, exports have rebounded, but have not reached previous levels. The current state of the EU economy is not conducive to a recovery and the concerns of EU importers and consumers regarding the legality and durability of tropical timber have also had a negative impact on imports.

It is nevertheless interesting to point out that imports of timber and timber products from the 15 producing countries that signed a VPA/FLEGT with the European Union have been showing signs of recovery since 2013 (even though exports to the EU by the 8 African countries that signed a VPA have continued to decline since the crisis, to the benefit of new destinations such as Southeast Asia). The first timber items covered by a FLEGT license arrived in the EU market in November 2016 from Indonesia.

Implementation of the EUTR may have led to initial hesitations in 2013-2014, as logging operations were still developing their due diligence systems. But thanks to strong support from European trade associations in favour of legal (and sustainable) imports, this regulation is no longer an obstacle.

In addition, four other countries have introduced legislation similar to the EUTR (Australia, Japan, South Korea and the United States), and they are having a positive impact on the legal and sustainable timber trade. Together, the EU and these four countries account for over half of China's exports and a third of China's imports of timber and paper products. They are therefore a key way to obtain proof regarding the legality of the sources of Chinese timber imports, as well as China's exports to their countries. It should be noted that China is moving towards similar policies.

Public procurement policies also favour the import of legal and sustainable timber.

**André DE BOER, ETTF/STTC**

***EUTR : private sector experience***

The ETTF is the European timber trade federation, which promotes the interests of timber trade in Europe, representing key national federations of importers, traders and distributors. It finds that the trade of illegal timber is bad for business, for fair trade, and for the image of the sector and its players. The ETTF implements measures to eradicate this situation by supporting the implementation of the EUTR. To this end, the ETTF and ATIBT have announced a partnership to develop and update a platform that provides information on the legality of the main tropical timber producing countries. This platform - the Timber Trade Portal - is already available and offers 23 country profiles

([www.timbertradeportal.com](http://www.timbertradeportal.com)), and will be financed by the FLEGT-REDD project implemented by ATIBT.

However, private companies still have a hard time implementing this regulation, and they are calling for greater harmonisation in its implementation at the European level. In particular, it is suggested that competent authorities should receive greater support, so that their inspections become more rigorous over time.

Some EU countries have already taken action against companies that have not adopted the regulation. For example, an administrative court in Sweden found that a company had failed to apply due diligence for timber from Burma, and this first decision had a very strong impact on that country. The Netherlands have also initiated legal proceedings against a timber importing company for breach of its "due diligence" obligation, following a Greenpeace investigation of various companies, in particular in Cameroon.

**Marie VALLÉE, WRI/GFW**

***Open Timber Portal : a tool to improve the transparency in the forest sector***

As part of its Forest Transparency Initiative program, WRI is developing a public information platform to make documents and information related to the legality of forest companies available. For the moment, this tool focuses on Central Africa, with Congo as a pilot country. The technical development of the portal is underway and the issues are managing data collection, interacting with other initiatives (such as the Timber Trade Portal), and promoting the tool to key users, including Governments, private sector and civil society.

**Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA)**

**Blandine OUOGUIA, GFBC (Forestry Syndicate in Cameroon) et Jack SOH NDEH**

***Private sector experience with VPA : traceability project***

Led by the GFBC and with \$72,289 of funding from the EU-FAO FLEGT Programme, the 9-month *project to improve and develop forestry traceability systems via mobile technologies* aims to simplify the gathering of information in lumber yards and improve communication on traceability. This project is part of an experimental approach leading to a model that can be used by administrations and private sector companies to simplify the gathering of data and access to traceability data.

Four companies were selected for the experimental phase, and 6 months after the start of the project initial findings have already been identified:

- Time saved in terms of data entry, and improved management of data flows thanks to mobile technologies,
- Fast access to data,
- Geo-referenced trees that can be traced on mobile platforms or on the Internet.

The next step is to highlight these tools at the end-customer level.

**Jacqueline LARDIT-VAN DE POL, ATIBT**

***Legality and global warming***

The European Union's FLEGT action plan and the REDD+ mechanism seek to combat deforestation and environmental degradation while striving to improve the distribution of forest benefits. However, the sources of financing and the interference strategies for implementation in the producer countries vary. Thus, six countries in Central and Western Africa have already signed FLEGT VPAs with the European Union and are in the implementation phase, while the main forest countries of Central and Western Africa have submitted their INDC (Intended Nationally Determined Contribution) documents to reduce global warming. But only Cameroon, Gabon and the Central African Republic have ratified the Paris Agreement (COP21), their planned contribution thus becomes a determined contribution at the national level (a CDN).

As far as the implementation of projects for these two mechanisms is concerned, it would be desirable to have a harmonised approach, both in terms of FLEGT partner country administrations and donor

countries (such as, for example, Congo's Palladium Group's initiative to organise meetings with stakeholders involved in both processes).

It is also proposed that support and financial resources to combat climate change should be made available both for plantation projects and to help forestry companies or community forests protect their forests from degradation.

### Theme 3.2 – Private initiatives for the responsible purchase of timber



**Caroline DUHESME, ATIBT**

#### ***Comparison of approaches and impacts between FLEGT and certification***

The FLEGT process and private forest certification have a common purpose: the improvement of forest management. However, they are different tools, the first being a political and regulatory one, which aims to combat illegal timber trade, and the latter a market tool that promotes improved forestry practices. These two processes encounter difficulties in terms of their implementation in the Congo Basin, resulting in a decline in the dynamic that was initiated around 15 years ago. Moreover, it is regularly mentioned that a phenomenon of "competition" could exist between the two.

There are, however, interactions and impacts between these two processes. In particular, the VPAs make it possible to clarify the regulatory framework and to improve transparency in the sector, which facilitates certification efforts. The latter broadens sustainable management requirements in terms of social, economic and environmental sustainability at the local level, it promotes awareness of responsible forest management, it represents a testing ground for the FLEGT and it stimulates the private sector.

The challenges that current lie ahead for these two processes are:

- regaining a shared dynamic of implementation and development that is based on their complementarity and their differences;
- promoting the value of certification in the FLEGT process (recognition at the VPA level and within the EUTR).

**Anand PUNJA and Mathieu AUGER-SCHWARTZENBERG, FSC**

#### **[FSC news, FSC and IFL : a positive evolution ?](#)**

FSC has developed a Strategic Plan 2016-2020, whose objectives are in line with the challenges of tropical forests. The objective of FSC is also to strengthen the tropical contingent within the FSC community. Projects are also underway to develop marketing on tropical timber.

FSC reaffirms the reliability of its system in the Congo Basin and the benefits it has brought, especially at the social level (workers' well-being). At the regional level, the current challenges are:

- the IFLs: within the framework of the implementation of Motion 65, a forum is organized in Libreville in April (IFL Solution Forum) in order to establish an appropriate political context before technical solutions are implemented;
- the development of national standards in the Congo Basin.

### **Benjamin O KALU**

#### Low forest management in Nigeria: need of an immediate response by ATIBT and other international development agencies and NGOs

Benjamin O Kalu, whose presence at the Forum was due to an invitation from the FSC, made a noteworthy intervention by calling for Nigeria not to be largely forgotten about Africa's attention to sustainable management forests. Throughout the Forum, the common denominator of interventions and exchanges was people, the human. Yet there was no mention of Nigeria, which represents 200 million people, who could contribute to the ATIBT's effort to help Africa become more responsible. Nigeria is also a country of 92 million hectares of land, 10-12% of which is forest cover and 5% reserved for the protection of biodiversity, 445 reserves in 5 ecological zones (mangrove, rainforest, savanna ...), 2 million forest-related jobs, the majority of which are in charcoal and 80,000 in forestry in the south, and the largest market in Africa. It would therefore be in the interest of the ATIBT to include Nigeria in its mission. In 2005, Nigeria was declared by FAO as the country with the highest deforestation rate, with 55.7% primary forest loss at an annual rate of 3.5%. Forest cover has decreased from 17.2 million hectares in 1990 to 11 million hectares in 2005. The main cause is deforestation, followed by fires, accidental or not, illegal logging, rapid urbanization, firewood, drought and erosion, agriculture and oil spills, all this leading to loss of species and loss of biodiversity, erosion, changes in the water cycle, rejection of greenhouse gas emissions.

The solutions are reforestation with public-private partnerships, protection of the existing forest, alternative sources to charcoal and sensitization among the populations, with the contribution of both the public and private sectors. But also the help of ATIBT and other stakeholders, with their expertise, experience, network and resources. For example, ATIBT could have members in Nigeria who would have participatory observer status; Certification bodies such as FSC and PEFC could be more active in Nigeria, with offices and a resource center, and partnerships could be established between certified ATIBT members and Nigerian companies.

### **Françoise VAN DE VEN, UFIGA (Forest Syndicate in Gabon) / Rose ONDO, PAFC Gabon**

#### ***Situation of PAFC Gabon and roadmap for the Congo basin***

The PAFC was initiated in the mid-1990s, positioning itself as the forest certification system that integrates the socio-cultural and economic values and realities of forest management in Africa. This is why PAFC certification, in addition to being a market instrument, is also intended to be an instrument of forest governance and a tool to implement public policies.

The GABON PAFC initiative is the Gabonese version of the Pan African Forest Certification System; it was recognised by the PEFC in 2009. Currently, there are no Gabon PAFC certificates, but efforts are under way to accredit a certification body in order to initiate the first certification efforts.

Other countries are also - at different levels - currently considering or already taking steps to develop their own PAFC scheme:

- In Cameroon, the scheme is already developed, but it still needs to be translated into French before it can be recognised by the PEFC and implemented;
- In the Republic of Congo, a roadmap was proposed, and the PAFC Congo association was legally established. Its application for membership will be submitted to PEFC in 2017;
- In the Central African Republic, it is necessary to have discussions with the logging companies prior to the development of a structure;
- In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the approach is currently under consideration, but its implementation seems complex due to the current context.

The challenge facing the PAFC in the next few years is the development of a regional PAFC scheme, with the establishment of a single standard that integrates national interpretations. This type of

approach is widely supported by stakeholders, including private loggers. This would make it possible to have an alternative certification system that competes with the FSC, to optimise costs (development, accreditation, etc.) and to develop a marketing approach.

Development activities have been initiated, but there is still a need to generate awareness among both stakeholders and donors.

**Anne-Cécile CAPEL, ONF International (ONFi)**

[REDD+ opportunities study for the private sector](#)

The ONFi conducted a study on behalf of ATIBT in the context of the FLEGT-REDD project, which focused on the opportunities of REDD+ for the private sector. This study was an opportunity to outline the steps required to set up a REDD+ project, to present some case studies and also to offer advice for those integrating this mechanism. In addition, consideration given during the study highlighted the fact that voluntary carbon markets are losing ground, thereby threatening the profitability of such projects, but that new opportunities exist, with the recent signing of sector agreements (such as in civil aviation), and between countries and large funds backing the REDD+. In this context, it is therefore essential that forest concessions and plantations become involved in this mechanism, which is currently being set up in some countries, in particular by seeking to integrate projects providing shared social and environmental benefits, by soliciting outside funding and by relying on technical partners to help negotiate profits.

### CONCLUSIONS OF THE SESSION 3

#### LEGALITY, CERTIFICATION, GLOBAL WARMING AND RESPONSIBLE PURCHASE OF TIMBER

Despite a general decline in **imports of timber and tropical timber products into the European Union**, especially since the 2008 economic crisis, these imports **are increasing in countries that have committed to the APV/FLEGT process** since 2013. Enforcement of legislation similar to EUTR by other countries has a positive influence on a legal and sustainable timber trade.

European importers' associations have been heavily involved in promoting the import of legal timber and helping companies prepare their Due Diligence Systems. ATIBT and the ETTF collaborate to provide objective and up-to-date information via the **Timber Trade Portal**. Moreover, there is a need for greater harmonisation in the implementation of the EUTR between European authorities (legal monitoring).

On the producer side, several companies have invested in digital **traceability** systems and in **forest certification** to prove the sustainable and/or legal origin of their timber. These private initiatives are important for VPAs (LVS - legality verification system) and the EUTR (SDR) and will need to be appreciated as such. ATIBT is committed to ensuring that **FSC** certification remains economically viable and it supports the development of **PAFC** certification in the Congo Basin.

The participatory and multi-stakeholder approach of the VPA/FLEGT and REDD<sup>+</sup> processes is fundamental to their success. These processes are linked by their objective of proper forest governance. Greater harmonisation between the two processes (including support projects) is desirable. **Improved highlighting of the complementarity between the FLEGT and REDD+ mechanisms** could, for example, also help to finance verification systems/LVS. Similarly, complementarity with private certification, which is already subject to independent audits, could reduce verification costs.

Responsible tropical timber procurement policies have been discussed with various UAE contact persons and partners, including H.E. Juma Al Kait, Deputy Under-Secretary of the UAE Ministry of Economy, and Dubai WoodShow's management. For the record, the ATIBT Forum was held in Dubai at the initiative of local authorities. **Discussions will continue in order to further explore these subjects with the UAE.**

Lastly, a specific approach could be considered with **Nigeria**, in order to encourage the development of certification and initiatives for responsible timber procurement. The timber sector, and in particular that of timber-based energy, has major stakes involved in terms of both employment and economic activity.

## SESSION 4 – LOGISTICS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



### **Yann ALIX, General Delegate of SEFACIL Foundation**

#### ***Current challenges in the logistics and supply chain in tropical timber in the world***

The aim of the SEFACIL foundation is to address the changes that are influencing, disrupting and stimulating the structuring of international logistics networks. It is working in promising areas such as the competitiveness of transport corridors, logistics performance tools and methods, the terms of public/private partnerships in transport investment, new port governances and international logistics. Accordingly, during his presentation, Mr. Alix brought up 4 points:

- The consequences of the ratification of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) for emerging African countries. The TFA contains provisions to expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit; it also provides for effective cooperation between customs and other competent authorities for matters related to trade facilitation and compliance with customs procedures;
- The regionalisation of dematerialised regional economic ecosystems;
- The quality of port services and the scarcity of public investments in non-specialised terminals;
- The world's containerised shipping offer and its impact on so-called secondary roads and global supply chains.

### **Tarik EL FAROUKI, Regional Director Africa of DP World**

#### ***Existing infrastructures and services in Dubai region***

The importance of DP World is clear. The company - which is the world's third largest port operator, operating in 49 terminals and with plans to expand its activities to 12 others - is a subsidiary of Dubai World, a holding company owned by the Dubai government. Its presence in Africa is also significant in Algeria, Mozambique, Djibouti and Dakar. In Dubai, the ports of Jebel Ali and Rashid port offer facilities adapted to all needs.

Mr. El Farouki highlighted the non-competitiveness of African countries in terms of logistics, while 33% of the African population resides in landlocked countries. A serious imbalance therefore exists in terms of trade and commerce.

### **Stanislas DE SAINT LOUVENT, Deputy General Director of Bolloré Ports**

#### ***Ports and logistic corridors in Africa***

Leader in Africa and a historic player in the timber sector, Bolloré Ports wants to strengthen its current positions and continue its development. The main obstacles to the development of the timber industry are now scattered and distant production of ports, a diversity of actors and a lack of infrastructures. States and operators have therefore committed themselves to developing export corridors for timber expanding capacity, with the development of the ports of Douala (new quay), Pointe Noire (extension) and Brazzaville (rehabilitation). Alternative solutions will exist with the port of Kribi, a waterway

Bangui-Brazzaville / Kinshasa (Socatraf), the port of Oyo and the port of Bata (alternative). The positive impacts will be numerous, with a reduction in bottlenecks, increased export options, improved fluidity and reduced export costs. These investments will provide new options for business development. In addition, new services will be proposed to the timber industry, with logistics platforms between production sites and export port, centralized flows, wood storage, etc. These improvements will aim to reduce costs and delays (shorter rotation, optimization of loading and consolidation, reduction of storage time), and thus support to local processing and the national forest industry.

**Nicolas BAYOL, FRM**

[Improving the competitiveness and transport conditions of the timber industry in northern Congo](#)

Despite recent developments in transport infrastructures serving forest concessions in Northern Congo, the cost of transporting timber from the forests to the various export ports accounts for 50 to 70% of the FOB (free on board) cost, which strongly hampers the growth and diversification of production.

A study conducted in 2015-2016 shows that logistic savings of 25% would allow a group of forest products to cross the profitability threshold. The objective of this study was more generally to provide comparative socio-economic data on the various logistic corridors for the export of timber and timber products from northern Congo, namely: Pointe-Noire, Owando, Douala and Kribi. The study also aimed to identify a less costly transport axis and formulate proposals for actions to improve logistical conditions on this axis.

Funded by the Programme for the Promotion of Certified Forest Exploitation (PPECF) under the supervision of Congo's Ministry of the Forest Economy and Sustainable Development, this work was conducted by FRMi, and it therefore proposes a series of recommendations that aim to improve the competitiveness of Northern Congo timber.

[Download the full study](#)

**Didier RAUX, ATIBT**

[Key points of the actual maritime transport](#)

These key points are today the reliability of the resource, the reliability of the supply chain, the reliability of the shipowner, the reliability of the local agent, the transfer agent, insurance subscription and obtaining documents on time to destination to avoid additional storage expenses. Many shippers or buyers take high risks when they do not sign insurance to cover transportation. Without insurance, the holder of the bill of lading may be sued.



#### **CONCLUSIONS OF THE SESSION 4 LOGISTICS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

In all trade, logistics issues are omnipresent. At the forum, the various stakeholders involved in logging emphasised the magnitude of logistics costs in the timber industry as well as transport problems in general.

Africa is no exception to the rule. Roads and railways are either aging or non-existent. Given these logistical difficulties, forest production is often penalised. It must be able to rely on solutions and improvements as soon as possible. Unless transport offers improve and loading port approach costs are sharply reduced, some species will remain excluded from the market, unable to position themselves in relation to other species, whether they are from the tropical zone or from Europe.

It is with a great deal of common sense that some African states admit that they are unable to propose an improvement solution to its industrial players.

Scientists, researchers and transport professionals have provided details on the improvements to be expected in the long term. The privatisation of port terminals, railways and inland waterways are high-priority cases that will open up countries without maritime frontiers or will offer more economical solutions. French groups have entered into long-term agreements to resolve certain difficulties, such as restoring the river/railway via Brazzaville. As a result, the Central African Republic axis towards Pointe Noire will become an economic solution. Just as the road to Kribi, which will link production in north Cameroon or north Congo to the port of Kribi, will be a more economical solution than the current offers, not to mention the free port north of Libreville.

The Bolloré and Getma/Nécotrans groups and the shipping companies are aware that they have to assume their share of responsibility, and they all enter into agreements with the various governments. A positive outcome lies ahead for the timber industry.

**What emerges from the Dubai discussions is that the timber industry can count on ATIBT's support and that of its members and partners, all of whom are specialists that will communicate on the solutions that will become available thanks to these new agreements with governments.**

**In the coming months, a specific meeting on the oft-mentioned "new" corridors will be organised, most likely under the coordination of the newly created ATIBT Transport Committee.**

## SESSION 5 – AFRICAN TIMBER MARKET IN THE WORLD AND IN PARTICULAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

### Theme 5.1 – Progress report on the ATIBT Marketing Program



#### **Christophe DU CASTEL, AFD (Agence française de développement – French Agency for Development)** ***The objectives of this program***

Christophe du Castel affirms AFD's commitment to sustainable forest management in general, and its special support of ATIBT and its members. Timber is a living and renewable material that - if the forests are properly managed - represents the future. AFD contributes in particular to the financing of marketing activities aimed at changing the perception of tropical timber in the market and has been committed since 2015 to the funding of a 3-year marketing project that aims to: *"Carry out a project to develop the "African timber" sector in a sustainable and responsible manner through the promotion and the highlighting of the commercial value of its legal and certified products."*

#### **Christine LE PAIRE, Communication Manager and Coordinator of the ATIBT Marketing Program** ***The ATIBT Marketing Commission***

Christine Le Paire, who took over the marketing programme in early 2017, briefly reviewed the creation of the marketing programme and the committee. The marketing programme was established in 2015 by ATIBT and its members following a marketing study designed to better understand consumers' perception of tropical timber, and following the observation that it had a poor image or was misunderstood (including certified timber and its implications). This study was presented at the ATIBT Forum in Milan and led to the discussion of a slogan to carry "Fair & Precious" certified timber. 2015 and 2016 were dedicated to the establishment of the Committee, which consists of 10 members (Alpitimber, Interholco, Wale, Wijma, Rougier, Olam, CBG, CEB, Pasquet and LCB) and meets 4 times each year, usually at ATIBT's premises. Christine Le Paire thanked the members who, thanks to their active contributions and ideas, and their work in the workshop, helped lay the foundations for the Fair & Precious brand and develop important tools such as the iconographic and semantic charter. This committee also has a vocation to expand itself, in particular to the European federations. The year 2017 will be devoted to the deployment of the F&P brand and the *"African timber, much more than wood"* campaign, which inspired the Forum's overall theme, and to various actions that aim to improve the perception of tropical timber

#### **Bertrand FAUCON, Stratémark and Laurent LAGADEC, Links**

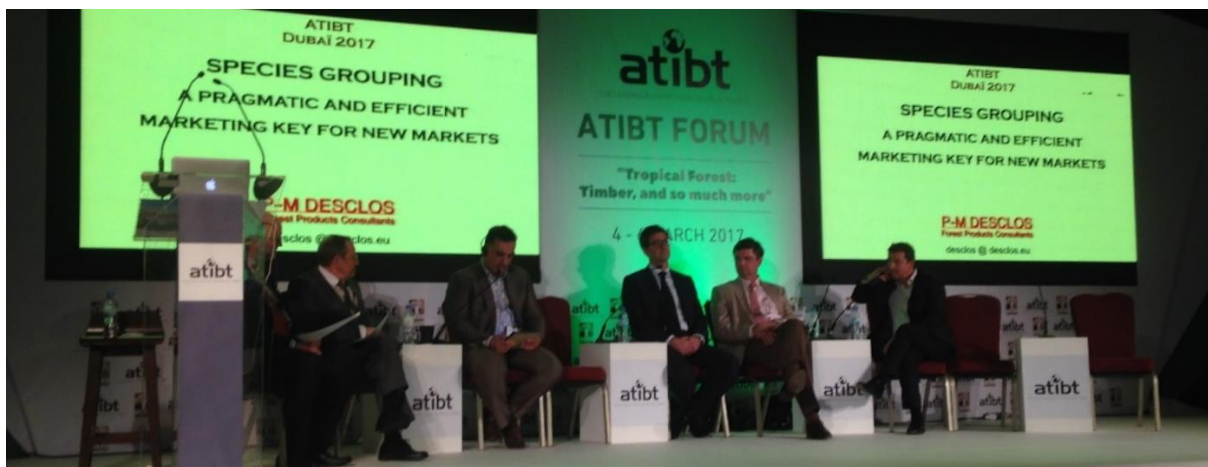
##### [Presentation of the actions led in 2016 and of the actions planned for 2017](#)

Since spring 2016, several founding tools have been developed, aiming to reposition the association and its members at the heart of the sector in order to optimize the impact of the program: refreshing

its identity and its graphic charter, Website, collaborative platform. Concerning the Fair&Precious brand, important actions have already been taken: filing of the trademark at the French and European level, drafting of the regulations for the use of the trademark, drafting of the semantic and iconographic charters, writing the Fair&Precious manifesto, creating of the campaign "African timber: more than timber", creation and development of the website "fair-and-precious.org". The year 2017 will focus on two components in order to promote the values and virtues of tropical timber in Europe and to enhance the image of forest companies in producing countries:

- Communication actions (development of the F&P website, communication kit, press and public relations, event communication, and partnerships and co-branding)
- The marketing actions (tropical timber site in 9 European countries on the model of boistropicaux.org (LCB / CIRAD), "DIY stores", "architects and project managers", "public buyers" "Targeted markets".

## Theme 5.2 – Tropical timber trade in the Middle East



### Mohamed MAULANA, President of Al Nibras Group

Established in 2005, the Nibras Group has a commercial portfolio that covers a wide range of businesses, including both design and construction, as well as timber commerce. The chairman of the group made a number of recommendations, which include a continued presence in Dubai and at the Dubai WoodShow, and he delivered serious messages in an industry where just about anything is said, and where a lack of professionalism is rampant.

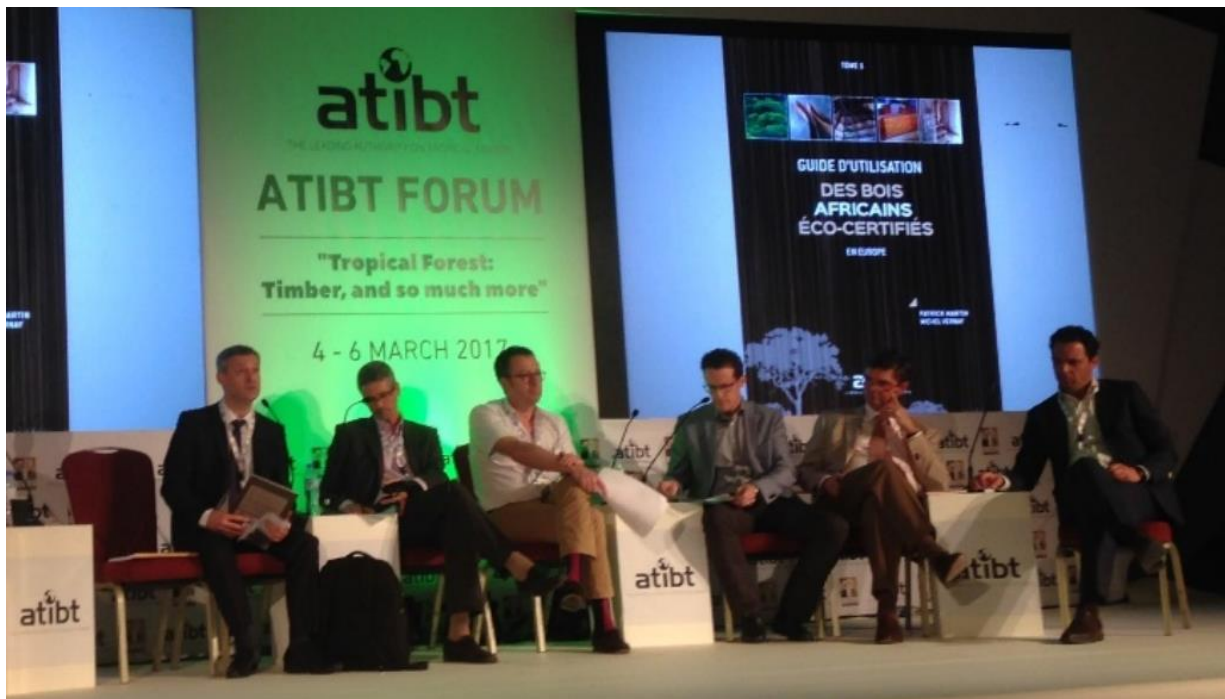
The Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) and the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA) are present and visible in the region.

### Pierre-Marie DESCLOS

#### The keys for companies based in Africa to conquer the Middle East market and LKTS

Collecting, sawing, processing and promoting Lesser Known Timber Species (LKTS) should be the first objective of the African forestry sector, as the benefits are numerous: better environmental management, better use of infrastructures, more rational forestry operations, significant growth of forestry potential and additional revenues. LKTS represent a large part of the forest inventory, however, critical mass must be reached to be of interest to exploit. One idea is to build up commercial mixes of species with similar properties, of the same kind or not. Today, finishes and techniques of construction allow to obtain homogeneous results with different essences. To do this, forest managers, laboratories and industry must be involved in the various phases of the process (inventory, characterization of species, group determination, industrial testing, marketing, promotion, distribution). This commercial tool has proved its effectiveness in North America and Asia.

## Theme 5.3 – Assets and qualities of tropical timber



### **Patrick MARTIN, Expert Technique de l'ATIBT**

#### ***Presentation of the “[Eco-Certified African Timber User Guide](#)”***

#### ***[Presentation of the LKTS 2020 project \(Lesser Known Timber Species\)](#)***

In 2016, ATIBT published the [Tropical Timber Nomenclature](#) and the [Eco-Certified African Timber User Guide](#) in Europe. The principle of the guide is to present timber in general, and the advantages of certified African timber, as well as European constructions, along with their requirements and the various species that are suitable for each type of use. Overall, this guide explains why tropical timber is appreciated and why its commercialisation helps safeguard the sustainably managed forests from which they originate. The tropical forest is characterised by great diversity and a very limited number of commercial species. The introduction of new species on the market prevents the systematic harvesting of the same species which, in the long term, threatens them with extinction. Previous generations selected species that featured the most interesting characteristics, but many evolutions have taken place since then (products, methods and techniques). Africa will soon demand a large quantity of timber with adequate characteristics. Despite the numerous studies that have been carried out on this issue, there are no reports of inventories, characterisation tests or reasons why the market has not accepted these LKTS (lesser known timber species). The marketing of these LKTS is based on 3 areas of knowledge: the resource, its technical properties and the markets. For the record, ATIBT and the SNCF (France's national railway company) are currently working on the identification of lesser known species for railway sleepers.

### **Benoît DEMARQUEZ, Terea**

#### ***The forest resource and the lesser known timber species***

Forestry in Central Africa sometimes exerts a great deal of pressure on some of the so-called main species, while the overall pressure on the entire forest massif remains low.

The many forest management plans developed in Central Africa over the past 20 years have revealed the enormous potential for so-called "secondary" or promotional species. The highlighting of these species is essential to ensure the profitability and sustainability of a logging operation. If this approach to resource diversification is to be accompanied by incentive policies, it must also be developed through a significant commercial effort and heightened awareness regarding the species' properties.

But it must not lose touch with the realities of the field: an analysis of the available resources, as well as the sustainability of their supply is essential. It must be carried out prior to any commercial approach. Moreover, only a regional approach can ensure of a sufficient impact on the markets that will offer new opportunities in a sustainable way.

**Emmanuel GROUTEL, Wale**

[Promotion of a lesser known timber species : \*the Gombé\*](#)

For Emmanuel Groutel, it is essential that we ensure a better distribution of the harvesting of the various species in forest concessions in order to preserve biodiversity, raise yield rates, minimise the harvesting of forests and create value for companies. The promotion of lesser-known species (LKTS) is also an improved way of taking into account the expectations of customers in mature markets (Europe), low cost markets (Middle East North Africa) and Africa's regional markets. It was clearly identified that Gombé (ATIBT's pilot name for *Didelotia* spp.) could be of major interest in terms of quantity, quality and the sustainability of harvests. Backed by the STTC and HDI as part of their policy to promote the sustainable production of timber and their support for the growth of timber volumes produced in a sustainable and legal way, this work also benefited from financial backing by the EITF and the CIRAD. A technical sheet of the GOMBE of this species, which is currently more familiar, is available.

**Christian HUBER, Ecowood**

[Presentation of a wooden construction in the Congo basin](#)

In 2009, the Gabonese authorities demonstrated their willingness to process timber locally by prohibiting the export of logs. The timber sector is Gabon's largest private sector employer (28% of the working population). The construction industry holds the greatest potential in terms of the volumes of timber used in Gabon and its subregion.

Here are the challenges that lie ahead:

- Gabon is still a forest country, but not a timber country
- The availability of lumber is low (problems in terms of quantities, quality, delays and pricing)
- There is a lack of qualified staff to develop the sector and its competitiveness
- The sector is not attractive enough to attract potential managers locally
- A lack of trust/A poor image of timber as building material (a need for promotional works)
- Legislation is still in the embryonic stage
- A lack of incentive measures
- Government debt owed to timber companies

The political will cannot be achieved at this time, especially due to a lack of sustainable funding (100% State).

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE SESSION 5 THE MARKET OF AFRICAN TIMBER IN THE WORLD AND IN PARTICULAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The discussions made it clear that the markets are still not familiar enough with tropical timber, or that it suffers from a poor social, environmental and even technical image. However, there are solutions to change this situation and reverse the market trend, given **the lack of quality communication on tropical timber during the past 20 years**. A positive image must now be promoted, explaining the stakes involved in a tropical timber sector that is based on legally and sustainably sourced timber.

One of the catalysts is also the use of Lesser Known Timber Species (often referred to as LKTS), through an improved distribution of species harvests or a commercial mix of species that have similar properties, in order to reduce the pressure on the most used species and therefore preserve them.

This change in image and this improved familiarity with tropical timber represents the challenge facing ATIBT's marketing programme, which was launched in 2015, with the support of the AFD and KFW, to promote and commercially highlight the legal and certified products made from African timber and, more generally, tropical timber, through two channels:

- **A communication channel**, embodied by the creation of the Fair & Precious brand and the Fair & Precious website, which aims to highlight all of the technical, environmental, economic and social benefits of certified tropical timber.
- **A marketing channel**, including the creation of the [tropicaltimber.com](http://tropicaltimber.com) website at the European scale (with the support of the Europe's STTC confederation and the support of national federations), in order to highlight the species, their properties, their uses and their suppliers.

This change of image can only be achieved with the support of the various stakeholders: NGOs, federations, forestry unions and States and governments, who help this new perception gain ground.

For our next Forum, beyond the "Congo Basin/Europe" supply/demand marketing duo, we could discuss experiences with other production and consumption zones, such as America and Asia.

Lastly, it is also important to bring up the event that immediately followed the Forum, namely the **Dubai WoodShow**. A review of this fair, which is generally positive, appears at the end of this document; it provides a glimpse of the continuity demonstrated by our sector in the UAE.

*The presentations and speeches delivered over the two days are available on the ATIBT website: [www.atibt.org](http://www.atibt.org).*

*Some of the studies mentioned during the discussions are also available on the ATIBT website or on the websites of ATIBT's donors or partners.*

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>AFD</b>	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i> - French Development Agency
<b>AFE</b>	<i>Accord sur la Facilitation des Echanges</i> - Trade Facilitation Agreement
<b>ATIBT</b>	<i>Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux</i> - International Tropical Timber Technical Association
<b>CAP</b>	<i>Certificat d’Aptitude Professionnelle</i> - Professional Aptitude Certificate
<b>CIRAD</b>	<i>Centre international de recherche agronomique et de développement</i> - International Centre of Agricultural Research for Development
<b>COMIFAC</b>	<i>Commission des Forêts d’Afrique Centrale</i> - Commission of Central African Forests
<b>DWS</b>	Dubai WoodShow
<b>DYNAFFOR</b>	Dynamic of Africa's Forests project - "Scientific results and policy choices for sustainable forest management"
<b>ENSTIB</b>	<i>Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Technologies de l’Industrie du Bois</i> - National School of Timber Technologies and Industries
<b>ERAIFT</b>	<i>Ecole Régionale Post Universitaire d’Aménagement et de Gestion Intégrée des Forêts et Territoires Tropicaux</i> - Regional Postgraduate School for the Planning and Integrated Management of Forests
<b>EUTR</b>	European Union Timber Regulation
<b>FFEM</b>	<i>Fonds Français pour l’Environnement Mondial</i> - French Fund for the Global Environment
<b>FIB</b>	<i>Fédération des Industriels du Bois (DRC)</i> - Industrial Timber Federation
<b>FLEGT</b>	Forest Law Governance and Trade
<b>FSC</b>	Forest Stewardship Council
<b>GFBC</b>	<i>Groupement de la Filière Bois du Cameroun</i> - Cameroon Timber Industry Group
<b>IFL</b>	Intact Forest Landscape
<b>LKTS</b>	Lesser Known Timber Species
<b>MTC</b>	Malaysian Timber Council
<b>NHLA</b>	National Hardwoods Lumber Association Rules
<b>OMC</b>	<i>Organisation Mondiale du Commerce</i> - World Trade Organization
<b>P3FAC</b>	"Public Private Partnership for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forests" project
<b>PAFC</b>	Pan African Forest Certification
<b>PARAFE</b>	<i>Projet d’appui au renforcement de l’adéquation formation-emploi</i> - Project in support of the reinforcement of the training-employment match
<b>PEFC</b>	Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes
<b>PSGE</b>	<i>Plan Stratégique Gabon Emergent</i> - Strategic Plan for Emerging Gabon
<b>RBUE</b>	<i>Règlement Bois de l’Union Européenne</i> - European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR)
<b>RIFFEAC</b>	<i>Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale d’Afrique Centrale</i> - Central African Network of Forestry and Environmental Training Institutions
<b>SATA</b>	<i>Sciages Avivés Tropicaux Africains</i> - Sawn African Tropical Timber (classification standard)
<b>SPIB</b>	<i>Syndicat des Producteurs Industriels du Bois</i> - Industrial Timber Producers Syndicate (Republic of Côte d'Ivoire)
<b>TFA</b>	Trade Facilitation Agreement
<b>UFIGA</b>	<i>Union des Forestiers Industriels du Gabon et Aménagistes</i> - Union of Foresters and Managers of Gabon
<b>UNIBOIS</b>	<i>Union Patronale des Entreprises Privées de la Filière Bois du Congo</i> - Employers' Union of Private Timber Sector Companies of Congo
<b>WRI</b>	World Resources Institute
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organization
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund

## REVIEW OF THE DUBAI WOODSHOW 7-9 March



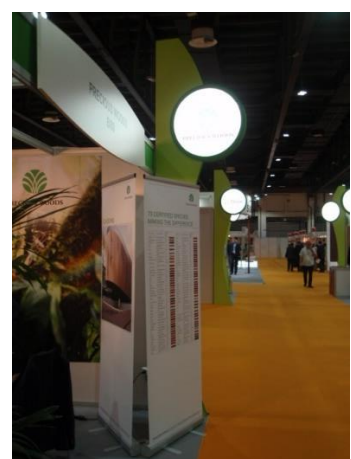
As part of its partnership, ATIBT had a 36 m<sup>2</sup> stand at the Dubai WoodShow, a major trade fair for the timber industry in the Middle East, which was held at the World Trade Centre.

### **Collective island for ATIBT + members**

As was proposed by the fair's organisers, an "ATIBT island" was set up around this stand, adopting ATIBT's colours, and accommodating the various members who wanted to participate (in exchange for financial participation in the DWS).

It brought together Precious Woods, Rougier, Olam, CORA Wood, Henry Timber, the Ministry of Water and Forests of Cameroon, the RAFM (African Model Forest Network) association and the CAFT Forest Community Cooperative.

Interholco had its very own stand as the company has been participating for several years in this fair. This ATIBT island surrounded by its members proved to be a productive experience, as it was pedagogically effective (information on certification and legality), commercially effective (ATIBT often referred its visitors to the stand of its members, especially when they were seeking a sales contact person) and useful from the point of view of the federation of the members and the discussions with them.





### ATIBT's stand

On its stand, ATIBT displayed its Fair & Precious posters, it screened the FFEM film "How to Preserve the Tropical Forest" and it exhibited on display units its Tropical Timber Nomenclature and its [Eco-certified African timber user guide](#). On one of the two counters, display boxes featured various African species.

It also distributed "surplus" goodies from the Forum: pouches, notepads and pens featuring ATIBT's colours. The laptop computer sleeves were especially popular.



### Stand attendance

As far as stand attendance was concerned during the 3 days of the fair, it was almost continuous, with very few instances where there were no visitors. ATIBT's teams gathered contact information from over 50 interested parties from Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, India, China, Turkey, Australia, Brazil, etc. who were curious about ATIBT's activities and about tropical timber. Following the DWS, ATIBT sent them a great deal of information and membership kits to the contact persons who requested them.

It is worth mentioning that there were several requests for ATIBT's participation in trade fairs in the Middle East and Asia, as well as a request for a technical intervention by Patrick Martin on tropical timber in China (Ghanzhou Fair).

In terms of book sales, here are the numbers:

- 50 Guides sold or ordered
- 3 Timber cases
- 30 Tropical Timber Atlases
- 5 Nomenclatures

Demand was underestimated, as all of the books brought to the DWS were sold.

