



Welcome to TFT's Newsletter! It's a busy time for TFT and we'd like to keep you updated on our work around the world.

Issue 4 ~ September 2009

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TFT Members' Update

TFT now has 59 members

See the complete list on our website

ALPI achieves OLB (Origin and Legality of Timber)

'In Conversation'

TFT's 'In Conversation' Podcast aims to capture stories, thoughts, aspirations and motivations from the people we meet or work with around the world.



See our website to download our latest podcast:

www.tft-forests.org/podcast.php



www.tft-forests.org



www.timbertradeactionplan.info

ITTFD COMING UP!

"Solving Buyers' Needs in a Tough Global Market"

The 2nd **International Timber Trade Federation Day (ITTFD)** is to be held on 8 and 9 October 2009 at the Kempinski Hotel in Geneva, Switzerland titled - "New Rules, New Dilemmas - Solving Buyers' Needs in a Tough Global Market".



The aim of the day will be to exchange practical experiences in responding to changing market requirements, in particular changing legislation (EC legislation and US Lacey Act) and timber purchasing policies for both the public and private sectors. More than 80 participants representing TTFs and the private sector from around the globe, governments, the EC, UNECE, EFI, independent experts and NGOs are expected to attend.

See the TTAP website for further details on the event and how you can take part.

TFT and Brazilian forestry company MAFLOPS sign MOU to assist smallholders sustainably manage their land in the Amazon forest



In August 2009, TFT signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the forest company Maflops based in the state of Pará, Brazil. This MOU seals an innovative collaboration aimed at maintaining forest cover and functioning ecosystems in this part of the Amazon forest while alleviating poverty of resettled smallholder populations in the area.

The Brazilian Amazon is one of relatively few regions where large remote forests currently exist beyond range of most agriculture or timber extraction. There, at the margins of these untouched forests, deprived populations face chronic poverty and often end up degrading these forests to cover their most basic needs.

Since the 1980s, the Brazilian government has been resettling 4.5 million landless people in Land Reform Rural Settlements (*assentamentos*) in public forest areas. These settlements in general have become major contributors to deforestation. In 2008, 21% of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon occurred within settlements and between 1997 and 2004, settlement deforestation was four times the Amazonian average.



The region of Santarém, in Pará State, hosts one of the major concentrations of poor migrants in the Amazon. Settlements here are among those most affected by deforestation, in both Pará State and Brazil as a whole. However in the area a very promising partnership model has been developed, helping to alleviate poverty while supporting forest conservation.

The partnership consists of an arrangement between the settler community and a forest company, and benefiting both. Each settler has a lot of approximately 100 ha, 20% of which can be legally cleared for another land use such as agriculture. In addition, if the smallholders have a forest management plan, they are authorized by the law to harvest timber from the remaining 80 ha of "Legal Reserve".

However, undertaking forest management requires knowledge and induces heavy costs for smallholders, which are difficult to overcome.

The system works as communities subcontract independent forestry company Maflops to develop the forest management plans and to harvest timber legally and sustainably on their behalf. This joint management is the best option for smallholders to access the income from their "legal reserve" whilst building their management capacity in the interim. The system allows the smallholders to afford keeping the forest more or less intact.

TFT is bringing technical assistance to Maflops and the smallholders and supporting the partnership on a phased progression to initially meet Verified Legal Origin requirements and then eventually achieve the coveted Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. TFT will also facilitate market access for the smallholders' production and develop partnerships with buyers and retailers in Europe and the US. This will help reassure consumers that by purchasing community-based, sustainably produced timber from settlements areas, they do not put more pressure on the Amazon rainforest biome and its inhabitants.

Cosmetics company LUSH supports TFT's efforts in AMT forest in Indonesia



August 2009: UK cosmetics company **LUSH**, known for its ethical and environmental principles, is supporting AMT with the sales of one of their popular body lotion!

In 2007, LUSH started to actively support charitable activities by introducing the "Charity Pot" body lotion. Sales of the product benefit charitable organisations as the full revenue (apart from the VAT) goes to support the selected projects.

For the month of September 2009, the Swiss branch of LUSH has opted to support TFT's Andalus Merapi Timber (AMT) forest project in Sumatra, Indonesia with the Charity Pot revenues. The island has some of the world's fastest-disappearing forests, threatened by palm oil plantations.

LUSH is working to exclude palm oil fully from its cosmetics and has been developing palm oil-free soap base for three years and has launched a campaign to make consumers aware of the impacts of palm cultivation on tropical forests. Palm oil has many benefits such as flexible use, low economic cost of production and as a result it is found in at least 10% of products in supermarkets, cosmetics and food, and used as biofuel. This generalised use also has a substantial drawback. The high demand for palm oil worldwide is causing severe deforestation in Indonesia and Malaysia particularly and resulting in disastrous consequences for biodiversity and local populations.



Burning the old natural forests to replace them with palm monocultures means functioning ecosystems are wiped out; homes for forest tribes, habitat for endangered orang-utans, and still unknown plant and animal species disappear. Besides the process of burning which itself releases great amounts of carbon into the atmosphere, the succeeding plantation will be far from matching level of carbon sequestration of natural composite forests. In fact a recent study reveals oil palm plantations store even less carbon than previously believed, suggesting that palm oil produced on cleared natural forest land carries a substantial carbon debt.

- Mature oil palm plantations > 40 tons per hectare of above-ground biomass on average over 25-year lifespan
- Logged-over forests at the two sites stored 70-200 tons of carbon per hectare
- Untouched forest contains up to < 400 tons per hectare

However as long as demand continues, great profits from cultivation of the palms will be derived and governments will allow deforestation to plant oil palms. Therefore one way to reverse the situation is to reduce the demand for palm oil which is currently too high for an entirely sustainable production.

Alternatives are needed to reduce the demand and LUSH is offering to share its methods and formulae of palm-free soap. Besides companies are increasingly seeking to avoid palm oil or to use responsibly-sourced palm oil independently verified and certified to meet environmental and social sustainability criteria. This is one area where TFT is also applying its expertise, and is currently in talks with a number of partners to help them source responsible palm oil while maintaining nearby forest cover.

See the LUSH website www.lush.com.

As TFT becomes officially registered in the Congo, the CSE students start field training with forest companies

On 8 July 2009, the Ministry of Territory, Administration and Decentralisation in Congo Brazzaville officially recognised TFT as an organisation aiming to develop social activities relating to sustainable forest management. This recognition formalises the activities of TFT in Congo.

The acknowledgment of the official registration was celebrated at TFT's headquarters in Brazzaville on Tuesday 28 July in the presence of public administration officials and NGO representatives. Dr. Norbert Gami, TFT Africa Manager, presented TFT and its activities to the audience and discussed the importance of forest conservation in the context of climate change and in particular of the importance of the forests of the Congo Basin. He reminded the audience of TFT's work in the region assisting forest companies towards sustainable forest management, running social programmes community radio Biso na Biso and the Centre of Social Excellence (CSE).



The Congolese media attended the event, which was subsequently covered on the Congolese evening news; see the video clip in French on Tele Congo, the official news portal of Congo (hosted on dailymotion.com).

TFT's official registration coincided with the end of the three month classroom-based training at the CSE. The six students are now set to begin the practical stage of their training and will each join a forest company where they will be based for the next five months. There, the trainees will spend the first two months evaluating the current social programme in partnership with their host company and will then propose a social plan answering the identified limitations, thus putting into practice the theory learned at the CSE.

New TFT Members in 2009

We are pleased to introduce seven new member companies who joined in 2009, taking the total number of TFT Members to 59 companies.

This is a fantastic achievement especially in the tough economic climate currently prevailing around the world, and it's great to see that organisations are still keen to support TFT's work in forests, and source from TFT projects in transition to FSC standards.

The new Members are made up of five Supplying Members; Steffex, Timexindo, Sfereteam, Alpi, and Java Doors, and two Buying Members; Brico Dépôt and Truffaut. We anticipate many more members joining by the end of the year!

Alpi Group

The Alpi Group is a major international industrial group based in Italy operating in the timber sector, with over 50% of its production located outside Italy. With 7 enterprises, 6 companies, 11 productive plants and 2,400 employees (1,800 of which, are in its African plants).

Alpi has become a leader in its sector thanks to its sound global vision. This is made possible by its effort to control the entire production process, from access to raw materials through to the distribution of high added value wood products. In this respect, its concessions in the African tropical forests (over 425 thousand hectares in Cameroon alone) are absolutely strategic.

Respect for the environment and responsible forest management are at the heart of the group's natural resources policy

Steffex Handelmaatschappij BV

Steffex is an importing wholesale company, based in the Netherlands. Steffex was established in 1975 by Stefan Fransen (STEFan Fransen EXport). They initially concentrated on importing doors from the Far East.

During the 1980's Steffex expanded their range in line with trends in the DIY sector and in 1993 they joined parent group N.V. Deli Maatschappij. During this period, they extended their range to interior and exterior doors, wall and radiator panels, furniture and garden furniture. The doors and panels will be sold under the CanDo brand. Steffex is one of only two companies importing merbau doors from TFT sources into Europe at the moment.

Brico Dépôt

Brico Dépôt is a well known retailer in France owning 73 shops with an annual turnover of over 2million Euros. They are importers of wooden items with stock consisting of doors, joinery and carpentry items. They have shown spectacular development over the years, and in such a competitive environment. Brico Dépôt is now in partnership with TFT, and showing great commitment to improving its wood sourcing.

Truffaut

Truffaut was established in 1897. It is the oldest garden centre in France. Initially it only used to sell plants, however step by step they have built up their range. It now includes high quality ranges of wooden garden furniture. Truffaut has always had a sustainable buying policy in favour of FSC supply, however they want to ensure its whole range is from responsible sources where FSC is not available. Truffaut have therefore have partnered with TFT to help improve its wood sourcing and maintain very high quality products.

Timexindo

Timexindo Co. Ltd a trading company based in Hong Kong. Timexindo caters to an Australian market, mostly supplying merbau decking and a small amount of merbau garden furniture. In order to grow their business in Australia and Europe, they need access to responsible wood sources due to increasing NGO pressure within these countries. They have therefore committed to TFT and are keen to supply wood from forests that are in transition to FSC standards.

Sfereteam

Sfereteam/Passerelle D'orient is an importer mainly specializing in wooden furniture for outdoor use. Sfereteam is a medium sized player in the French market and is already supplying TFT buying members such as Leroy Merlin. This means that most of their factories have already been inspected by TFT Team. This shows transparency of supply chain and commitment to TFT.

Java Doors

Java Doors Ltd is a Door Importer and is seeking FSC certification for its tropical hardwoods, as it recognizes that market demand will grow significantly over the coming years. They fully understand TFT's Mission and are committed to the TFT process. We look forward to working with them in the future.

We welcome our new members and look forwards to a successful collaboration. See the full list of all current TFT members on the TFT website.

Legality workshop for French retailers to take place in October

TFT is organising a workshop for French retailers in Paris in October on upcoming EU legislation on timber and timber product imports.

En octobre 2009, Le Forest Trust organise à Paris une séance de formation sur la future législation européenne sur les importations de bois.

Voir notre site web pour plus d'information.

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