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Wood Engineering

REASONS TO PROMOTE TEAK FROM INDONESIAN PLANTATIONS

The public may not be able to differ between the use of teak from Burmese forests and teak from Indonesian plantations - unless informed about it.

The below facts might give some perspective and assistance with arguments in the debate.

1. In Indonesia there is NO and has NEVER been any wild growing teak.
2. The teak plantations were established more than 200 years ago.
3. No natural forest has been cut to extend the plantations for several decades.
4. The Indonesian government, through the Forestry Department Perum Perhutani, owns and manages 3,2 million acres of teak plantations. Apart from those there are many privately owned plantations.
5. A boycott of teak from the plantations in Indonesia would have dramatic, negative consequences:
 - (a) The teak plantations would lose their value and instead have to be clear-cut in order to give space to more financially viable species – where the timber itself is not the end product.
 - (b) That species would probably be oil-palm - an environmental catastrophe according to all scientists and environmental groups.
 - (c) This would lead to an extinction of the animal life that has established in the teak plantations through the year hundreds.
 - (d) Thousands of industries and establishments, living on the teak plantations, would have to close down.
 - (e) More than half a million (500.000) people - family supporters - would lose their jobs.
 - (f) Serious producers of teak products, who actively work for a constant improvement on the sustainable plantation management, would be damaged - possibly bankrupt - and prevented to proceed with the long-term positive work.
 - (g) A boycott of Indonesian teak does NOT transform the plantations into rainforest.
6. There is a big difference between cheap, fast grown, thinning timber – often used for teak furniture production - and the teak specially selected for the marine industry.
7. The geographical location of the teak forest/plantation is of no importance for the final teakwood product quality. Careful and slow nursing, experienced selection and appropriate, simple maintenance are the keys to a teakwood product that lasts for generations. This is established by the Swedish Institute of Wood Science in Uppsala, Sweden.
8. Alternative, thermo-treated wood becomes soft and porous when the "cement" (glucose & lignin) between the wood cells are burnt away (the bacteria snacks) and continues to be an unsuitable material.

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9. Plastic and other artificial materials as alternatives to teakwood are - with all chemicals included and polluting, energyconsuming manufacturing processes - environmental catastrophes in a comparison.
10. For an end-users practical parallel wood/plastic - compare with seats in a car; real leather, or plastic that looks like leather.
11. From April 2014 the Myanmar government implemented a total ban on all unprocessed log exports.
12. Teakwood that officially comes from "China", "Malaysia", "Thailand" or similar is smuggled from Burma/Myanmar and illegally transhipped, because there is no large scale, industrial teak growing in those countries.
13. EuroDesign Group is today the only international manufacturer of teak products to the marine industry that only and guaranteed uses Indonesian plantation teak.
14. Through proper documentation, every delivery from EuroDesign can be tracked back to its place of origin in the plantation where the trees were harvested and replaced with new plants. As an evidence of that, EuroDesign Group's production plant has achieved an FSC Chain-of-Custody certificate.
15. From the 17 October 2008 and onwards the European Commission has imposed all companies buying products made of tropical wood to "seek sufficient guarantees that timber was harvested legally".
16. Consumers/boat buyers should demand from the dealer a fact-based reassurance about the origin of the wood - and that environmental organisations and authorities should be able to check that information.
17. In order to promote the survival of the enormous teak plantations in Indonesia - you SHOULD buy, rather than to avoid.

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