Timber Trade Federation | Members Magazine

FOCUS

Issue thirty nine July/August 2004

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Introducing the new President

John Tong was elected the Federation's President at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 14 July 2004

Aged 52, married with three children. John has over 30 years experience in the timber industry, starting as a management trainee with Montague L Meyer, Hull in 1970, John then progressed from internal sales to Sales Director of Williams and Farmer, Gloucester (a timber importer) from 1974–1982. John joined Finnforest, then called Mallinson Denny, in 1982 and has remained with the group in its many different forms. His career has included positions as Trading Director of Malden Timber (146 merchant outlets), Buying Director of Hunter Timber, Joint Managing Director of Hunter Timber and Sales Director of Stantons. Today John is the Managing Director of Finnforest UK Ltd (circa £250 million business) employing 950 staff in 7 locations in the UK.

"We are moving into a period of accelerating change, both in the UK and Europe as a whole, where legislation is constantly on the move and we need a strong, united voice to ensure that the interests of our Industry are protected."

Why did you personally agree to become the Federation's President?

I firmly believe that the industry needs a strong Federation to represent its interests. Without it, the individual trade members will never be able to make best use of their combined skills, knowledge and strengths and we will have a weaker industry as a result.

Personally I have benefited from being part of the industry for a long time now and rather than sitting on the sidelines and being a critic, I felt I should make a contribution to strengthen the Federation for the benefit of all. It's essential to ensure the Federation is seen as relevant and inclusive for the whole Industry and I hope that the wide variety of experiences I've had in the trade over the past thirty years will allow me to appreciate and represent everyone's requirements effectively.

How do you see the TTF at present?

The Federation has been going through a difficult time financially and there have been some internal management issues. However, a new structure has been put in place and the financial situation is back in balance. Clearly, there are some Members questioning the benefits and cost of membership. We have a strong core team of permanent staff within the Federation and the amount of work and effort they actually put in for the benefit of the trade is not always fully appreciated.

I will be taking over a firm foundation that has credibility and this gives me the opportunity to build further and restore confidence where it is lacking.

What are your key priorities for your term of office?

To restore confidence in the Federation and establish an effective and suitable method of securing its long term financial stability. I will be looking to set a strategy that reflects the membership's needs and create a structure that is vibrant, forward-thinking and responsive.

We are moving into a period of accelerating change, both

Timber Trade Federation

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The Timber Trade Federation's mission is to help create and sustain the conditions in which its members can prosper. The Federation represents the timber industry's views to Government and other organisations and provides information, services and advice to its members.

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Introducing the new President continued from page 1

in the UK and Europe as a whole, where legislation is constantly on the move and we need a strong, united voice to ensure that the interests of our industry are protected.
It is my hope that the Federation will become a broader church representing all aspects of our Industry from forest to consumer. It is evident to me that by having a clear strategy and a single approach to government, both in the EU and the UK, that we will have a united and strong message that government must listen to. Through all of this we will need to make sure that our Members are kept fully aware of how their interests are being furthered and that they are able to take full advantage of all the Federation has to offer.

What do you see as the TTF's strengths and where has it not been so strong?

The Federation does have a good reputation and has access to EU and UK processes that would be denied to individual companies. We also have environmental, forestry, technical and public affairs expertise and the introduction of the Code of Conduct is clearly an asset for Members but one that we continually need to strengthen. Where it has not been so strong is on the financial side where we are too dependent upon a few core Members and that we do not represent all parts of our industry which would include forestry, UK producers and large manufacturers of wood goods.

What are the biggest challenges facing the trade in the next decade and what should the TTF do to meet these challenges?

Proving that we have strong environmental credentials, resisting the challenge from competing products such as steel, concrete and plastic and establishing timber as the only sustainable product for the construction industry. To meet these challenges, first of all we need to generate sufficient funds to be able to promote the benefits of our products – our competitors are already well ahead of us in this area. To that end, we are looking to create a Promotional Premium and work closely with wood.for good and other agencies to ensure the effective use of any monies that are raised.
It is essential that we do fairly represent all parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland and all of the product group areas.
In summary, we need a strong pro-active Federation that represents the best interests of all of its Members. Through the Federation we need our industry to pull together as one and appreciate that it is no longer acceptable to sit on the sidelines and criticise. All sectors of our trade need to get involved and become positive activists who are going to help deliver this for the benefit of us all.

The Wood Awards goes on tour

The organisers of the Wood Awards have announced that a display of all the short-listed projects will go on tour after the summer judging period.

Entries have now closed for The Wood Awards 2004, which is the first time that the Awards have been held annually. This year the panel of judges will visit their selected shortlist during June and July, from the record 230 entries received.
The short-listed projects for 2004 will be unveiled and exhibited in a special display at **100% Detail** – the architectural show at Earls Court from 23-25 September.
Shortly after, the shortlist will be presented to the annual conference of the **Institute of Wood Science**, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Birmingham on 30 September, by Giles Downes of Sidell Gibson – Chairman of the awards' judges.
Finally the shortlist will be a central attraction at **Woodmex**, from 10-13 October, in the Atrium entrance of the NEC in Birmingham, with a display funded by the American Hardwood Export Council, one of the main sponsors of The Wood Awards.
This UK tour will further raise interest in The Wood Awards, now the pre-eminent event for wood in architecture and joinery. The Awards ceremony will be held at the Carpenters' Hall in the City of London in October.
Full details of the awards, and the progress of the 2004 short-listed projects, will be regularly updated on **www.woodawards.com**

Keep in the E News **If you would like to subscribe to our weekly electronic newsletter or our corporate social responsibility information service then email Mark O'Brien on mobrien@ttf.co.uk**

Sustainable Buildings Task Group

THe UK Timber Frame Association is part of the Sustainable Building Task Group. Below is a summary of group's work so far.

- The Government's policy for Sustainable Communities aims to deliver more housing and improved neighbourhoods. Vital background is also the Energy White Paper and the Government's carbon reduction commitments.
- Following the Better Buildings Summit in October 2003, the Government Departments of ODPM, DEFRA and DTI, jointly announced the establishment of a Sustainable Buildings Task Group (SBTG).
- The aim of this group was to recommend ways in which industry and the Government can work together to promote sustainable development through better environmental performance in new and existing buildings. It uniquely reported to three Secretaries of State; John Prescott, Margaret Beckett, and Patricia Hewitt.
- Specific issues considered included water, energy, timber and other construction materials and waste reduction.
- It is worth noting that timber was specifically included because of concerns with the use of illegally logged timber on several prestigious Government projects. It is a good result that the final report, rather than highlighting this problem, deals professionally with methods to avoid this in the future.

Current Position

- The Government now has three key reports on the Construction Sector, which inter-relate and will be used to form the basis of future policy. These are Kate Barker's report "Review of Housing Supply", Sir John Egan's report "Skills for Sustainable Communities" and the Sustainable Buildings Task Group report "Better Buildings – Better Lives".
- The timber industry now has a unique six month window of opportunity to pro-actively work to maximise the many opportunities contained in these reports.
- During this time, it can influence Government and both the public and private construction sectors to significantly increase the use of timber, as this is without question the most environmentally acceptable material in modern construction.
- The timber industry offers low risk and well proven solutions. For instance, 70% of all low-rise housing in the developed world is timber frame. The UK is the anomaly with only 15% being timber frame.
- Kate Barker's report notes that high quality buildings and high levels of customer satisfaction can be achieved from Off-Site Construction – timber frame is the largest and most proven method of OSC. Many use the term Modern Methods of Construction – again timber frame is the most proven of these techniques and represents a lower risk to insurers and mortgagers than other methods.
- Sir John Egan's report emphasises the need to develop generic skills and again OSC in timber frame greatly assists with issues of site skill shortages. It also assists with communication, using IT integration between architect, manufacturer and builder – others in the supply chain can join this equation.
- The UKTFA's new Site Erector Training approach, developed in conjunction with the European Social Fund, exists to increase site skills and offer opportunities for the unemployed to transfer to a growing sector as well as further improve building quality.
- All of the SBTG report recommendations are readily achievable with timber frame construction, not just at minimum standards required by Building Regulations, but also at the more aspirational levels of the proposed new Code for Sustainable Building (CSB).
- The SBTG notes policy to improve Government timber purchasing practices and highlights that the UK Timber Trade Federation has developed a new responsible purchasing policy for its Members, in direct response to this policy.
- This report recommends that Government provide the necessary short-term funding to implement the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET), which will provide guidance on timber from well-managed sources to Central Government buyers. This service could possibly be extended further in due course, including to the private sector.

Way Forward

This opportunity for the timber industry to be pro-active and respond to the Government's initiatives in these areas has been considered initially by a small group including representatives of the Forestry Commission, wood.for good, Naturally Wood, UKFPA, BRE and UKTFA. A more widespread representation of all aspects of the timber industry can be developed in due course depending on interest received following this briefing.

Immediate Actions Agreed

These actions will be carried out, not only by the industry, but also in close co-ordination and co-operation with appropriate Government Departments, NGO's and other interested parties so that a working consensus moving forward is developed for key areas.

1. Timber Procurement - Currently this aspect of Eco Homes/BREEAM is only used in approximately 3 out of 1000 projects. BRE to arrange a Consultation Group including NGO's (especially WWF) and industry to make this more user friendly without reducing standards. More user-friendly guidance removing some of the mystique of this issue may also be required.
2. Current work on Life Cycle Analysis for timber frame to be consolidated and to include more timber frame industry specifics. User friendly guidance would be the key outcome.
3. Research options with the Energy Saving Trust to upgrade the energy conservation performance of existing timber frame buildings and relate to the "Decent Homes" initiative. User friendly guidance would be the key outcome.
4. Research options for improved flood resilience of timber frame for new-build and ensure good information is available for repair of existing buildings. User friendly guidance would be the key outcome.
5. Research into improved recycling and waste minimisation in timber frame manufacture with WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme). User friendly guidance would be the key outcome.
6. Prepare user-friendly cost guidance information on both initial cost and whole life cost for timber frame buildings of various standard types.
7. Work with the insurance and mortgage industry to ensure timber frame is not adversely affected by the risks thought to be associated with other modern methods of construction.
8. Ensure good timber industry input is available for the possible forum at which Kate Barker, Sir John Egan and Sir John Harman will be jointly presenting the joined up conclusions from their reports.
9. Offer a high quality speaker for the "Better Buildings Summit 2" Conference in January 2005 at G-Mex Centre, Manchester. The presentation would highlight the pro-active response of the timber industry as follow-up to these three major Government reports.

Note:

This is only an initial action list prepared by a small group. Any other interested parties in the timber industry or other stakeholders can become involved if they wish by expressing suitable interest to expand and develop the work required in this area. All help is gratefully received.

Timber in context – a statistical review of the timber industry, 2003

The timber industry in the UK is a bigger business than many imagine. Nick Moore reports below.

The timber supply chain comprises a vast number of processing and manufacturing operations that use timber in some form or other, resulting in the confirmed value of wood products in the UK, as measured at manufacturers selling prices by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), of over £7 billion.

There are, of course, many stages before this level is reached, including the importation of wood products in raw material form (logs), semi-manufactured or processed form (often sawn lumber and sheet materials[1]) or as semi-finished or finished components, such as mouldings or door sets.

The value of imports of these products has been measured, again by ONS, and is reproduced below, alongside other leading UK importing industries.

The UK is a net importer of wood products, but there exists a highly active domestic production sector too, producing sawn timbers, panel products and an array of secondary processed, semi-manufactured and finished goods.

The intended audience for this review of the UK timber industry is based at an early stage of the supply chain: from forest to sawmill and into secondary processing, merchanting and distribution operations.

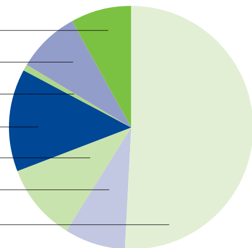
The importing and merchanting sectors of the industry are represented by organisations such as the Timber Trade Federation and the domestic supply side by the United Kingdom Forest Products Association and the Wood Panels Industries Federation. It is the members of these and other organisations that form the generally understood definition of the timber industry in the UK. It is at this stage of the supply chain that the focus tends to be on the trading of sawn timber and sheet materials.

Even at this early stage of supply, the timber industry is large, with sales of **£2.5 billion from 17.5 million cubic metres** of sawn timber and sheet materials in 2003.

Turnover and Volume

The breakdown of timber products by traded values in 2003 is as follows. **Chart 1**, In percentage terms, sawn softwood products comprised nearly 51% of the total of traded **values** in 2003. By adding sawn hardwood values to those of softwood, sawn products in

Chart 1: Value of timber products traded in the UK, 2003 £ millions



Total = £2.5 billion

Chart 2: Timber product volumes traded in the UK, 2003

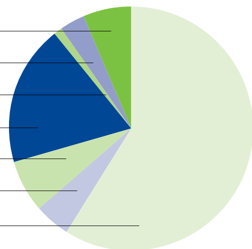
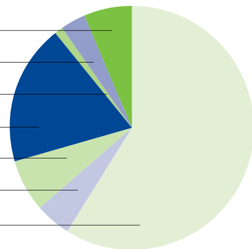


Chart 3: Timber product volumes traded in the UK, 2003 000s m³



Imports to the UK, Leading Industries, 2000 – 2002, £ millions

Industry	2000	2001	2002
Road vehicles	23,117	26,365	28,394
Clothing	8,495	9,160	9,792
Petroleum and Products	9,048	9,232	8,838
Metal manufactures	4,065	4,337	4,481
Beverages	2,910	2,860	3,021
Wood products*	**2,438**	**2,507**	**2,649**
Toilet Preparations	2,005	2,267	2,490
Footwear	2,001	2,244	2,363
Tobacco Products	1,440	1,370	1,447
Coal, Gas & Electricity	968	1,270	1,005

Source: Office of National Statistics

***Both supply of imported timber materials and imported timber manufactures.**

[1] The general classification of timber products used in this review is sawn timbers (softwoods and hardwoods) and panel products (particleboards, OSB, plywood, MDF and fibreboards).

Chart 4: Timber product volume % change, 2003/2002

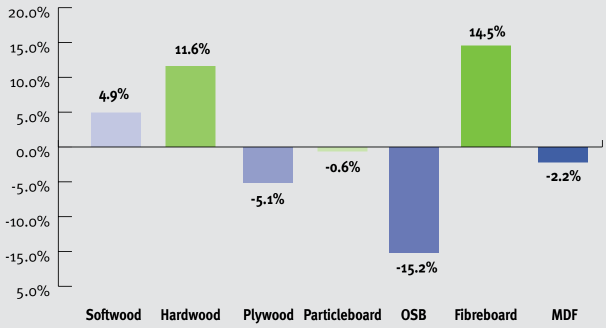
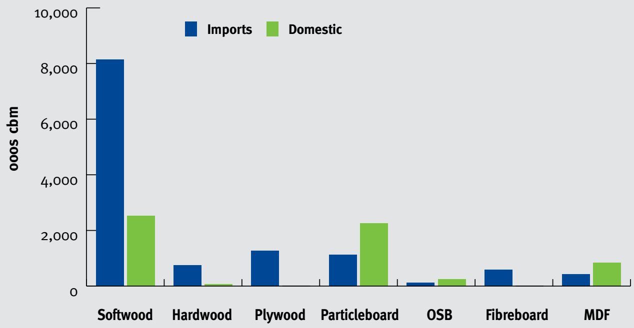


Chart 6: Timber product volumes traded in the UK 2003, by source



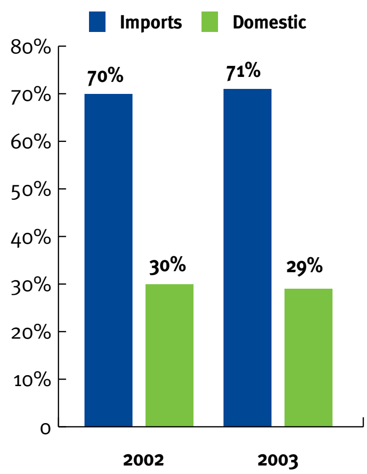
2003 represented 59% of the industry's traded value; panel products of many types making up the remaining 41%. It should be noted that fibreboard statistics are currently under review and it appears likely that the figures provided are over-stated.

A more frequently used comparison between products is by volume. The differing values placed on different timber products is exemplified by softwoods, which (above) comprise nearly 51% of the total value of timber products while accounting for 59% by volume. Similar, but less marked differences exist with hardwoods and plywood. The importance of particleboard within the industry is seen, claiming nearly 19% of all volumes in 2003 in **chart 2** below (slightly down on revised 2002 figures). The percentages in chart 2 are derived from the volumes shown in **chart 3**. Sawn softwood remains the single largest product and is made up of imported and domestically produced product. Consumption of the total of all softwood (imported and domestic) volumes increased in 2003 over 2002 by 4.9% or over half-a-million cubic metres. The percentage changes for each product is provided in **chart 4**, "Timber Product Volume % Change, 2003/2002".

Comparisons, 2003 vs 2002

As reported, volumes of sawn goods rose appreciably in 2003. The total increase in apparent consumption of sawn goods was 5.4%. Imported panels as a group fell by 2.7% in 2003 with the 0.9% growth in domestically produced panels unable to compensate, resulting in a total decline in 2003 of 1.2% in the consumption of all panels. Comparisons for all products are described below and in overall terms, the growth in 2003 for all products in this review was 2.9%, or 496,000m³.

Chart 5: Timber product volumes traded in the UK, 2003 & 2003



Source of Supply

The volumes delivered to the many timber-using markets in the UK are sourced from domestic suppliers and from the numerous timber and panel producing countries from around the world.

The proportion of imported timber products to the UK, by volume was 71% in 2003, up by 1 percentage point on the revised 2002 totals. This is shown graphically in **chart 5**.

The difference in the source of products, by product type, is described in **chart 6**.

Imports have traditionally played a major role in the development of the UK timber industry and they continue to be the major source of supply for sawn softwoods, hardwoods, plywood and 'wet-process' forms of fibreboard. However, domestically produced particleboard and MDF volumes are higher than UK imports.

The timber industry in the UK has long been recognised as being highly influential in people's lives, for the purposes of building, for making furniture, for packaging, transport, making tools, decorating and a host of other uses; and the combined values of this industry, as shown in this review, also establishes it as one of the largest in the UK.

Sources: TTF – Timber Trade Federation; EPF – European Panels Federation; FC – Forestry Commission; WPIF – Wood Panels Industries Federation; ***timbertrends*** – independent analyst; ONS – Office of National Statistics

Producer Groups: bringing "legal and sustainable" timber to market

WWF's Global Forest & Trade Network, the global network of affiliated groups that includes the WWF UK Forest & Trade Network, is rapidly establishing "Producer Groups" in South East Asia, Central and West Africa, Latin America, Russia and Eastern Europe. How can Producer Groups help the UK timber trade source "legal and sustainable" timber from these regions? Darius Sarshar reports.

In many countries where forests are especially valuable and threatened, forest certification remains very much a distant goal. In many of these countries the trade in forest products is significant but even with a strong market demand certification has not worked on the ground, despite a decade of constant demand.

There are many reasons why certification has not worked in these places. For forests in many of these countries some of the foundations needed for certification are not in place:

- Illegal logging and other forest crimes may be rife
- There is a lack of technical expertise
- There is a lack of finance
- The market has had little trust or patience in the lengthy process that would lead to certification

Technical assistance in forest inventory and silviculture to forest concessionaire exporting sawn hardwoods

Like the Timber Trade Federation, WWF believes that the power of the market can be harnessed to drive improvements in forest management in the way that it has improved the buying practices of many buyers. The ten year history of WWF consuming country Forest & Trade Networks or "Buyer Groups" has shown how buying responsibly can drive certification. WWF now believes this force can be used to drive certification again, this time through producing country Forest & Trade Networks or "Producer Groups" and their participants.

WWF/GFTN Producer Groups are Forest and Trade Networks for producers – forest owners, forest managers, processors and manufacturers that are committed to achieving credible certification following a stepwise approach.

Sourcing from a forest which is part of a WWF/GFTN Producer Group has the following benefits:

- The forest may be fully certified and able to supply "legal and sustainable" timber
- The forest may not be certified but can supply timber that is "in progress" to certification
- Uncertified forests are committed to credible certification within 5 years, often sooner
- The commitment is genuine and credible
- The forest is "legal" – tenure and harvest rights have been established
- The forest will be developing transparent and robust chain of custody systems

Sourcing from a processor in a WWF/GFTN Producer Group also has benefits:

- The processor may be chain-of-custody certified and able to supply "legal and sustainable timber"
- The processor may not be certified but may be able to supply timber that is "legal" or "in progress"
- The processor will be developing transparent and robust chain of custody systems as a priority
- The processor will be committed to phase out all illegal and controversial timber from their supply chain within 5 years, often sooner
- The commitment is genuine and credible

How do WWF/GFTN Producer Groups work?

WWF has no monopoly on expertise in forest certification and supply chain management. Indeed, a range of independent service providers, expert consultants and other organisations will likely be required to support participating companies in each country. Producer groups offer a credible and transparent global framework within which these different entities can come together to assist forest operations to achieve credible certification, and to assist processors to eliminate timber from illegal and controversial sources from their supply chains. WWF/GFTN provides the framework rules, practical tools and advice to guide progress, and gives participating companies the credibility and market recognition they need to capture the market benefits they need to support their commitments.

Each WWF/GFTN Producer Group itself is administered by a manager who is supported by regional co-ordinators and a small international secretariat team. Each Producer Group is aligned with WWF GFTN's "Participation Requirements"

Assessor carrying out mill baseline appraisal of concessionaire exporting sawn hardwoods

which means that all of the groups have common entry requirements. Whilst not all the groups are run by WWF they all have common standards of performance. Prior to participating in a WWF/GFTN Producer Group and beginning progress towards certification, a forest management operation will need to undergo a "baseline appraisal" to assess its current management practices against certification requirements. The appraisal is conducted by experienced assessors and identifies the key areas of non-compliance with certification requirements ("gaps"). Once these "gaps" are identified, the Producer Group assists the forest management operation to prepare a time-tabled action plan that documents how and when the operation will achieve certification ("close the gaps") in a stepwise manner. The development and commitment to a Certification Action Plan for a forest management operation is a key requirement for participation in a WWF/GFTN Producer Group. For forest managers, there are a series of 20 modules which cover all the building blocks needed to achieve certification. The plan will show how and when these will be achieved.

WWF/GFTN Producer Groups also assist processors to develop mill action plans. These plans show how and when the mill will develop transparent and robust chain of custody systems and phase out wood from unwanted (including illegal and controversial) sources.

WWF/GFTN Producer Groups use experienced assessors to monitor progress against the action plans on a regular basis. Participants that make consistent progress will stay in the group, those that consistently fail will be ejected.

What next?

WWF/GFTN Producer Groups are an attractive business proposition and more companies are becoming participants all the time. WWF/GFTN Producer Group membership currently stands at 18 full members, 33 applicants (membership in process), and a further 57 potential members. These companies together manage in excess of 17 million hectares of forest in Russia, SE Asia, West & Central Africa and Latin America. Clear messages from Responsible Buyers about the desirability of participation from their suppliers will help make these Groups grow even faster. To get advice on how to get your suppliers involved or to find out more about existing participants, please contact WWF/GFTN today.

What is WWF/GFTN?

The Global Forest and Trade Network is WWF's initiative to eliminate illegal logging and improve the management of valuable and threatened forests.

By facilitating trade links between companies committed to achieving and supporting responsible forestry, the GFTN creates market conditions that help conserve the world's forests while providing economic and social benefits for the businesses and people that depend on them.

Where are WWF/GFTN Producer Groups and who manages them?

Asia

Indonesia	Nusa Hijau (Green Archipelago), WWF Indonesia
Malaysia	Kumpulan Khazanah Hijau (Green Heritage Group), WWF Malaysia
Vietnam	Vietnam Producer Group (under development), WWF Indochina

Central & South America

Bolivia	Bolivia Producers Group (under development), CADEFOR, Centro Amazónico de Desarrollo Forestal
Brazil	Produtores Florestais Certificados na Amazônia (PFCA), Imazon
Central America & Caribbean	Jagwood+, WWF Central America
Peru	Peru Producers Group, WWF Peru

Africa

Central Africa	Groupe du Producteurs d'Afrique Centrale, WWF Central Africa
Ghana	Ghana Producer Group, Friends of the Earth-Ghana

Eastern Europe

Russia	Association of Environmentally Responsible Timber Producers, WWF Russia
Romania	Romania Producer Group, WWF Danube-Carpathians
Bulgaria	Bulgaria Producer Group, WWF Danube-Carpathians

GFTN contacts

To find out more about WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network, visit www.panda.org/forestandtrade

For more information on WWF/GFTN Producer Groups please contact:

Global Market Links Coordinator: **George White (Georgewhite@blueyonder.co.uk)**

Global Producer Group Coordinator: **Darius Sarshar (Dsarshar@yahoo.com)**

Cater's Corner

Mike Cater is having a well-deserved rest this month but has sent the following which might be good money saving scheme.

With summer upon us I would request that you excuse me from "Cater's Corner" duties this time round, as I will be taking my annual holiday. Due to economic pressures brought on by reducing Agency commissions and my concerns about a downturn in the economy I will actually be staying at home.

I will lock the door, close the curtains and in my darkened lounge take a simulated flight to Majorca. I have fitted seat belts to my Parker Knoll recliner and my loved one will stand in front of me with the safety instructions and wave her arms in the direction of the front and back doors and request my slippers do not block the walking area. She will then creep up behind my chair and give it a bit of push and pull to simulate turbulence. After this she will come amongst me with the tea trolley containing beverages and half an hour later will serve me a dry roll, warm orange juice and the plate of salad, which has been on our kitchen worktop covered in cling film for the previous two days. Finally, the plastic cheese which will break the plastic knife. I can enhance the simulation for, by example, eating some bad prawns a couple of days before the return simulated flight so that I am suffering from gastric trouble and can only eat cream crackers.

A sun lamp, potted palm and some holiday videos on the telly. Mother-in-law popping in to do the Bingo calling but then going away again, it could make a perfect holiday with absolutely no stress. I recommend this.

I would like to convey my best wishes for a relaxing holiday period to all readers of Focus.

Mike Cater is the Managing Director of MCI Timply Limited

John Southern retires from the Timber Trade

John Southern has retired from the family timber company of M H Southern & Co Ltd at the end of May after 45 year's service.

During his time in the trade he has been President of the local T.T.B.S., Chairman of the N.E.Coast Timber Trade Association, Director of the Board of Management of the Timber Trade Federation, Chairman of the National Softwood Division.

He is currently Captain of Bamburgh Castle Golf Club that is celebrating its Centenary.

He leaves the company in good hands as his two nephews (fourth generation) will continue to run the business.

James Southern becomes Chairman and Managing Director and Mark Lowis continues as a Director. Both have been with the company for 12 and 7 years respectively.

National Hardwood Division – Nominations for Vice Chairman/Chairman

David McKee has informed the NHD Committee that it is his intention to retire from his current position in the trade at the end of this year. This means that David will not be able to assume the role of Chairman of the NHD at the AGM in February 2005. We are therefore looking for nominations from Members to fill the role of Vice Chairman until February and then assume the position of Chairman of the NHD following the AGM. The post of Chairman of the NHD is for a 2 year period and the holder also becomes a Director of the TTF with a seat on the Governing Board.

If anyone is interested and would like to be considered or indeed if you know someone who should be approached please can you let Caroline Ready (cready@ttf.co.uk) know as soon as possible.

Overseas opportunities in China

Kent Trade Mission to China, 14-19 November, Shanghai. This mission provides an opportunity for export companies to research the market potential or meet business contacts. Grants of £750 are available to SMEs from the UK Trade and Investment.

For further information contact
Jan Fox at internationaltrade@businesslinkkent.com

Hampton review of regulation inspection and enforcement

The CBI has been working with the Hampton Review and is encouraging members to contribute directly. The Review Team is keen to hear from companies that have significant concerns about the way in which inspection and enforcement regimes currently operate and those which have ideas for beneficial changes that could be introduced.

To participate visit
www.hm-Treasury.gov.uk/consultation_and_legislation
The CBI is also collecting examples of contradictory regulations and conflicts in enforcement. If you have any good examples please contact John Tebbit on jtebbit@constprod.org.uk

Keep in the E News **If you would like to subscribe to our weekly electronic newsletter or our corporate social responsibility information service then email Mark O'Brien on mobrien@ttf.co.uk**