

**GREENPEACE**

# GOOD WOOD GUIDE

Use this guide to help you specify timber from environmentally and socially responsible forestry and to avoid timber that is the product of illegal or destructive logging practices in ancient forest areas.

## FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (FSC) CERTIFICATION

Insist on timber products from well-managed sources. Choose timber bearing the FSC label to ensure that it comes from forests or plantations that have been responsibly managed according to strong environmental and social criteria.

FSC principles are strict and closely monitored: they ensure that natural forests are conserved, that endangered species and their habitats are protected, and that forest workers and forest-dependent communities are respected. The FSC also has a rigorous chain of custody, tracking timber from the forest to the end user. Other schemes, such as PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes), have been created and funded by the forestry industry. Standards are weak and vary significantly. Avoid these schemes wherever you can.

In contrast, the FSC enjoys broad support from conservation groups, indigenous communities and forest product buyers. The FSC gives equal decision-making rights to economic, social and environmental interests in its governing structure and standard-setting process.

In the past, it was difficult to find FSC-certified material. This situation is changing rapidly. There are now over 2,000 FSC-certified companies worldwide. Over 45 million hectares of forest have been certified, in 69 countries across five continents. To find out more about the FSC, what products and species are available in FSC-certified form and where you can buy them, please refer to [www.fsc-uk.info](http://www.fsc-uk.info)



### FSC Pine

*Pinus spp.*

Marine construction, heavy construction, light construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture



### FSC Larch

*Larix spp.*

(European Larch, *Larix decidua*)

Marine construction, heavy construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture



### FSC Jatoba

*Hymenaea courbaril*

Marine construction, heavy construction, light construction, interior construction, furniture



### FSC panel products

Blockboard, chipboard, hardboard, MDF, OSB, plywood

Light construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture

Specifying FSC pine minimises the risk of the timber originating from old-growth forests, poorly managed plantations or illegal logging operations.

Can be used as an alternative to spruce and pine, and, in some cases, offers an alternative to tropical hardwoods.

Very strong and durable tropical hardwood, with high shock resistance. Suitable for a range of exterior uses and flooring.

FSC softwood plywood, along with FSC OSB and MDF, should be considered as an alternative to tropical hardwood plywoods. The majority of tropical hardwood plywood imported into the UK originates in the last ancient forests of Indonesia, Malaysia or the Brazilian Amazon.

These are just a few examples of FSC-certified species, and more are listed below. The choice of suitable alternatives will depend on intended use and availability. Always check with Trada or progressive timber traders before selecting an alternative FSC timber to fit your intended use.

## REGIONAL INFORMATION

### European timbers

Most of Europe's ancient forests have already been destroyed, and the timber industry relies heavily on plantations and secondary forests. This means there is a lower risk of timber coming from ancient forest destruction than with the species listed in the red section of this guide. However, what ancient forest remains is under threat from logging operations and caution is needed if timber is not FSC-certified. Boreal forests are particularly at risk, in countries such as Finland, Norway and Russia, where the survival of numerous species (including the flying squirrel and the eagle owl) is in the balance.

Indigenous communities also continue to be affected by forestry operations. For example, the Sámi communities in parts of northern Finland rely on reindeer herding, a livelihood threatened by logging in ancient forests. In addition, illegal logging is a serious problem in Russia and some Central and Eastern European countries, including Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia and Estonia.

### Plantation timbers

Whilst buying timber from European non-FSC plantations does not directly contribute to the destruction of ancient forests, plantations can have negative environmental impacts, including damage to soil fertility and water quality, and may offer habitat to a relatively small number of species. Non-European plantation timber carries all the same environmental risks; in addition, there is serious risk that the timber will be linked to negative social issues such as land conflict with indigenous peoples. In contrast, FSC plantation design supports biodiversity conservation, and the scale and layout attempt to mimic natural forest patterns.

## SPECIES COMMON USES



**Ash**  
*Fraxinus spp.*  
(European Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior*)

Interior construction, furniture



**Beech**  
*Fagus spp.*  
(European Beech, *Fagus sylvatica*)

Marine construction, heavy construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture



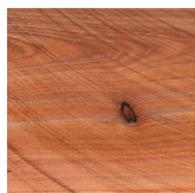
**Birch**  
*Betula spp.*

Interior construction, panel products, furniture



**Douglas Fir**  
*Pseudotsuga menziesii*

Marine construction, heavy construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture



**Larch**  
*Larix spp.*  
(European Larch, *Larix decidua*)

Marine construction, heavy construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture



**Oak**  
*Quercus spp.*

Marine construction, heavy construction, light construction, interior construction, furniture

## SPECIFIC CONCERNS

More controversial areas for sourcing ash include Romania and Bulgaria where there are high rates of illegal logging.

Beech imports to the UK from Romania and Poland could be linked to ancient forest destruction. Imports are also common from France where PEFC, the industry certification standard, is particularly weak.

Birch from Russia, the north of Finland and parts of Norway could be linked to ancient forest destruction, though timber from Finland and Norway will still carry a PEFC certificate. Illegal logging is widespread in Russia, Estonia and Latvia, which commonly supply the UK.

Douglas fir comes from managed plantations across Europe or from destructive logging in North America's coastal temperate rainforests. Avoid sourcing from Canada if you cannot get FSC supplies and if the supplier is not working with environmental groups to improve practices (see [www.savethegreatbear.org/4pages/aboutus/aboutus.htm](http://www.savethegreatbear.org/4pages/aboutus/aboutus.htm) for suppliers list).

European larch has been planted throughout Europe, but larch from Siberia (usually Siberian larch, *Larix sibirica*) or Canada (American larch, *Larix laricina*) is often the product of ancient forest destruction.

Caution is advised regarding oak originating from Poland, Russia and Ukraine, due to links with ancient forest destruction and illegal logging. Oak imported into the UK can also be sourced from Estonia, where illegal logging is widespread, and France, where the industry-backed PEFC certification standard is particularly weak.

## EXAMPLES OF FSC ALTERNATIVES

FSC Ash

FSC Beech

FSC Birch

FSC Douglas  
Fir

FSC Larch

FSC Oak

### North American timbers

Very little North American timber comes from plantations. Non-FSC timber from North American forests can come from ancient forests, and is often certified by the weak SFI or CSA certification schemes. The remaining ancient forests of North America include the boreal forest belt stretching between Newfoundland and Alaska, while some of the only large, intact tracts of temperate rainforest in the world, known as the Great Bear Rainforest, are found along the coast of British Columbia in western Canada. This is a region of rich biological diversity and home to a wide range of endangered species. For information on other North American tree species, see below.



**Pine**  
*Pinus spp.*

Marine construction, heavy construction, light construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture

Pine from Russia, the north of Finland and parts of Norway could be linked to ancient forest destruction, though timber from Finland and Norway will still carry a PEFC certificate. Imports to the UK can also come from Latvia and Estonia where illegal logging is widespread.

FSC Pine



**Spruce**  
*Picea spp.*  
(Norway Spruce, *Picea abies*)

Light construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture

Spruce from Russia, the north of Finland and parts of Norway could be linked to ancient forest destruction, though timber from Finland and Norway will still carry a PEFC certificate. Imports to the UK can also come from Latvia and Estonia where illegal logging is widespread.

FSC Spruce  
FSC Siberian Larch

## REGIONAL INFORMATION

## SPECIES COMMON USES

## SPECIFIC CONCERNS

## EXAMPLES OF FSC ALTERNATIVES

### North American timbers

North America has already lost much of its ancient forest. Industrial logging threatens large parts of what remains in both Canada and the USA. In Canada some of British Columbia's major logging companies are working with Greenpeace and other groups on a solutions process for the Great Bear Rainforest and new standards for logging operations in the region. However, the harvesting of western red cedar and western hemlock from North America's coastal rainforests is still contributing to the destruction of this unique ecosystem, threatening the habitats of grizzly and black bears, white spirit bears and a number of threatened bird species, along with thousands of wild salmon runs.



**Western Red Cedar**  
*Thuja plicata*

Light construction

Usually sourced from North America's coastal temperate rainforests. Some supplies are still connected to ancient forest destruction. Avoid this species if you cannot get FSC and if the supplier is not working with environmental groups to improve practices. (See [www.savethegreatbear.org/4pages/aboutus/aboutus.htm](http://www.savethegreatbear.org/4pages/aboutus/aboutus.htm) for list of suppliers.)

FSC Western Red Cedar  
FSC European Larch  
FSC Red Louro



**Western Hemlock**  
*Tsuga heterophylla*

Marine construction, heavy construction, interior construction, furniture

An abundant species in the threatened ecosystem of North America's coastal temperate rainforests. Avoid this species if you cannot get FSC and if the supplier is not working with environmental groups to improve practices. (See [www.savethegreatbear.org/4pages/aboutus/aboutus.htm](http://www.savethegreatbear.org/4pages/aboutus/aboutus.htm) for list of suppliers.)

FSC Western Hemlock  
FSC Pine

### South-East Asian timbers

South-East Asia remains a very large producer of timber and wood products, though its forests are rapidly disappearing. Indonesia and Malaysia are now South-East Asia's main suppliers to the international market.



**Meranti**  
*Shorea spp.*

Interior construction, panel products, furniture

Over 200 individual species are classified under the genus *Shorea*. Meranti is a commercial name given to four groups, differing in colour and weight. More than half of the *Shorea* species are listed by IUCN as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable.

FSC Meranti or FSC Red Louro for some uses

Each year in Indonesia, an area of forest larger than Wales is destroyed – the highest rate of forest loss in the world. Indonesia has more species threatened with extinction than anywhere else on Earth. According to conservative estimates from the World Bank, if the current rates of logging continue, the ancient lowland forests of Sumatra and Kalimantan will be eradicated by 2010, together with hope for the remaining orang-utans and other rare species such as the sunbear, the world's smallest bear.



**Ramin**  
*Gonystylus spp.*

Furniture, joinery

From January 2005 Ramin will be listed on Appendix II of CITES. Ramin is still commonly logged illegally and smuggled to other countries. The most commonly traded species (*Gonystylus bancanus*) is listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Beech  
FSC Meranti or FSC Red Louro

At least 50 million indigenous people depend on Indonesia's forests. The destruction of these forests goes hand in hand with corruption and human rights abuses. In 2003 an estimated 88% of logging in Indonesia was illegal. Profits from the industrial timber trade in Indonesia flow to the military, corrupt officials, illegal timber barons and international traders.

In Malaysia, production capacity in plywood and furniture mills exceeds the volume of timber actually available from the country's forests. As a result, Sabah in Borneo, once the centre of the timber industry in Malaysia, has virtually run out of raw materials. Despite legislation in both countries banning the transportation of round logs from Indonesia to Malaysia, estimates suggest that a significant proportion of the logs needed by Sarawak's processing industry is smuggled illegally from Indonesia. Malaysian timber is increasingly certified by the Malaysian Timber Certification Council. Among other failings, its certification scheme does not recognise the land rights of indigenous communities or offer sufficient protection for high-conservation-value forests.

#### South American timbers

The Amazon Basin supports almost half of all known land-based species. However, it also has one of the world's highest rates of forest destruction and the pace is increasing. In 2002 alone, an area of Amazon rainforest the size of Belgium was lost.

More than 20 million people live in and depend on the Amazon forest. The lives and cultural identity of indigenous communities are seriously threatened by logging companies. Due to deforestation, more than 87 indigenous cultures have been lost in Brazil alone. A lack of governance and law enforcement means that murder, violence, slavery and illegal occupancy of public land are widespread. Approximately 80% of timber from the Brazilian Amazon is logged illegally.



#### Balau/Selangan Batu/Bangkirai

*Shorea* spp.

Marine construction, heavy construction, interior construction, furniture, garden furniture

Balau is the commercial name given to about 45 species described as the 'heavyweights' of the *Shorea* genus. More than half of the *Shorea* species are listed by IUCN as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable.

FSC Meranti



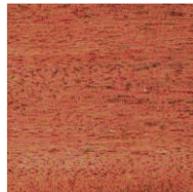
#### Merbau/Kwila

*Intsia* spp.

Interior construction, panel products, furniture

Two *Intsia* species are listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Merbau  
FSC Kwila  
FSC Jatoba



#### Keruing/Asian Mahogany

*Dipterocarpus* spp.

Marine construction, heavy construction, light construction, interior construction

Keruing is the name given to around 70 commercially harvested timber species from the genus *Dipterocarpus*. More than half of these are listed by IUCN as critically endangered or endangered.

No direct FSC alternative



#### Burmese Teak/Genuine Teak

*Tectona grandis*

Marine construction, furniture, garden furniture

Burma is the only country that still exports teak from natural forests. Between 1999 and 2000 over half the teak exported from Burma was logged illegally. The sale of teak is a key source of foreign currency for Burma's brutal military dictatorship.

FSC Teak,  
FSC Jatoba  
for some uses



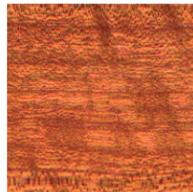
#### Brazilian Cedar

*Cedrela* spp.

Light construction, interior construction, panel products, furniture

Two *Cedrela* species are listed as endangered and one as vulnerable by IUCN. The Colombian and Peruvian populations of *Cedrela odorata* are listed in Appendix III of CITES.

FSC Brazilian Cedar



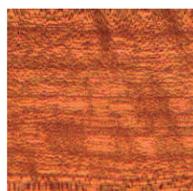
#### Brazilian Mahogany Big Leaf Mahogany

*Swietenia macrophylla*

Interior construction, furniture

Listed by IUCN as vulnerable. Listed on Appendix II of CITES.

FSC Andiroba  
FSC Brazilian Mahogany  
FSC Jatoba



#### Greenheart

*Chlorocardium (Ocotea) rodiei*

Marine construction, bridge construction, exterior work, flooring

Listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Andiroba  
FSC Jatoba  
FSC Red  
Angelim

### African timbers

All the African timbers listed in this guide are from West and Central African countries, including Cameroon, Ghana, Congo Brazzaville and Côte d'Ivoire. The rainforests of West and Central Africa are home to an astonishing number of animal and plant species. They are critical to the survival of three of our closest animal relatives, the gorilla, the chimpanzee and the bonobo, all of which are endangered.

Millions of hectares of African rainforest have been lost in the last 30 years, and now logging operations are expanding into the heart of the Congo Basin, whose rainforests are the second largest in the world after those of the Amazon. The Congo Basin is home to around 12 million forest-dwelling people, including the semi-nomadic Baka pygmies, who depend almost entirely on the forests. Substantial parts of these forests have already been allocated to international timber companies and commercial logging operations.

Illegal logging is rampant in the region and corruption is widespread. Protection of forest areas by national and international law is largely inadequate and poorly implemented. Logging roads open up tropical rainforests to the hunting of and trade in bushmeat – including the meat of gorillas, chimpanzees, forest elephants and other endangered species.

Many of these species are part of the trade in 'conflict timber' – timber traded by armed groups or administrations to perpetuate conflict or take advantage of conflict situations. Groups notorious for human rights abuses have been funded by the timber trade in Liberia and Democratic Republic of Congo.



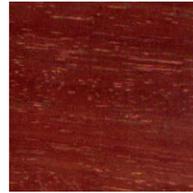
#### African Walnut

*Lovoa trichilioides*

Panel products, furniture

Listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Andiroba  
for some uses



#### Ekki/Azobé

*Lophira alata*

Marine construction, heavy construction,  
interior construction, furniture

Listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Cumaru  
FSC Massar-  
anduba



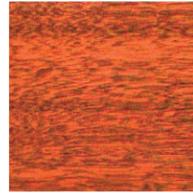
#### Iroko/African Teak

*Milicia excelsa and Milicia regia*

Marine construction, heavy construction,  
light construction, interior construction,  
panel products, furniture

*Milicia regia* is listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Favinha  
FSC Guariuba  
FSC Tatajuba



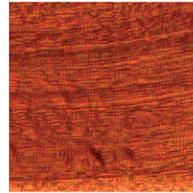
#### Khaya/African Mahogany

*Khaya* spp., especially *Khaya ivorensis*

Marine construction, heavy construction,  
light construction, panel products, furniture

Five species in the genus *Khaya* are listed by IUCN as endangered or vulnerable.

FSC Andiroba  
FSC Jatoba



#### Sapele/African Mahogany

*Entandrophragma cylindricum*

Marine construction, light construction,  
heavy construction, interior construction, furniture

Listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Andiroba  
FSC Jatoba  
FSC Santa  
Maria



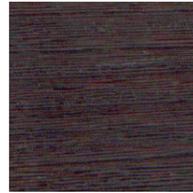
#### Utile/Sipo/African Mahogany

*Entandrophragma utile*

Marine construction, light construction,  
heavy construction, interior construction, furniture

Listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

FSC Jatoba  
FSC Karri for  
some uses



#### Wenge

*Millettia laurentii*

Interior construction, furniture

Listed by IUCN as vulnerable.

No direct FSC  
alternative