



Cover Story

Wei-Ling Gallery

Where Wood Is Also An Art Piece

Timber Market To Become More Environmentally Demanding

KL Hosts 43rd Annual Conference Of International Research Group On Wood Protection

Sabah Has 226,000ha Of Forest Plantations

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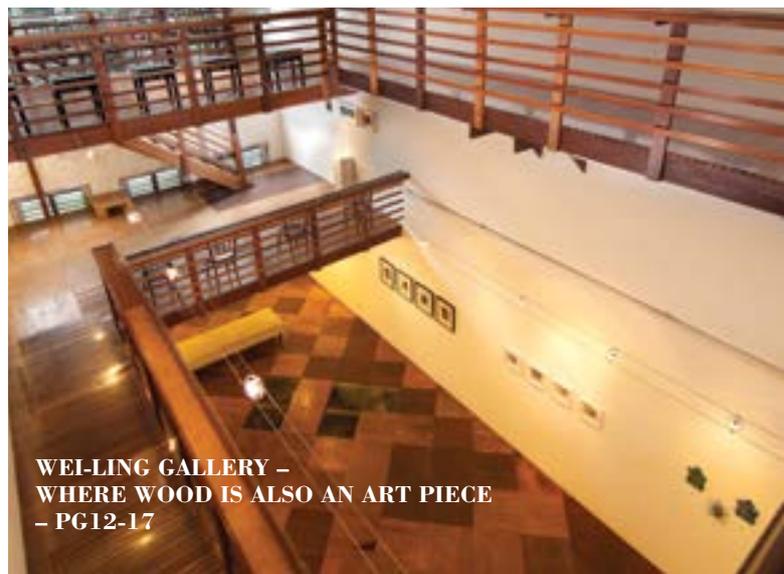
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**WEI-LING GALLERY –
WHERE WOOD IS ALSO AN ART PIECE
– PG12-17**

Dear Readers,

Come 1 March 2013, the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) will come into force. Together with the US Lacey Act and the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011 (the latter is in the process of being enacted by the Australian Government), their common objective is to combat the trade of illegal timber. Regulations banning the sale of illegal timber in consumer countries will force companies to move away from business-as-usual practices as they will now have to verify the legality of the timber from the source country onwards; a process known as due diligence. And like all due diligence, it must happen before one buys the product. In the UK, timber traders are urged to conduct risk assessments **NOW** as even timber products purchased before 3 March 2013 (the date the EUTR comes into force in the UK) will be subject to the legislation if they are delivered after that date. Likewise, Malaysian timber exporters have been constantly reminded to take appropriate steps to comply with such regulations or risk losing market share. Besides issuing such a reminder to the Malaysian timber industry during the Malaysian Timber Industry Forum Association's first anniversary dinner recently, His Honourable Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, the Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, also called on governments in consumer countries like the UK and Australia to ensure that the new regulations put in place will be fair and pragmatic (see page 2).

In May, Malaysia played host to the 43rd Annual Conference of the International Research Group on Wood Protection (IRG). This prestigious event is the IRG's primary vehicle that is usually held in May each year at different locations. Apart from attaining the attention of the international timber and forestry research fraternity, the Malaysian timber industry has also benefitted from the specialized topics of specific scientific or market interests presented by researchers and scientists from around the world. Additionally, the networking between Malaysian participants and IRG members from other countries provided opportunities for scientific collaborations,



TIMBER MARKET TO BECOME MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY DEMANDING – PG 2

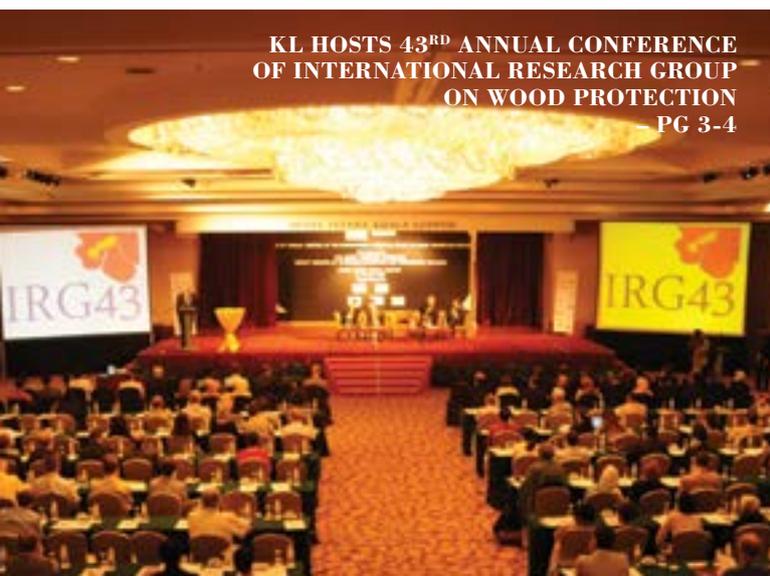
technical information exchange and business development. MTC congratulates the President of the Malaysian Wood Preserving Association, Dr. Clarence Tan, and his team for convincing the IRG to hold the conference in Malaysia. Turn to **pages 3-4** for a report on the annual conference.

Suggestions to use timber as the main structural components in modern-day building construction have often been met with pessimism. Timber – solid or engineered – is still perceived as not durable or strong and has not been well received as a worthy structural material despite its strong credentials and the fact that technologies are readily available to enhance the properties of timber for various applications. This issue of *TIMBER MALAYSIA* showcases two buildings in Malaysia where timber's inherent strength properties are undeniable.

- **Showcase 1:** An iconic timber building in Tebrau, Johor Bahru (see pages 9-11) constructed mainly of glued laminated timber (Glulam), the unique characteristics of which allow for larger sizes and complex curved shapes that are not possible with other building materials. Glulam's high strength-to-weight ratio makes it easier to handle as compared to its equivalent in steel and concrete.
- **Showcase 2:** An art gallery (see pages 12-17) created out of a burnt shophouse in Kuala Lumpur. Its timber's insulating properties have provided built-in fire resistance, thus enabling better predictability for rescue operations as well as facilitating fire-fighting measures that had prevented the shophouse from total destruction. The charred timber posts and beams still in service after the renovation of the premise are a testimony that timber is highly resilient to fire.

Happy reading!

The Editor



KL HOSTS 43RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH GROUP
ON WOOD PROTECTION
– PG 3-4

Timber Market To Become More Environmentally Demanding

With the rising demand for legal timber in major markets, Malaysian timber product exporters have to be mindful of this development and take appropriate steps to comply with regulations that are meant to protect legal operators from the unfair advantage of lower-priced illegal timber products.

His Honourable Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, the Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, said developed markets have become far more discerning and environment conscious. The European Union (EU), US and Australia have either put in place legislation to compel trade in legal timber or are in the midst of formulating such regulations.

The local timber industry would regularly be kept informed of the latest development in timber trade rules by the government to ensure that the local timber-based business community was not disadvantaged, he added.

The Minister made the remarks at the Malaysian Timber Industry Forum Association's (MTIFA) first anniversary dinner in Kuala Lumpur. His speech was delivered on his behalf by his deputy, His Honourable Datuk Hamzah Zainudin. Six timber industry-related organisations had come together to form MTIFA, the umbrella body that represents and promotes the interest of the various timber industry sectors.

The Association is headed by Datuk Sheikh Othman Sheikh Abdul Rahman with George Tan as secretary-general.

Malaysia is now actively engaged with the EU towards finalising a Malaysia-EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Voluntary Partnership Agreement.

"This is in anticipation of the implementation of the due diligence process for timber products

imported into the EU beginning 1 March 2013," he said.

Australia is also in the midst of enacting the Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011 aimed at combating trade in illegal timber. Malaysia conveyed its concerns over the implication of the bill and provided input to Australian Members of Parliament and

senators to ensure that they were fully informed of Malaysia's concerns and were mindful of the various potential consequences which may arise



Tan Sri Bernard Dompok - Malaysian timber product exporters have to be mindful of the rising demand for legal timber in major markets.

with the implementation of the bill.

Malaysia had made two submissions, and the latest one was to the Trade Sub-Committee of the Australian Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade in

early May this year. The Malaysian Government wanted to ensure that the new regulation in Australia would be fair and pragmatic, and would not over-burden timber product exporters with additional cost. 🌱

Malaysia is now actively engaged with the EU towards finalising a Malaysia-EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Voluntary Partnership Agreement.

KL Hosts 43rd Annual Conference Of International Research Group On Wood Protection

Malaysia played host to the 43rd Annual Conference of the International Research Group on Wood Protection (IRG43), which was held on 6-10 May 2012 in Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia's Deputy Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC), His Honourable Datuk Hamzah Zainudin officiated the event.



Datuk Hamzah Zainudin (left) with IRG President, Jack Norton, at the opening of the conference. Photo credit: MTIB.

A total of 185 participants from 32 countries including the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, China and Malaysia as well as from Europe attended the conference. Researchers, technologists, policy makers, academics and stakeholders of timber-related disciplines were among the participants.

In his speech, Datuk Hamzah called for more scientific approaches to widen the scope of timber products as well as to encourage the utilisation of lesser-known species, including potential forest plantation species. He also said that the wood protection industry has the responsibility to produce and promote certified quality treated wood, which at the same time must remain competitive with other building materials.

Datuk Hamzah also expressed the hope that through the conference, Malaysia will be able to enhance its role in forest protection and sustainable forest management to the world. He also said that the initiative of organising an international conference such as the

IRG43 by the Malaysian Government in cooperation with related timber industry members is a reflection of Malaysia's strong commitment in promoting the utilisation of wood as a green material for the construction sector.

A total of 113 scientific papers were presented during the five-day conference through sessions on biology, test method and assessment, wood protecting chemical, process and properties as well as sustainability and environment.

The event provided a platform for participants to reflect, analyse, discuss and exchange ideas and views on a wide variety of issues pertaining to global requirements of wood protection in various contexts. These include the issue of Malaysian tropical wood protection, which is divided into two aspects; of tropical species that are naturally durable, and of tropical species that require additional preservatives to increase their durability.



The event provided a platform for participants to reflect, analyse, discuss and exchange ideas and views on a wide variety of issues pertaining to global requirements of wood protection in various contexts. Photo credit: MTIB.

The event highlighted, amongst others, the fact that dependence on naturally durable wood species for the construction sector has significantly declined in terms of availability of logs, manufacture and market supply. In order to optimise the usage of wood with preservatives, it has become an important agenda for Malaysia to ascertain the best methods, processes and preservatives to protect and lengthen the lifespan of wood.

The conference also provided opportunities for the local industry players to create a better network through which the wood industry can be further developed – focusing on wood protection aspects – between research centers, government agencies, private sectors as well as the public.

Apart from formal meetings, a social programme was also organised, which included the IRG President's reception for new members and recipients of the Ron Cockcroft Award that provides financial assistance to selected researchers to attend IRG conferences, and for sponsors of the conference, one of whom is MTC. A field trip was also organised for the delegates to visit several places of historical importance in Malaysia. 🌿

Backgrounder

The IRG is a structured group of scientists and technologists focused on generating knowledge of the science of wood deterioration, and presenting novel solutions to provide fit-for-purpose eco-friendly products for the protection of wood-based materials. The primary function of the IRG is to provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and information in an informal atmosphere, unencumbered by refereeing of papers or other pre-conditions. Its primary vehicle is the annual meeting at different locations globally. More information on the IRG and its activities is available on its website: www.irg-wp.org

FRIM to ‘Digitalise’ Trees

Life cycle findings of Chengal trees located within the grounds of the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) or a virtual view of FRIM’s canopy walkway will be made available via ‘Digital FRIM’ – a project to digitally document all trees and other interesting features in FRIM for better management, conservation of its resources and greater sharing of information with the public.



Datuk Dr. Abdul Latif (left) and Cube Global's Managing Director, Azman Ali M. Habib Rahman, signing the MoU. Witnessing the event was Multimedia Development Corporation's CEO, Datuk Badlisham Ghazali. Photo credit: FRIM.

FRIM signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Cube Global Sdn Bhd, an award-winning ICT company specialising in forestry and digital mapping, to pave the way for FRIM researchers and the ICT experts to work together on the ‘Digital FRIM’ project for a period of five years.

The collaboration is expected to result in the development and implementation of an innovative system for documenting forest features – ranging from tree species, their locations and sizes as well as general information on their uses, and flowering and fruiting patterns – in a digital format that can be easily retrieved and viewed.

The system, costing RM5 million, will serve as a permanent geospatial record for the reference of future generations. It will help create a virtual FRIM, which will be globally connected and interactive with in real time. It will also provide opportunities for FRIM researchers to explore new areas in forest resource surveys and mapping, animation, eco-tourism, ICT and environmental education.

“The project is part of the country’s intellectual property,” said FRIM Director-General Datuk Dr. Abdul Latif Mohmod. He added that FRIM’s efforts in compiling and documenting all relevant information are in line with FRIM’s aim towards achieving UNESCO World Heritage Site status by 2015.

The FRIM main campus in Kepong will be the pilot project site. The system will be utilised to document other forest areas after the digital documentation system is fully developed and refined. The forest information and data collected using this system will be crucial for the conservation and sustainable management of the country’s precious forest resources including monitoring and prevention of illegal logging, as well as for promoting carbon stock trading. 🌱



FRIM main campus in Kepong will be the pilot project site. Photo credit: FRIM.

Sabah Has 226,000ha Of Forest Plantations

Sabah has established some 226,000ha of forest plantations, of which about 55% consists of high-value commercial species.



Jeflus Sinajin.

Sabah Forestry Department's Sustainable Forest Management division head, Jeflus Sinajin, said among the companies that have established the plantations, Borneo Timber has planted 9,770ha of high-value species, followed by Sapulut Forest Development (6,740ha), Timberwell (3,476ha), TSH Resources (2,778ha) and KTS Plantation (2,189ha) up to December 2011.

State-owned Sabah Forest Industries took the lead with total plantation areas covering more than 45,400ha. The company is involved in the cultivation of fast-growing species like *Acacia mangium*.

“Currently, there are 20 players implementing industrial tree plantations in Sabah,” said Jeflus Sinajin in his paper entitled *Sabah Experience in Forest Plantation* presented at the Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation's industry update held in Kuching, Sarawak recently.



For 2011, timber from forest plantations in Sabah totalled about 1.3 million m³.

According to him, Sabah Softwoods was the pioneer in commercial industrial tree plantations with the cultivation of 60,000ha in 1974, followed by the Sabah Forest Development Authority, which reforested 200,000ha of degraded land caused by shifting cultivation.

In 1987, Sabah Foundation's commercial arm, Innoprise Corporation initiated the planting of high-value timber species on 40,000ha of its concessions in Tawau. For 2011, timber from forest plantations in Sabah totalled about 1.3 million m³. 🌱



About 55% of the 226,000ha of forest plantations in Sabah consists of high-value commercial species. Photo credit: MTIB.

200 Trees Planted To Reduce Carbon Footprint



Some of the 200 saplings awaiting to be planted at the UTP campus.

Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP) planted a total of 200 saplings at its campus in Bandar Seri Iskandar, Perak in an effort to reduce carbon footprint. The event was held in collaboration with the Higher Education Ministry and the Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry, and in conjunction with the recent World Engineering, Science and Technology Congress (Estcon).

UTP has been working on a Carbon Offset Project known as “Save the Earth”, which was launched in June to help mitigate global warming. This was the second time that UTP has embarked on such a project, after having planted 260 trees during the first Estcon in 2010.

UTP has focused on reducing and reworking strategies to minimise carbon dioxide in areas such as air travel, paper usage and electricity consumption. UTP Vice-Chancellor, Datuk Dr. Zainal Abidin Kasim, said that climate change was among the most serious threats facing society.

“Hopefully, the trees we planted will counterbalance carbon emissions, support biodiversity and reduce green-house gases as well as have a less harmful impact on the environment,” he said.

About 1,200 representatives from 45 countries attended Estcon, which carried the theme “Towards Sustainability: Bridging Engineering, Technology and Humanities”. 🌱

MMC’s Commitment To Nature

In their quest to do more for the conservation of the environment, Multimedia College (MMC) students will plant 26,000 trees under its “1 Youth Minifest 2012 for Green” campaign.

The students launched their campaign with the planting of 400 trees at Taman Kejiranan Ayer Panas, near MMC’s campus in Kuala Lumpur. The effort was praised by the Ministry of Federal Territories and Urban Well-being Secretary-General, Datuk Ahmad Phesal who said that the initiative should be emulated by other institutions of higher learning in the country.

“The ministry aims to create a green environment especially within the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur,” he said.

Datuk Ahmad Phesal kicked off the event by planting a Spiny Black Olive sapling. About 6,600 trees have been planted throughout Kuala Lumpur by the Ministry so far, with 544 trees having been planted in 2011.

Also present at the event were Telekom Malaysia chairman, Datuk Dr. Halim Shafie, and MMC chief executive officer, Khaneesa Khalid. In addition to the tree planting, the students also launched the River Rangers team to help monitor Bonus River in Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with MMC’s neighbours such as the Police Training Centre, national news agency Bernama and the Kuala Lumpur Department of Irrigation and Drainage. 🌱



Datuk Ahmad Phesal officiating the MMC’s tree-planting event.

Beauties On Mission To Green Kota Kinabalu



Pageant finalists getting their hands dirty for nature.

Twelve Miss Earth Sabah 2012 finalists got their hands dirty in their bid to promote the environment by planting trees. The event was held in conjunction with World Environment Day.

Organised by the Kota Kinabalu City Hall and Sutura Harbour Resort and Spa, 50 trees were planted in the city. Pageant organising director, Madelyne Nandu, said the contestants' involvement in the tree-planting activity was crucial to awaken and create a sense of social responsibility in them.

"These young women play a role as nature's ambassadors and the pageant will help to bring out their leadership by exposing them to some of the most pressing environmental problems," said Nandu, the former Miss Earth Malaysia 2009.

Finalist Deidre Ann Walker hoped to learn more about environmental conservation to help increase public awareness on the subject, especially among the younger generation.

The mayor of Kota Kinabalu, Datuk Abidin Madingkir, officiated the event at Grace Point Sembulan where 30 *Tabebuia pallida* trees were planted. Another 20 *Casuarina equisetifolia* trees were planted at Tanjung Aru, also in the state of Sabah. 🌱

Shah Alam River And Tree For Life 2012

During the Shah Alam River and Tree For Life 2012 event held in conjunction with World Environment Day, 350 volunteers including students planted 2,500 trees along the banks of the Damansara River in the state of Selangor.

The event was jointly organised by the Shah Alam City Council (MBSA), Department of Drainage and Irrigation, Forest Research Institute Malaysia and Sathya Sai Organisation with the aim of promoting awareness on the importance of preserving the environment.

A sum of RM10,000 raised through a charity drive was handed over to MBSA during the event to help fund the tree-planting activity.

Event coordinator K. Moorthy said: "We are spreading the message on the importance of preserving the environment to students from colleges and higher learning institutions because they are the future leaders of the country," he said.

Volunteers from Shah Alam Polytechnic, Management and Science University (MSU) and Taylors University were among the volunteers who waded in knee-deep thick soil to plant the trees.

MSU lecturer, Nazri Idris, felt it was meaningful to be part of the team that was helping to preserve the environment. MSU students P. Annithaa and S. Tanuswary regarded the experience a 'green' knowledgeable journey. 🌱



Shah Alam mayor, Datuk Mohd. Jaafar (centre), officiating the tree-planting event.

A Unique Timber Building



The building consists of three exhibition halls, formed by parallel portal frames and built using a combination of resak and keruing Glulam members.
Photo credit: MTIB.

Malaysia's first commercial building constructed mainly of timber was officially opened by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, His Right Honourable, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd. Yassin, on 22 May 2012. The building has been appropriately named Galeri Glulam to highlight the application of locally manufactured glued laminated timber (Glulam) for its main structures. Malaysian species used for the manufacture of the Glulam are Resak (*Cotylelobium* spp. and *Vatica* spp.) and Keruing (*Dipterocarpus* spp.).

Tan Sri Muhyiddin, in his speech, said that the building of Galeri Glulam is a long-term investment by the government to ensure the sustainability of the timber-based industry, especially in areas that involve wood engineering innovation and R&D.

The building, located in Tebrau, Johor Bahru, serves to showcase applications of structural timber engineered products such as Glulam to specifiers as well as to promote Malaysian timber products such as furniture and Builders' Carpentry and Joinery.

When fully functional, it will also be equipped with the latest technological equipment to train young Malaysian designers, which is part of the government's agenda to encourage the Malaysian

furniture industry to shift from Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) to Original Brand or Design Manufacturing (OBM/ODM).

"I believe our country has the capacity and technological skills to produce timber-based products such as Glulam, which will enhance the country's image globally as a producer of innovative and high-technology wood products," he said.

The Deputy Premier was also pleased to note that the building has achieved more than 80% Industrialized Building System (IBS) score through wood usage. The IBS is one of the government's initiatives to reduce reliance on human labour, as well as to lessen material wastage at construction sites.

“This effort fulfills the minimum requirement of a 70% IBS score for any physical development project undertaken by the government,” he said and added with pride that “this special building has been listed in the Malaysia Book of Records as the first building in Malaysia to use tropical timber with Glulam technology”.

Earlier, His Honourable Tan Sri Bernard Dompok, the Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, in his welcoming address touched on the concerted measures undertaken by his Ministry to enhance the competitiveness of the Malaysian wood-based industry. The measures, which include promoting innovation and upgrading processing technology, are in line with the National Timber Industry Policy (2009-2020) to achieve its annual target of RM53 billion in export of wood products by the year 2020.

The construction of Galeri Glulam was undertaken by the Public Works Department (PWD). Foundation site work began in January 2010, with Bintang Kencana Sdn. Bhd. as the main contractor for the project. A local wood-based product manufacturer, Woodsfield Timber Industries Sdn. Bhd., was contracted to produce the hardwood Glulam beams and columns, the works of which commenced in July 2010.



The building was designed as a three-portal frame with each consisting of eight glue-laminated sections connected by anchor plates and bonded in rods. Photo credit: MTIB.

The jointed timber columns were manufactured at Woodsfield’s factory in Pasir Gudang, Johor and delivered sequentially to the construction site starting August 2010. By January 2011, the erection of the Glulam structure was completed. The structure consists of 39 portals, each made up of four 700mm wide and 150mm thick Glulam elements.

The building consists of three exhibition halls, formed by parallel portal frames and built using a combination of resak and keruing Glulam members. These structural members are connected by glued-in steel rods, bolted and welded to steel brackets and steel plates, applied both at the factory and on-site. It was designed as a three-portal frame with each consisting of eight glue-laminated sections connected by anchor plates and bonded in rods.



KERUING

Botanical Name – *Dipterocarpus* spp.

Classification – Medium Hardwood

Uses

Posts, beams, joists, rafters, ship and boat building (keels, keelsons and framework), container flooring and when treated, it is suitable for railway sleepers, harbour works, bridges, power-line poles and telegraph poles.

Description

Sapwood is well-defined and grey-brown in colour. The heartwood is red-brown or purple-red weathering to a dark red-brown. Grain is straight to deeply interlocked. Texture is moderately coarse to coarse but even.

The portal frames were covered with marine plywood sheets of 12mm thick, which were subsequently covered with 0.3mm thick zinc sheets. The inner side of the roof consists of pre-coated boards (12mm thick, 57mm wide and 3m long) made of solid Keranji (*Dialium* spp.) and Balau (*Shorea* spp.). This inner surface conceals the fire sprinkler system.

The roof covering was originally designed to incorporate exterior coated metal sheeting, but was later altered to incorporate shingles made of Belian (*Eusideroxylon zwageri*). Approximately 350,000 pieces of belian shingles were applied, each 6mm thick, 100mm wide and 520mm long. This change in specification was in line with keeping the project philosophy of having the structure as the first Iconic Timber Building in Malaysia.

All interior and exterior exposed timber was coated with single pack lightly pigmented PU while all interior and exterior end grain surfaces were treated with a Boron solution.

During the construction, some enhancements to the hardwood Glulam members were carried out to ensure the durability and expected service life of the material. Measures were also drawn up to



Tan Sri Muhyiddin (second left) taking a closer look at samples of timber members exhibited in the gallery. Photo credit: MTIB.

detect problems in the performance of the glued-in rod connections due to exposure to site conditions as well as any other manufacturing problems and issues such as elevated temperatures when utilising glued-in rod connections with epoxy structural adhesives.

The construction of Galeri Glulam was completed at end-October 2011 and handed over by PWD to the Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB), the project owner, in December 2011. In taking on this ambitious project, MTIB has demonstrated the potential of indigenous tropical hardwood as a suitable raw material for manufacturing structural Glulam. 🌱



RESAK

Botanical Name – *Cotylelobium* spp. and *Vatica* spp.

Classification – Heavy Hardwood

Uses

Bridges, piling, marine construction, beams, posts, joists, pallets, door and window frames and sills, flooring (heavy traffic), railway sleepers, fender supports, staircase (angle blocks, rough brackets, carriage, riser, stringer, tread, bullnose, round end and winder), heavy duty furniture and wooden containers.

Description

Sapwood is light coloured and sharply defined in *Cotylelobium* but not generally so in *Vatica*. Heartwood is pale yellow when fresh and turning to deep red-brown on exposure in *Cotylelobium* and brown with a green tinge in *Vatica*. Grain is straight or only slightly interlocked. Texture is fine and even.





WEI-LING GALLERY

WHERE WOOD IS ALSO AN ART PIECE

The Wei-Ling Gallery occupies the top three floors of CSL Associates' office in Brickfields, in Malaysia's capital city of Kuala Lumpur. In 2004, a fire razed the building and gutted this old colonial period shoplot. When architect Jimmy Lim of CSL Associates restored his office, the upper floors that used to archive drawings and documents were left empty. Wei-Ling, who was then running her Townhouse Gallery nearby, prompted her dad Jimmy Lim, to turn it into an art gallery.

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Under his able hands, Jimmy Lim had creatively morphed it into an airy gallery space with the addition of just a few platforms connected by stairs and bridges, using mainly one material: timber, the signature material which is the essence of Jimmy Lim's architectural style. The double-volume space is laid with square plywood floor "tiles", some of which are changed to tempered glass to provide visual connection with the floor below as well as to reveal the construction of both the new and the old charred timber floors. The charred timbers are meant to showcase the fact that timber burns slowly through a fire, enabling better predictability for any rescue operations.

Two plywood platforms on timber joists straddle across the gallery space at both ends. They are connected by timber staircases and narrow timber walkways bracketed off the walls. The timber balustrades are topped with counters which provide ready surfaces to place one's drink or *hors d'oeuvres* during art viewings.



The double-volume space is laid with square plywood floor "tiles", some of which are changed to tempered glass to provide visual connection with the floor below as well as to reveal the construction of both the new and the old charred timber floors.





To minimise cost, the ceiling is sheathed with sheets of 3' x 8' plywood and installed in a staggered fashion for interesting effect as well as to accommodate concealed lighting. Track lights are used to illuminate the paintings on the walls. The whole space – with the rawness of the natural timber finish, exposed nuts and bolts in the construction joints, glass-cased charred timber flooring, minimally dressed walls – is meant to provide an honest but warm and unintimidating space for beautiful art pieces to be showcased and appreciated.

This approach to timber detailing, *i.e.*, the deliberate exposure of the connections, joints, bolts and nuts, is reminiscent of the nuts-and-berries or the Sydney School style of the 1960s. This partly reflects the influence of Jimmy Lim's architectural training at the University of New South Wales, Australia. The architect's love for timber and innate passion for maintaining colonial structures are evident in the Wei-Ling Gallery, which exudes character and elegance.

While most modern galleries made of brick and stone are cold and unwelcoming, Wei-Ling Gallery's timber features exude warmth and coziness, encouraging visitors to linger longer. More importantly, its construction points to wood as a material capable of being turned into an art piece in itself, creating a renewed interest in pushing timber at the forefront of interior design that is authentically and uniquely Malaysian.

Since its opening in 2005, the Wei-Ling Gallery has become a popular exhibition space in the Kuala Lumpur art scene. 🌿

For further information on art shows at the Wei-Ling Gallery, please go to:
www.weiling-gallery.com



A flight of stairs bracketed off two charred timber posts that survived the fire. The charred timbers are meant to showcase the fact that timber burns slowly through a fire, enabling better predictability for any rescue operations.



A close-up view of the old charred timber floor through the tempered glass floor tiles.



To minimise cost, the ceiling is sheathed with sheets of 3' x 8' plywood and installed in a staggered fashion for interesting effect as well as to accommodate concealed lighting.

MTC SupplyWeb

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Resources



MTC SupplyWeb is a web-based information database that lists Malaysian suppliers of timber products and service providers that relate to the use of wood. This database serves as a one-stop information centre for consumers of timber products and services.

The aim of MTC SupplyWeb is to promote wider use of Malaysian timber both locally and abroad. Timber buyers and consumers are able to access information on Malaysian suppliers of timber products and providers of related services through the Web.

Additional Features:

- Companies with existing websites can link to MTC SupplyWeb.
- MTC can create a "gallery-style" website for companies without existing website.
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Dr Eric Ng (eric@mtc.com.my) / Lucas Low (low@mtc.com.my) OR Fax: 03-92828999

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CBD WGRI 4

The fourth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation (WGRI 4) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convened at the headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal, Canada from 7-11 May 2012.

WGRI 4 adopted eight recommendations that will be submitted to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD, to be held from 8-19 October 2012, in Hyderabad, India.

The recommendations address:

- the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- the Strategy for Resource Mobilization;
- the Financial Mechanism (GEF);
- the message to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20);
- cooperation with other conventions;
- biodiversity for poverty eradication and development;
- engagement of business; and
- South-South cooperation.

Awareness of the rapidly approaching 2020 deadline for achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as set out in the CBD's Strategic Plan, has increased attention to implementation. Both of this spring's intersessional CBD meetings – the sixteenth meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice as well as WGRI 4 – have recognised implementation is paramount to achieving the 2020 deadline. However, debates on this and related issues were unusually tame, even “peaceful”, according to some participants. The mild tone called into question the purpose and efficacy of WGRI 4 in the CBD process.

Looking ahead to Hyderabad, and based on the lackluster, “visionless” discussions at WGRI 4, delegates were left wondering how resource mobilisation discussions have been positioned for the eleventh COP (COP 11) in October 2012. Although incremental progress will be possible on aspects of resource mobilisation, the initial outcomes on the “preliminary” reporting framework



Chair Kazuaki Hosino, Japan, gaveling the meeting to a close.
Photo credit: iisd.ca

for monitoring progress, with bracketed baselines, may not set COP 11 up to make its expected decisions on funding targets. Old funding debates are also sure to receive heightened pressure as well, since gaps in financial flows will delay further work on data-gathering.

The CBD's message to the Rio+20, written as a call from 193 parties, urges world leaders to ensure that biodiversity considerations are integrated into future decision-making and punctuates the need for adequate and timely financial resources to be mobilised. Time will tell if it packs the “punch” to bring biodiversity onto an already busy stage.

The agenda for the next meeting of the CBD COP includes consideration of, *inter alia*: the status of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from their Utilisation; implementation of the Strategic Plan 2011-2020 and progress towards the Biodiversity Targets; issues related to financial resources and the financial mechanism; and biodiversity and climate change. 🌱

Source: *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Volume 09 Number 573, 14 May 2012.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Bonn Conference



A presentation being made during the conference. Photo credit: iisd.ca

The Bonn Climate Change Conference took place from 14-25 May 2012 in Bonn, Germany. The conference comprised the 36th sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). It also included the 15th session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the 17th session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) and the first session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP).

Under the SBI, key issues discussed included loss and damage, national adaptation plans (NAPs), and reporting by Annex I and non-Annex I parties. The SBSTA focused on agriculture, research and systematic observation, and methodological guidance on REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries). Technology and response measures were considered under both the SBI and SBSTA.

Under the AWG-KP, the focus was on issues that need to be finalised to adopt a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and for the AWG-KP to conclude its work at the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. These include matters relating to quantified emission limitation or reduction objectives (QELROs) with a view to adopting these as amendments to Annex B to the Kyoto Protocol and carry-over of assigned amount units (AAUs). While discussions under the AWG-KP advanced understanding of these issues, many outstanding questions remain, including the



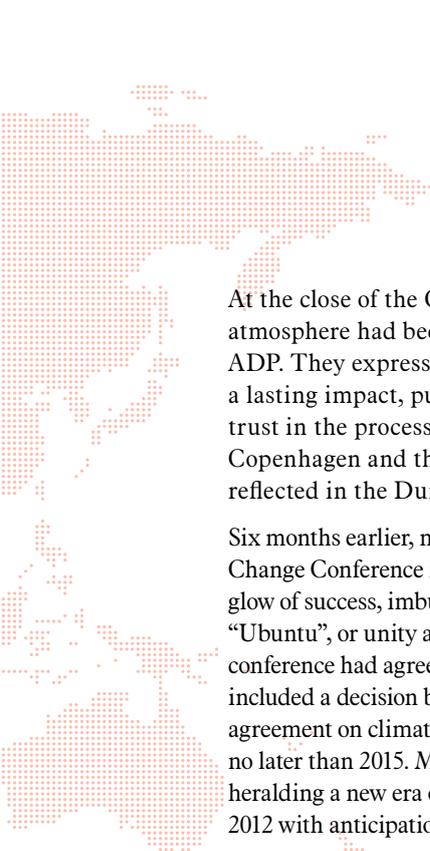
UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiania Figueres, addressing members of the mass media covering the conference. Photo credit: iisd.ca

length of the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and carry-over of surplus units.

Under the AWG-LCA, parties initially debated the agenda and whether it adequately reflected progress since the adoption of the Bali Action Plan at COP 13 in 2007. After agreement on the agenda, debates continued on which issues require consideration so that the AWG-LCA can finalise its work at COP 18 in Doha.

Developed countries stressed “significant progress” and the various new institutions established in Cancun and Durban. They called for a focus on specific tasks mandated by Decision 2/CP.17 (Outcome of the work of the AWG-LCA). Developing countries identified the need to continue discussing issues such as finance, technology, adaptation, capacity building and response measures in order to fulfill the mandate in the Bali Action Plan.

Under the ADP, discussions centered on the agenda and election of officers. After nearly two weeks of discussions, the ADP plenary adopted the agenda and agreed on the election of officers during the final day of the conference.



At the close of the Conference, many felt that the atmosphere had been “tense,” especially under the ADP. They expressed hope that this would not have a lasting impact, putting at risk efforts to rebuild trust in the process over the past two years since Copenhagen and the “delicate balance” of interests reflected in the Durban Package.

Six months earlier, many delegates left the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban basking in the warm glow of success, imbued with the infectious spirit of “Ubuntu”, or unity and interconnectedness. The conference had agreed on several landmark decisions, included a decision by Parties to adopt a universal legal agreement on climate change as soon as possible, and no later than 2015. Many saw these decisions as heralding a new era of multilateralism and turned to 2012 with anticipation, vigor and purpose.

Six months later, the pressure was on delegates in Bonn to live up to the promise of Durban. Delegates faced a heavy workload, including the tasks needed to operationalise the institutions and mechanisms established in Cancun and Durban. However, negotiations in 2012 got off to an inauspicious start and the Bonn Climate Change Conference was marred by mistrust and unabashed posturing. The meeting was almost paralyzed by prolonged procedural wrangling, which many described as “unprecedented”.

In Durban, under the AWG-KP track, parties agreed to “decide that the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol shall begin on 1 January 2013”. However, it is clear to everybody that to “really adopt” the second commitment

period, parties will have to agree on its length, put forward QELROs and adopt the necessary amendments to the Kyoto Protocol in Doha. Some questions remain on key issues such as on how to ensure a smooth transition to the second commitment period, how to deal with excess units from the first commitment period, how rules can be continued and, in particular, how to continue with the flexibility mechanisms, including who will be able to participate, given that some countries indicated they would not be part of a second commitment period. In Bonn, developing countries reiterated that parties intending to participate in the second commitment period should submit ambitious QELROs in line with the goal of limiting temperature increase to below 2°C. Venezuela vociferously demanded that Annex I parties “show their QELROs” as opposed to pledges. The EU highlighted their submission of QELROs and also called upon their Annex B colleagues to follow suit.

Moreover, in order to finish shaping the second commitment period and properly adopt it in Doha, parties have to agree on its length and on the text of the Kyoto Protocol amendment, but negotiations in Bonn did not lead to any further progress in this regard. With so many relevant details to be defined before Doha, developing countries expressed fear that parties are “jumping from the Kyoto Protocol ship” by shifting the focus on the ADP. The EU and other developed countries argued, in turn, that their agreement on a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol was based on a transition to a global and comprehensive post-2020 climate treaty to be negotiated under the ADP.

Bonn demonstrated that, as many have said, Durban was a carefully negotiated package contingent on all elements of the outcome moving forward in tandem. However, what is clear is that parties have a very different perspective of what the future looks like in terms of, *inter alia*, the ADP’s mandate, how to terminate the AWGs and what to focus on for effectively addressing climate change. As evidenced in Bonn, constructive ambiguity results in uncertainty that can sometimes breed mistrust. This mistrust is often manifested through disputes over procedure and consequently hampers progress. Looking ahead, parties have their work cut out to accomplish tasks they agreed to in Durban. They will need to exercise goodwill, integrity and congeniality in order to deliver on the ultimate objective of meaningful mitigation action for the post-2012 era. 🌱

Source: Earth Negotiations Bulletin, Volume 12 Number 546, 28 May 2012.

Participants negotiating the agenda in the ADP informal consultations.
Photo credit: iisd.ca



QATAR

Project Qatar 2012

MTC participated in the 9th International Trade Exhibition for Construction Technology, Building Materials, Equipment and Environmental Technology for Qatar (Project Qatar) held on 30 April – 3 May 2012 at the Doha Exhibition Center in Doha, Qatar.

The fair is a high-profile Qatari event showcasing a wide range of building materials, including wood-based products as well as construction equipment and machinery.

A total of 1,420 companies exhibited their products and services in five halls with total exhibition space of 82,000m². The international representation was from 46 countries comprising 1,056 companies including 26 national pavilions.

MTC participated under the Malaysia Pavilion to promote the MTC Global WoodMart 2012 and strengthen relationship with timber merchants in the building materials industry. 🌱



MTC's booth at the fair.

MALAYSIA

Timber Talk



Architect Azman Zainal Md. Nor during his presentation.

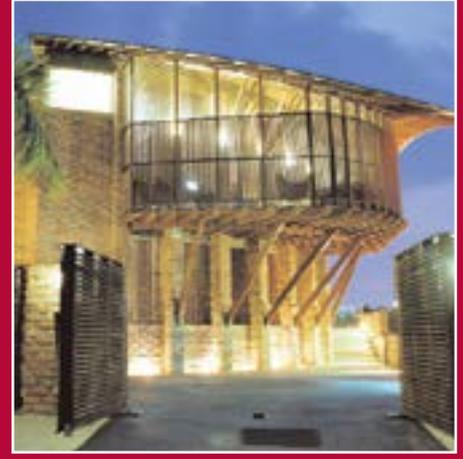
MTC's second Timber Talk for 2012 was held on 10 May at MTC Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

The talk entitled 'Building with Recycled Timber' was presented by architect Azman Zainal Md. Nor and focused on generating interest and confidence in using reclaimed timbers, which is one of the ways to get good timbers at affordable prices.

According to Azman, suggestions to use timber including in construction are often met with skepticism, despite the fact that Malaysia has sizable resources and an established forest management system. "As such, the timber culture is waning, together with its timber craftsmen and specialised tools," he said.

Thus, in his talk, Azman highlighted the advantages of using timber, which can be recycled with minimal energy consumption compared to other building materials. He emphasised on the right approach in recycling used timber, which can be an affordable way to build. Old timber, he said, comes from good logs and the fact that it still exists today is testimony to its quality and durability.

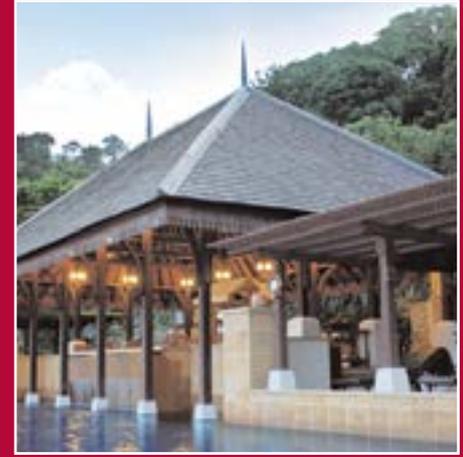
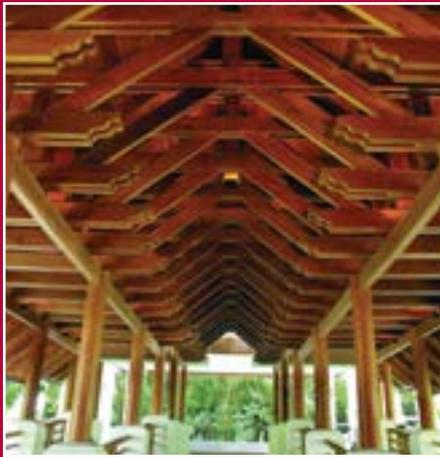
The talk was attended by 54 participants including architects, surveyors, lecturers, architectural students as well as members of the timber industry. 🌱



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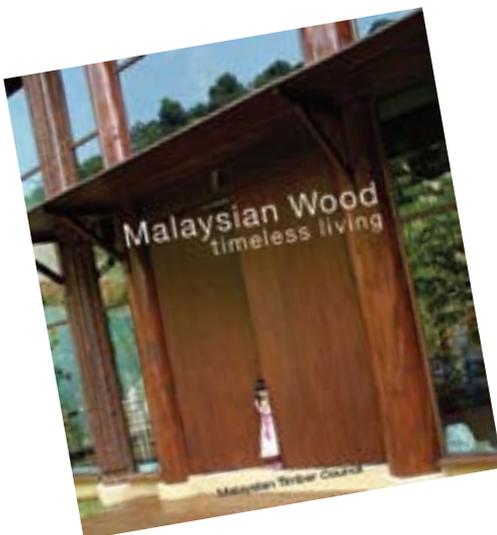
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Niah National Park, Sarawak

The enormous caverns of Niah National Park are among Borneo’s most incredible natural attractions and certainly the most important. The oldest evidence of human habitation in Southeast Asia, dating back 40,000 years, was said to be found at Niah, making the Park one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. Yet there is much more to Niah than archaeology. A vast cave known as the Great Cave, which is swarming with bats and swiftlets; the thriving local economy based on bird nests and guano (bird and bat droppings); old cave paintings; a majestic rainforest criss-crossed with walking trails; abundant plant and animal life - all these and more make up the geological, historical and environmental kaleidoscope that is Niah.

Niah National Park is located along the Niah River, about 3km from the small town of Batu Niah. The park was first gazetted as a National Historic Monument in 1958, and in 1974 some 3,100ha of surrounding lowland dipterocarp forest and limestone hills were included to form Niah National Park.

The Great Cave is approximately 3.5km from the Park headquarters, and is easily reached via a wooden boardwalk. The stroll along the boardwalk, which takes about 45 minutes is fascinating in its own right. It passes through mangrove swamps, palm groves and rainforests that are home to numerous wildlife including swiftlets. Locals gather the birds’ nests, made from glutinous saliva, to sell for use in bird’s nest soup. Collectors of these nests climb narrow rattan ladders or bamboo poles up to 50m high to reach the cave roof to harvest the nests.



Access to the Painted Cave. Photo credits: contosdemochila.com

The Painted Cave contains old wall paintings, which depict the lifestyle of the people living in by-gone eras. They are rendered in red hematite and portray human figures as warriors and hunters guarding over a gravesite.

The 45-minute boardwalk passes through mangrove swamps, palm groves and rainforests that are home to numerous wildlife.



Bird’s nest collectors climb narrow rattan ladders or bamboo poles up to 50m high to reach the cave roof to harvest the nests. Photo credit: Sarawak Tourism Board.





The enormous caverns of Niah are among Borneo's most incredible natural attractions.
Photo credit: Sarawak Tourism Board.

Both caves were used as gravesites where bodies were buried in wooden, boat-shaped coffins. Although the burial site at the Painted Cave is far more recent than those at the Great Cave, it is of equal significance as it offers a clear insight into the religious beliefs of ancient Borneo. There are also illustrations of coffins carrying the souls of the deceased on their final journey.

The return journey from the Great Cave around sunset will enable the visitor to see two large black 'clouds' intermingling. This is the nightly 'changing of the guards' where half a million swiftlets return to their nests whilst an equivalent number of bats fly out to forage in the forest. This is one of Niah's most spectacular sights, the other being the unusual number of luminous fungi, which can be seen clearly from the boardwalk at night.

Apart from the caves, visitors can explore several kilometers of trails that lead through beautiful primary rainforest, climb a 400m-tall limestone ridge or visit an Iban longhouse located near the Park boundary. Visitors can also rent a boat or walk along the river edges from the Park headquarters to Batu Niah. 🌿

LOCATION

The Park is situated near the coast, 100km to the south of Miri in northern Sarawak.

ACCESS

Batu Niah, the gateway to the Park, is 11km west of Niah Junction on the Miri-Bintulu Road. From Batu Niah, you can walk or take a longboat or car ride to the Park headquarters.

ENTRANCE FEES

Park entrance is RM10 for adults and RM5 for children under 18.

TIPS

Old clothes, facial towels and hats are recommended in the caves as protection from the bird droppings. It is advisable to carry a torch light while visiting the caves.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For enquiries, please contact:
National Parks Booking Office
c/o Visitors Information Centre
Lot 452, Jalan Melayu
98000 Miri, Sarawak.
Tel: +60 8 5434184
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Old wall paintings dating back 1,000 years found in the Painted Cave.

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