

## INFORMATION ON THE AVAILABILITY AND TYPE OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS IN THE UK AUGUST 2009

### TIMBER SOURCES



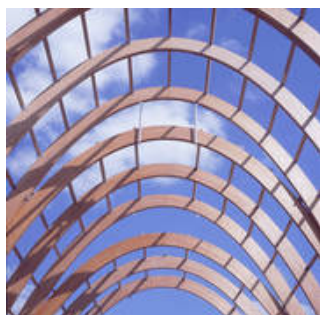
Timber is split into two main categories; softwood and hardwood. These terms are in relation to their botanical characteristics and do not refer to their physical properties. The main species of timber used in the UK are softwoods mainly Pine (redwood) or Spruce (whitewood), sometimes Fir maybe mixed in with the whitewood, but generally it is Spruce. Softwood timber is derived from conifers which are trees with needles and cones and usually evergreen. There are a greater variety of hardwoods used in the UK, but probably account for less than 10% of the timber used. These trees are broadleaved and are usually split into temperate such as Oak, Birch, Cherry etc or tropical such as Teak, Mahogany, Meranti etc.

In general, for softwood, the slower trees grow they tend to have closer growth rings, smaller knots producing a better, more dense, grade of timber. The colder and shorter growing seasons typified by Northern Scandinavia and Russia produces the higher grades of softwood. For instance it is not possible to machine UK sourced timber into softwood mouldings (e.g. skirtings) the “furry” grain which is a common characteristic of UK timber, is not suitable.

The UK has an active and flourishing forest sector, but the fact remains that we currently import around two thirds of all the timber used in this country. The UK simply does not have the volumes, timber grades or the range of different species to meet the demand.

However, a vast majority of UK sourced timber is used for domestic applications such as fencing or utilised for carcassing which is a collective term for sawn timber used in construction which is usually not seen; such as studwork, joists or roof trusses.

### BUYING RESPONSIBLY



Here are a few things you should keep in mind when buying timber and wood products responsibly:

- **timber and wood-derived products** cover any product that contains wood or wood fibre. Such products range from solid wood, paper, timber used temporarily on construction sites, pallets, wood chips, etc.

-here we are detailing **how to source virgin fibre and timber** but buying recycled products is equally responsible.

- when buying timber it is important to remember that **timber is fit for the intended purpose**, e.g. structural applications. For more information on timber product standards click here:

[http://www.ttf.co.uk/Timber\\_industry/Technical.aspx](http://www.ttf.co.uk/Timber_industry/Technical.aspx)

-**definitions of legal and sustainable:** we are referring to production and process methods, as defined in the document titled: "UK Government timber procurement policy: Definition of legal and sustainable for timber procurement".

- the pyramid below sets out the **recommended decision tree to purchase timber responsibly**.



1. In the first instance verified sustainable timber is preferred.
2. If certified is not available it is advised to ask for verified legal timber; there are numerous schemes operating globally:  
[http://www.ttf.co.uk/Environment/Third\\_Party\\_Schemes.aspx](http://www.ttf.co.uk/Environment/Third_Party_Schemes.aspx).

Most are listed in the triangle below. Some of the legality schemes are specific to countries whilst most are available world-wide. FLEGT licenced timber represents timber that will be verified under a countries national legality scheme that will be developed under the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with producer countries as part of the [EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance & Trade Action Plan](#). At present only a few countries have signed a VPA and are working on a national legality scheme, so FLEGT licensed timber is not expected until at least 2011.

3. Lastly if there is no certified or verified legal available then buying from a mill which is in a step-wise programme towards credible certification or legal verification is advisable.

More information on the programmes listed here is available on <http://panda.org/index.cfm> for the WWF Global Forest Trade Network, on <http://www.tropicalforesttrust.com/> for the Forest Trust and on <http://www.timbertradeactionplan.info/> for the Timber Trade Forest Trust.

4. Finally, if there is no independent proof of legality and sustainability then it is important to buy from timber suppliers who operate a timber procurement policy and due diligence tool to assess their suppliers such as the UK TTF's Responsible Purchasing Policy on [http://www.ttf.co.uk/Environment/Due Diligence RPP.aspx](http://www.ttf.co.uk/Environment/Due_Diligence_RPP.aspx) or WWF's Global Forest Trade Network Buyers Group.

For more detail on those schemes and standards, please consult the CPET website or get in touch with us.

- the **six steps to implementing a responsible timber procurement policy**, as well as **model contract clauses and specifications** are available in separate documents.

## AVAILABILITY OF CERTIFIED PRODUCTS ON THE UK MARKET

For further information on products and what is available as certified, refer to the table below.

Product Group	Main Countries	Availability of Certified Products
All softwood (pine & spruce) Range of uses mouldings, doors, windows, carcassing, trussed rafter, decking, log cabins etc	Scandinavia, UK, Russia, Baltics	Over 85% of softwood used in the UK is certified. The split is pretty even between PEFC & FSC, however, structural timbers & trussed rafters are usually PEFC.
Construction Products: Glulam, I joists etc (mainly softwood)	Scandinavia, Germany	Majority certified to either PEFC or FSC certified (Glulam majority PEFC)
Panels, MDF, Particleboard, hardboard & OSB (mainly softwood or in the case of Particleboard – recycled timber)	Mainly UK with some from Europe	Majority certified to FSC, small volume of PEFC available. Hardboard mainly PEFC.
Temperate Hardwood Ash, Oak, Elm etc used for doors, mouldings etc	Europe, US & Canada	Majority certified to PEFC (CSA, SFI are endorsed by PEFC)
Tropical Hardwood used for mouldings, decking, blockboard, door blanks etc	Mainly Malaysia, Africa, Indonesia	Increasing volume certified to MTCS, some FSC from Africa available in addition to Verified Legal timber through one of the legality schemes operating. For more information on these <a href="#">click here</a> . Hardwoods may attract price increases for certified or verified legal - the increase can vary and be small if large volumes are procured.
Temperate Plywood; Spruce, Birch, Poplar	Mainly Scandinavia, Russia & China	Both softwood (spruce) and hardwood (birch) are majority certified to PEFC with some FSC available.
Tropical Plywood	Mainly Brazil, Malaysia & China	As with tropical hardwood, prices are generally higher for certified or verified legal products and the increase varies with the different products. Elliotis (softwood) ply from Brazil, FSC is available. Poplar (hardwood) from China, FSC is available. Plywood from Malaysia is MTCS certified & this is increasing.
Flooring		Majority of Laminated flooring is certified to FSC whilst engineered is a mixture of FSC & PEFC.