



Anti-Illegal Logging Orders Take Effect In Davao Region

Seven months after Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Michael T. Defensor lifted the ban on logging operations in the Caraga and Davao Regions on March 7, 2005, forestry players find themselves facing a new set of problems with new anti-illegal logging measures based on Secretary Defensor's memorandum dated October 20, 2005.

These recent directives include the cancellation of all existing Operations Plans and other similar permits and the ban on the movement of logs/lumber and the processing/milling of stockpiled logs until their sources are verified.

These measures were taken because of the documented illegal logging cases in the region and the various complaints raised by some members of Congress during its hearing on the DENR budget last October 10, 2005.

Those which conduct legitimate logging operations in the area, like PWPA members C. Alcantara and Sons, Inc.; Baganga Plywood Corp.; San Manuel Wood Products Inc.; Mindanao Omega Industries Corp.; and Consolidated Plywood Industries, Inc., will be penalized for actions they did not commit.

Responding to the memorandum, PWPA appealed to the DENR not to generalize the implementation of the directive and to consider exempting its members from the suspension order while the DENR'S inspection/evaluation teams perform their work in the region.

In reply to the Association's request, the DENR allowed all wood processing plants to resume milling operations of their stockpiled logs after verification of their sources and the issuance of the required certificate of origin of their milled/manufactured wood products so that timely transport/shipment could be made to meet their respective domestic and foreign supply commitments.



Future Forest. Well managed plantation of PWPA IFMA holder and would be source of raw materials.

DENR Allows 3 More Companies to Resume Harvesting Operations

After DENR's selective lifting of logging suspension of four companies in August 17, 2005 (see last issue of Woodstock), three more companies, namely, Sirawai Plywood and Lumber Company (SPLC) in Region 9; and M&S Company and Silvicultural Industries, Inc. (SII), both in Region 12, received the go signal to resume their harvesting operations through DENR Secretary Michael T. Defensor's August 31, 2005 memorandum to concerned DENR regional executive directors (REDs).

The decision came after the comprehensive review and field inspection on the performance of said companies conducted by validation teams from the Forest Management Bureau and NGOs. These teams reviewed the reports submitted by the REDs and the on-site status of the peace and order, labor, community services and environmental compliance of these companies.

The approval, however, of these companies' actual timber harvesting operations is still on hold until their respective integrated annual operations plans (IAOPs) have been revised to put more emphasis on their forest protection and reforestation programs. Their conformance will then be evaluated by the office of the undersecretary for Environment and Forestry.

PWPA-FMB Consultation Focuses on Forestry Growth

Issues and programs critical to the development of the forestry sector, especially the wood industry, were discussed recently in a consultation meeting between the PWPA and the Forest Management Bureau (FMB) at the latter's office. Present were PWPA's director-EVP Alfonso C. Keh, Jr., director-VP Florio M. Buñag, executive director Leonardo D. Angeles and adviser Jose A. Lorenzo, Forestry and Environment coordinator Maila R. Vasquez and representatives from members LUZMATIM and IDC; and FMB officers, FMB OIC director Marcial C. Amaro, Jr., assistant director Neria Andin, FMB division chiefs and selected staff members.

One of the major agreements made during the consultation was the creation of a forest-based industry advisory committee (FBIAC) with sub-committees to represent different forest-based industries to ensure that discussion of issues were more focused and productive.

The participants also reiterated the lifting of the

suspension of logging operations, resulting in agreements to reinstate several policies -- such as the DAO 2004-04 and DAO 2004-34-- that were also suspended in lieu of the suspension of the logging operations. Clarification of the real interpretation of a memorandum (dated 17 August 2005) on the lifting of suspension of operations of LUZMATIM, IDC, FGI and the Star Veneer will also be sought.

FMB likewise agreed to review again the guidelines on the issuance of wood processing plants permits, already submitted to the Office of the undersecretary for Environment and Forestry. Proposed additional inputs to the guidelines are the redefinition of re-saw and mini-saw, and the possibility of exporting lumber.

To sustain collaborative efforts and thus strengthen the sector, the parties agreed to hold regular meetings to tackle relevant issues critical to the advancement of the wood industry.

PWPA Meets with Myanmar Forestry Delegation

PWPA recently feted Myanmar ambassador Thaung Sun and other Myanmar delegates who attended the Sept. 27-28 Asean Meeting.

The other Myanmar guests were Forestry director general Than Swe, Kyi Maung and Yin Yin Lay. PWPA chairman Antonio C. Olizon, president Fernando A. Lu, VP-director Ramon Y. Uy, Domingo L. Tan, executive director Leonardo D. Angeles and Regino M. Serafico represented the association.

The attendees took the

opportunity to revisit the topics discussed during the PWPA-participated Myanmar Trade Mission earlier this year. They agreed to further review and consider trade relations especially on wood and mineral products.

DENR's undersecretary for Environment and Forestry Ramon J.P. Paje, director Marcial C. Amaro, Jr. and forester Norlito Sarmiento of the Forest Management Bureau; and Chamber of Mines of the Philippines president Benjamin Philip Romualdez, also attended the meeting.



TOWARD MORE TRADE AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES. Present at the dinner for Myanmar guests (l-r): Kyi Maung, Yin Yin Lay, Forestry dir. gen. Than Swe, ambassador Thaung Sun of Myanmar, DENR usec. R. J.P. Paje and Chamber of Mines president Benjamin Romualdez.

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First step: Understanding legitimate logging

PWPA chairman of the Board Antonio C. Olizon and director-vice president Evaristo M. Narvaez, Jr., tackled the significant issues faced by the wood industry— its future plans, the best land use options and forest management practices — in an interview recently.

Esther Batangan, Advocacy Officer of the Haribon Foundation, and Penny Reyes-Velasco, Managing Director of IMACRON and material development consultant of the Haribon Foundation, met with the PWPA in line with a project of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme in collaboration with Haribon Foundation. The project, dubbed as “Developing Materials for Resource Valuation,” aims to promote the use of resource valuation in land and resource use planning processes to determine best resource use options.

Olizon said that the most significant issue faced by the wood industry today is “insufficient information to best describe the real situation of our forest resources and the wood industry.” He said most of the information being released is, “if inaccurate, exaggerated giving a vague picture of our forest situation and a bad impression on commercial logging.” On the issue of future plans, he said that PWPA submitted several policy and program recommendations to the DENR to promote forestry and the wood industry, among these the creation of the timber board. In terms of the best land use options, he said that the conditions of the area — its climatic type, soil type, topography, market accessibility and other factors — should be considered in developing plantations, for example.

Narvaez, on the other hand, noted the significant comparative advantage of our country. “Mindanao, for example, has been identified for developing fast growing tree species because its land and climate are suitable throughout the year for such venture.”

The former PICOP president also shared his experiences in identifying and implementing several management practices adaptable to different types of natural and plantation forests.

He also said degraded areas could not be planted immediately with indigenous species because of their “shade loving characteristic,” but with fast growing species that could immediately rehabilitate the area.

Olizon and Narvaez both expressed the need for a stable government policy so that the wood industry can effectively contribute to the country’s economy, and to attract local and international investors.

The dialogue proved to be an eye-opener to Velasco and Batangan and other Haribon representatives. It will be recalled that Haribon Foundation launched earlier this year a TV commercial (15 sec. “Leaf”) calling public support against commercial logging. Our spokespersons have hopefully put across that industry players do not consider the interest of their businesses alone, but most especially the concerns of the whole community and population, and that logging is **proper harvesting** of timber and not a threat to the environment.

UPLB Develops Mapping Model for Forest Raw Materials

Filipino scientist have recently developed a computer-based model for inventory and mapping of raw materials for forest-based industries.

The UP Los Baños-College of Forestry and Natural Resources (UPLB-CFNR) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (DOST-ERDB) developed the program, with funding support from the DOST-Philippines Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARDD).

Explaining the model's importance, Dr. Nathaniel Bantayan of UPLB-CFNR and Dr. Evangeline Castillo of DENR-ERDB said that today's furniture and handicraft industries need support in information technology.

"The geographic information system (GIS)-based databank would be the best vehicle from which vital information on the overall picture of the current and future state of these industries can be drawn," they said.

Its databank would include information on actual source of pro-

duction, potential areas which can be sustainable sources of raw materials, market potentials and other vital information to back up and speed up the industry's production, marketing, and global competitiveness.

Dr. Bantayan and Dr. Castillo pointed out that through GIS, any interested furniture and handicraft manufacturer or client can easily locate production source areas. This will provide an efficient system of resource inventory and analysis model for the furniture and handicraft industries. (Source: Philippine Star, September 25, 2005)

ASEAN MINISTERS MEET IN MANILA

Review and enhance cooperation on regional environmental issues, particularly on nature conservation and biodiversity, water resources management and transboundary haze pollution (caused by burning of forests), and to reaffirm their commitment to conserve and to use these resources in a sustainable manner.

These bold objectives became the focus of the ASEAN Environment Ministers' 9th Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment held recently in Makati.

Other meeting highlights: Launch of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), led by DENR secretary Michael T. Defensor; web portal launch of the ASEAN Network on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (ESC) (<http://www.aseansec.org/aiesc.htm>), by H.E. assoc. prof. Koo Tsai Kee, senior parliamentary secretary, Ministry of Environment and Water Resources,

Singapore; and the ministers' adoption of the ASEAN Strategic Plan of Action on Water Resources Management. Also noted was the publication of the Report on the State of Water Resources Management in ASEAN.

The ministers met with their counterparts shortly after the conference. The Fourth ASEAN Plus Three Environment Ministers Meeting became the venue for exchanging views on priority areas of cooperation and on several project ideas to promote collaboration in specific areas. The "Plus Three Countries" are the People's Republic of China, Japan and Republic of Korea. The Plus Three Ministers expressed their interest to collaborate with ASEAN on some of the project ideas, and tasked the ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials to follow-up on these proposals. (Source: ASEAN Website)

THE ENVIRONMENT.... EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

PWPA continues its commitment to its stakeholders by donating planting materials of assorted seedlings to the Tuloy Foundation, Inc., through the Tuloy sa Don Bosco Streetchildren Village. The Foundation pledges to plant, care for and tend these seedlings until they are full-grown. The areas for planting are situated in Alabang, Muntinlupa City. The association first donated seedlings of different species to the Foundation late last year.

Fr. Rocky Evangelista, President and Project Director of the Foundation, noted that environmental work is no longer just the responsibility of a few, the idealistic or the powerful, but everyone's.

Typhoon Damrey triggers landslides and floods in Vietnam

HANOI (AFP) - Northern Vietnam reeled last September 29, in the aftermath of Typhoon Damrey which triggered landslides and flooding, causing widespread destruction.

Government officials said most of the dead were in the mountainous province of Yen Bai where the typhoon caused flash floods.

Many bodies were still inaccessible, he said, adding that in all, 51 people had died in the province.

The typhoon struck Vietnam Tuesday before blowing itself out over Laos and Thailand on Wednesday.

The typhoon, packing winds of 200 kilometers (125 miles) per hour, left at least 89 people dead during its

week-long sweep through East Asia— 50 in Vietnam, 16 in the Philippines, 16 in China and seven in Thailand.

Vietnamese officials said the violent storm destroyed over 10,000 houses and smashed through 54 kilometers of dykes. Some 200 schools and 45 medical clinics also suffered damage.

The typhoon, which Vietnamese officials described as the most powerful in a decade, also knocked out electricity and communications in several provinces, and flooded more than 60,000 hectares (about 150,000 acres) of crops.

"The coastal regions had prepared well for the typhoon and had

managed to limit the number of victims, but the northwestern mountainous provinces were caught out as the flooding happened too rapidly and they lacked weather information," said Nguyen Lan Chau of Vietnam's national meteorology centre.

Prime Minister Phan Van Khai appeared on television late Wednesday telling a cabinet meeting that the greatest priority was to reinforce the network of dykes that had been breached.

"At the same time we have to encourage social organizations and local authorities to help people restore their livelihood," Khai said. (Source: *Manila Bulletin*, September 30, 2005)

MUST READ– for those interested in doing reforestation projects

Fund for Aggressive Reforestation Effort

“Lush and biologically diverse Philippine forest that are sustainably managed and accessible to responsible stakeholders, as a collective responsibility for the greater good”

This is the vision of the Philippine Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation (PTFCF). It's mission is to increase financial and technical resources available to local groups for sustainable forest management throughout the country, applying efficient and transparent mechanisms and procedures.

PTFCF goals include sustainably-managed forests; widespread adoption of best practices in forest conservation; empowered forest-based communities; excellent management and support mechanisms; a functional network of resource providers; and financial sustainability.

The PTFCF was created through a bilateral agreement between the governments of the United States of America and the Republic of the Philippines under the US Tropical Forest Conservation Act. The agreement was signed on September 19, 2002, reducing \$41.5 million in debt to the US and allowing regular scheduled interest payments \$8.25 million over 14 years, to be deposited by the Philippines to the Fund. This shall be used to fund activities that will support aggressive reforestation efforts.

The Fund will provide grants to eligible institutions such as non-governmental environmental, forestry, conservation, and indigenous people organizations of, or active in, the Philippines, including those involved in development, education, science, research, or forest management duly-registered with government regulatory bodies. Priority shall be given to projects that involve local communities in their planning and execution.

Proposals will be evaluated on the following eligibility criteria: Purpose, Results Focus, Cost Effectiveness, Past Performance (of Institutions and/or Individuals), Biodiversity or Geographic Priority.

The proposed activities, on the other hand, must deliver measurable results that support one or more of the following activities: 1) establishment, restoration, protection and maintenance of both national and local parks, protected areas, critical habitats, sanctuaries and reserves; 2) implementation of scientifically sound systems of natural resource management including land and ecosystem management practices; 3) development and support of the liveli-

hood of individuals living in or near a tropical forest in a manner consistent with protecting such a tropical forest; 4) training programs to increase scientific, technical, and managerial capacities of individuals and organizations involved in forest conservation efforts resulting in demonstrable outputs within the project term.

The Fund is administered by a Board comprising two representatives of the US, two representatives of the RP and five representatives of the non-governmental sector appointed by the Philippine government.

Its Board is composed of: Jose Ma. Lorenzo-Tan, chairman; DENR secretary Michael Defensor, Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, vice chairman; Evelyn Amit-Corado, secretary; Dr. Perry Ong, treasurer; and board members: Finance undersecretary Roberto B. Tan; Robert Ludan, Economic counselor, US Embassy in Manila; Jon Lindborg, Mission director US Agency for International Development; Dennis Salvador, Atty. Grizelda Mayo-Anda. Maria Paz G. Luna is the executive director.

Plywood Price Survey in NCR

Average prices of plywood and substitutes as of November 7, 2005 (Now), in the National Capital Region versus average prices last October 3, 2005 (Before) are as follows:

	Before	Now		Before	Now
3mm (1/8) plywood	PHP215/pc	PHP210/pc	1/8 lawanit	163	154
4mm (3/16) plywood	254	255	3/16 lawanit	221	225
5mm (1/4) plywood ordinary	276	278	¼ Hardiflex	335	330
5mm (1/4) plywood marine	328	334			
18mm (3/4) plywood ordinary	768	779	Note: all pick-up prices/panel inclusive of VAT		
18mm (3/4) plyboard	647	666			

Anti-illegal Logging: Task Force Sagip Kalikasan

*Interview with Director Nilo B. Tamoria,
Deputy Head of Task Force Sagip Kalikasan*

PWPA Executive Director Leonardo D. Angeles, Forestry and Environment Adviser Jose A. Lorenzo and Forestry and Environment Coordinator Maila R. Vasquez met with Engineer Nilo B. Tamoria, Director of DENR's Special Concerns Office and concurrent Deputy Head of the Task Force Sagip Kalikasan, to inquire on DENR's efforts on illegal logging and Indigenous Peoples (IPs) concerns.

When was the Task Force created?

The Task Force was a brainchild of Gen. Alfonso Dagudag, even before the flood in Aurora and Quezon Provinces. His concept was supposed to be a Law Enforcement Bureau considering that the DENR is implementing so many laws and avoid the task forces being created everytime there is a need and take immediate action on certain issues and everytime there is a change of administration. Gen. Dagudag is now designated as Presidential Adviser of Environment Protection in the Office of the President.

Do you focus your operations only on hotspots areas?

No, it really depends on the build up of intelligence reports, the directives of the secretary and the logistical support. But our resources are limited. We are only small—manpower of only eight (8). General Dagudag then was the Head, I am the Deputy Head, Forester Samuel Danganan, our forestry specialist, one GPS specialist Martiniano Rotol, Victorio Pula for the inventories, two lawyers, one of whom was already the director of Lands, Atty. Tiamson. The DENR secretary now temporarily heads the Task Force.

With so many concerns and yet only few people?

Gen. Dagudag limits the group though we have authority to mobilize other teams especially the SAID. Then, when in the field, we strike and withdraw. After apprehension, we leave to DENR field operations the disposition of forest products.

Do you have counterparts in the field?



The directive of the Secretary is not really to have a counterpart in the field, but the regional forest protection plan is strengthened including the rationalization of the forest rangers and the forest guards. They already have Regional Special Operations Groups (RSOGs). We do coordination. But there is really no structured counterpart so as not to defeat the purpose of check and balance.

We are looking at your report and we noticed that the volume confiscated is very small....

The problem is basic—operational funds. Previously, we depended on the intelligence fund of

the secretary which was very minimal because it was the only flexible fund. But for the proposed budget next year, we already have a line item.

What we are trying to say is the importance of having a network, not necessarily task force type.

Yes, networking is being done. [The] General has his network, the secretary has also his own network even I, being once an activist, have my own network. And it really works to our advantage.

Aside from that, what are the strategies being adopted by the Task Force?

Formation of RSOGs, identify team leader per province so the accountability will be ascertained.

We also have assets who provide us information.

We also want to have a mechanism where the rotation of the mobile station/office of the DENR will be made every three months.

We also plan to train sniffing dogs. It is being done for drugs, so why not with wood hidden as cargoes.

There was a report that you apprehended 12 vans declared as corn grits and cassava meal but happened to be with mixed dipterocarp species. How did you know about it? How about your operations in Ports? Of course, Customs officials are very zealous in their jobs so how do you go about it? How did you get the container vans?

Networking. It is to our advantage that [the] General is then the Head of the Task Force and normally, [with the] coast guard [and] maritime, he

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has the presence and the personality. We were also able to enter the port areas and we have assets and intelligence reports.

What happened to the confiscated forest products? The products are perishable and it should be disposed immediately through bonding? How is your linkage with DOJ?

For those with finished cases or with no claimants, the products are donated to the NRDC. [However,] we have problems with those with cases. We have problems with the judicial processes. We have already received notice of contempt of court. Of course, the owners will file writ for replevin but [the] General doesn't want that. [Then] the next thing is contempt. Something should [really] be done with the judicial aspects.

We started networking with DOJ, Ombudsman, Supreme Court and with

IBP. At the early stage, we really are making arrangements like what we do with drugs, [where] we just need a sample and the rest are burned and the sample will serve as evidence. But in wood products, it's really different. One thing more, the lawyers of the other side are really good.

Posting bonds is not yet an acceptable thing [in the judiciary] but we are looking at that.

We have a long standing MOA with the DOJ but the problem is really systemic. During the meeting, everything is ok but the problem comes during the actual cases.

What is the role of NRDC?

Apprehended goods are donated to the NRDC which handles the bidding of the wood products. If there are really no problems with the goods, meaning the case is resolved or there are no claimants/owners, bidding is

fast. Our concern is to check who won in the bidding— they may just be the owners of the goods themselves, so we want to have a seat in the PBAC. We learned that there is a seat for OSEC representative so we will take that seat.

NRDC prefers that all cases are finished for the confiscated wood products [before they are] turned over to them.

Thank you for giving us time. We are glad to have met you. We will inform our members about what the Task Force is, how you work, and your concerns. We hope to collaborate with you not only in the task force, Sagip Kalikasan, but also in helping indigenous people.

It will be nice to have a continuous collaboration with you and we will be happy to assist you with your concerns with IPs.

Status of Apprehension and Confiscation as of October 30, 2005

DATE OF APPREHENSION	PLACE OF APPREHENSION	KIND OF FOREST	VOLUME (Bd.ft)	ESTIMATED VALUE (P)	CLAIMANT AND/OR OWNER	CASE STATUS
Region III						
4/18/2005	Concealed Bodega of Mr. Chris David, located Guadalupe Subd. So. Sta. Ursula, Betis, Guagua, Pampanga	Narra Lumber and flitches	15,202.00	2,280,300.00	Mr. Cris David	Forfeited in favor of Government per DENR Regional Order Signed by Regidor de Leon dated June 16, 2005.
09/20/2005	Baliwag, Bulacan	Mix Dipterocarp lumber and flitches	20,662.00	723,170.00	Marcelino Li	For administration adjudication (1 month)
Region IV						
12/08/2004	Mauban, Quezon	Good Lumber of dipterocarp species	178,786.33	3,182,153.90	Rebeca Gonzalez, Larry Larita, Neol Co and Danny Miraflores all of Mauban, Quezon	Forfeited in Favor of Government
12/18/2004	Bgy. Calumpang, Tayabas, Quezon	Narra Flitches/Lumber	2,964.88	266,839.20	None	Forfeited in Favor of Government
12/23/2004	Bgy. Polo, Mauban, Quezon	Narra Flitches & mix dipterocarp species	26,624	4,000,000	None	Forfeited in Favor of Government

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ITTO Hosts International Conference on Tropical Plywood

By Alfonso C. Keh, Jr.

Executive Vice President, PWPA

The International Conference on Tropical Plywood hosted by the ITTO in close collaboration with FAO, the Chinese International Forestry Cooperation Center, the private sector and national and regional plywood associations was held on September 26-28, 2005 in Beijing, China. The conference was attended by 134 businessmen representing 29 countries. Four (4) delegates came from the Philippines. China sent 34 representatives—the biggest delegation so far, comprising 25% of total participants.

The objectives of the Conference were to assess the current status and to provide ITTO member countries with updated information and recommendations regarding: 1) the expected outlook for production and trade of tropical plywood; 2) processing productivity and profitability of tropical plywood manufacturing; 3) marketing knowledge, trade efficiency and transparency in the tropical plywood trade; 4) the raw materials supply outlook; and 5) raising awareness in the tropical plywood sector on their environmental and corporate social responsibilities.

Several papers presented during the conference were noteworthy and must be shared.

The production of tropical logs in Asia is declining and trade liberalization has facilitated movement of goods and encouraged substitution. Latin America, on the other hand, has 6.6 million hectares of plantation forests supplying about 70% of the 30 million m³ annual production of logs, 8 million of which is veneer grade. Latin American tropical plywood production is only 1.7 million m³ while pine plywood production which comprises 60% of its exports of plywood is at 4 million m³.

India is now liberalizing its trade and is an increasing potential as a major market/producer of plywood, while African plywood production remains limited and most of its timber exported in log form. New investments are coming in but for veneering mills only. Japan has increased its production of thick plywood from softwood log imports. Russian logs are now the source of 60% of domestic production. Indonesia and Malaysia account for 50% and 40% of imported plywood respectively.

With regards to the UK tropical plywood trade, government procurement policies are being implemented at the local and national levels and require Certified Legal Timber with preference for Certified Sustainable products. UK buyers are reportedly willing to pay up to 30% premium for certified legal timber.

China's plywood production is growing at an average rate of 3 million m³ per year from 1998 to 2003 with 17 million m³ in 2003. China is so-competitive because it has minimal dependence on imported face and back; and its more than 200 mills with a capacity of over 20,000 m³ each where every output, product or by-product has its appropriate price and market. Further, producers have appropriate machines which are extremely affordable and locally made. Government support is also substantial in developing programs to improve its competitiveness through establishment of more plantations, promotion of standards and ISO 9000 certification and encouraging ISO 14000. In fact, comparing average production cost of hardwood plywood in selected countries, China has the cheapest production cost. This is illustrated by the table on page 13.

As a conclusion on trade, as already being felt, logs will become a scarce raw material which will make exporting countries keep more for local industries. China, which has surpassed Canada's export of plywood to the United States, will increase its production in the future and the large part of its log imports will be supplied by Russian forests. India will emerge as an important market in the future and there will be increasing pressure in the international timber trade for the adoption of "Certified Legal Timber" systems in supplier and importing countries.

Although tropical plywood production and trade has continued to retreat, it is good to know that the plywood market in general, including softwood and hardwood, has increased. The key problem is substitution, with softwood plywood increasing its market share.

Although there are threats, there are also opportunities for tropical plywood. Tropical plywood's abundance of clear faces is a very important strength hence development of niche markets to take advantage of this is necessary in order to realize better values for those clear faces. Low cost is still a primary factor in selling plywood as a commodity. Development of large plantations for plywood use is also important to compete in the commodity area against softwood plywood, OSB, MDF and other engineered products. To overcome negative public image in importing countries, there must be a powerful association to correct misperceptions and to lobby for market access. It is also important to develop corporate social responsibility policies and meet national and international standards not only to address the negative public image but also to conform to increasing related regulation in importing countries.

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Recommendations Must be *Acted Upon*

By Tony Olizon

If his busy schedule will allow it, our President- Ferdie Lu- will take over this column in the next issue. Let's wait for HERE COMES THE EAGLE!

As they say, we are like a broken record. We have always pleaded with DENR to please exercise prudence in suspending logging/wood processing operations. We tried to put forward our position but it appears that DENR has been under pressure from other sectors including Congress.

Even if we explain to them that any business concern cannot operate on the basis of, "Now you are open, tomorrow you are closed, and heaven knows when you will open again," it seems that politicians and NGOs are their priority other than businesses that contribute to the growth of our country.

The creation of the Timber Board was one of the resolutions adapted at the Forestry Forum.

However, it seems that after the lengthy discussions during and after the Forum last June, the recommendations will remain just like that: "Recommendations".

This is even after personal assurances from Sec. Mike Defensor that he is convinced with the objectives of the proposed Timber Industry Board. In one of the meetings, Sec. Mike even emphasized that he will personally follow up the approval of the Executive Order to create the BOARD. He envisioned that the BOARD would give the wood sector definite and long term directions; would instill business sense; would be investor friendly and not too regulatory.

DENR – FMB forwarded the proposal to the office of the President/Executive Secretary who in turn endorsed it to the Dept. of Budget and Management (DBM). DBM rejected the idea of a Timber Industry Board.

Maybe, just maybe, DENR-FMB did not really put a good presentation to merit approval. But this we must understand. Most government agencies would not want another office to oversee them. This might create a "turf war".

Little did they realize that the proposed Board would have the DENR Secretary as chairman of the Board and that even FMB will be duly represented with other government departments and the private sector. This would have synergized the plans of our Timber Industry.

Recently, DENR lifted the suspension on the TLA License of San Jose Timber (Sen. Enrile's company). Our Association should expect that this will trigger again a controversy that might drag the association with it.

It is not for us to say whether the DENR order is appropriate or not.

Our director/vice president Jun Narvaez and myself met with the officers of Haribon Foundation – Esther Batangan and Penny Reyes-Velasco, Advocacy Officer and Managing Director of the firm IMACRON, which consults with Haribon, respectively at the PWPA office last month. The meeting cum interview turned out to be a very cordial exchange of opinions, and I believe that PWPA and Haribon have some similar objectives, although our approaches might differ. Exchanges of opinions and not debates and adverse press releases should be the "order of the day." No more grand standing. No more show-offs. If only we approach an issue with sincerity, we can have less conflicts and can move forward.

It was not the first time that Jun N and Penny met. They were both guests at the "Dong Puno Live" TV program several months ago.

We are happy to note that the suspension order for the group of Vic Consunji has been finally lifted. We are however sad that Ferdie Lu's PATECO suspension has not been acted upon despite the favorable comments of the NGOs that inspected his concession area.

I would like to propose that we have a mid-year meeting to discuss with our members their concerns and to hear their suggestions. We hope to do this by February next year.

The Lower House or Congress has been continuously hearing the bill on Sustainable Forest Management. We hope the Senate could also move forward. We will try to appeal to the Committee Chairperson, Sen. Pia Cayetano, to give more attention to the proposed bill.

Prices of local lumber in Metro Manila has dramatically declined. Our feedback is that there's substantial volume of lumber from questionable sources that are dumping into the local market.

Having said this, one DENR official might again ask me to show them where these sources are, or where these stocks of lumber are stored.

Sorry but this is not my job. It is DENR's duty to confiscate these illegal lumber and not to apprehend and confiscate (even temporarily) legally sourced wood products.

Trade info received: India is starting to give China stiff competition in buying logs from world suppliers. Remember, India also has a huge population next to China.

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Status of Apprehension and Confiscation

DATE OF APPREHENSION	PLACE OF APPREHENSION	KIND OF FOREST	VOLUME (Bd.ft)	ESTIMATED VALUE (P)	CLAIMANT AND/OR OWNER	CASE STATUS
12/30/2004	Junctions Bgys. Kilib and Aliliw, Lucban, Quezon	Narra Flitches	5,025.50	452,295	Mr. Enrique Amarillo/Edison Remolona	ORDERED Forfeited
1/19/2005	Superlines Bus Company Terminal, Bgy. Tigbakin, Atimonan Quezon	Lauan Lumber & Flitches	47,573.20	1,236,903	Josefino M. Vargas, Carmencita Lavidez, Talampas former Cong. Manolete Lavidez & Angel Talampas, all of Atimonan, Quezon	ORDERED Forfeited .
7/18/2005	Montalban Municipal Motorpool	Mix dipterocarp, lumber and flitches	28,050.21	841,506.30	Certain Mr. Ciriaco personnel of Mayor Cuerpo	On going administrative adjudication (3 months)
8/28/2005	Bgy Daungan, Mauban, Quezon	Narra, Yakal Mix dipterocarp logs/ flitches	29,771.95	3,870,353.50	None but believed to be owned by Ms. Roselyn Banagan, Martin Tampoc & Mauban Wood Craft	For administrative Adjudication (2 months)
9/12/2005	N. Pascual St., Georgia Heights Subd., San Isidro, Taytay, Rizal	Narra, lumber & flitches	8,511.12	1,300,000.00	Mr. Gilbert Gozum of Montevista Heights, Bgy. Dolores, Taytay Rizal	For administrative Adjudication (1 month)
10/06/2005	ALJORENCE Door Systems, Inc.	Dipterocarp species of sawn timber	2,130.00	74,550.00	Mrs. Erlinda Payoyo of Balintawak, Metro Manila	For administration adjudication
10/17/2005	Balaybalay, Mauban, Quezon	Dipterocarp species of sawn timber	7,398.55	255,949.25	Brgy. Captain Serapin dela Rosa, Mr. Wilson Banagan, and Raquel Magbuhos	For administration adjudication
Region VI						
5/12/2005	Iloilo City PPA Port	Mix dipterocarp species	28,813.45	864,403.50	Mr. Yusop Sahisa	Forfeited in favor of Government
5/19/2005	Culasi Port, Roxas City	Knock-down Furniture component (Narra spp.)		132,000.00	Leonencio Regala & Adorie Royo, San Fernando Romblon	On going adjudication (5 months)
Region VII						
1/24/2005	Pier 7, FF Cruz Wharf, Mandaue City	Mix dipterocarp species	208,095.77	4,578,090	Mr. Ruben Apostol, Shipper and Consigned to Green Peak Lumber Dealer, Mandaue City	Confiscated in favor of the government
2/2/2005	Pier 5, Cebu Port Authority	Mix dipterocarp species	316,466.81	6,962,270	Almar, Balatawan Shannie & Lovely lumber Dealers, Polloc, Parang, Maguindanao	Confiscated in favor of the government
1/29/2005	Pier 6, National Marine Container Port, Mandaue City	Mix dipterocarp species	90,000.00	1,980,000	Mis-declared Corn Grits & Casava Meal	Four (4) container vans were ORDERS CONFISCATED . The other 8 containers are subject for repliven
2/24/2005	Pier 7, Mandaue City	Mix dipterocarp species	32,349.00	808,725.00	Hadji Iftikar Tawasil	On going Administrative Adjudication (8 months)

Continued on page 11...

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DATE OF APPREHENSION	PLACE OF APPREHENSION	KIND OF FOREST	VOLUME (Bd.ft)	ESTIMATED VALUE (P)	CLAIMANT AND/OR OWNER	CASE STATUS
8/15/2005	Gothong Wharf/Yard, North Reclamation Area, Pier 7, Mandaue City	Mix dipterocarp, lumber & flitches	70,000	1,750,000.00	Various shipper of Fictitious Names residing in Cebu	Volume subject to final scaling. Administrative Adjudication (2 months)
Region VIII						
5/11/2005	Tacloban City Port	Mix dipterocarp species	111,610.80	2,790,270.00	Mario Zaragoza/Hadji Ishmael Abubakar, Tandubas, Tawi-tawi	Forfeited in favor of Government
Region IX						
3/18/2005	Pulawan Wharf, Dapitan & Majini Pier, Zamboanga City	Mahogany, falcata & Mix dipterocarp species	54,786.30	1,643,589	Various Shipper	Hermie Bunayog Shipment was Ordered Forfeited
Region X						
4/02/2005	Cagayan de Oro City Port	Mix dipterocarp species & Igem species	145,120.65	3,192,654.30	Nasrodin P. Sani Veneer & Lumber Enterprises	Forfeited in favor of Government
Region XII						
6/24/200	Manchinegun Hill, Palembang, Sultan Kudarat	Mix dipterocarp and lumber flitches	51,971.76	1,455,209.28	NEDAI PLTP rep. by Eleasar Tanedo, Bgy. Ned, Lake Sebu, SC	Recommended for the issuance of Forfeiture Order (4 months)
7/21/2005	Macar Wharf, Gen. Santos City	Mix dipterocarp logs, lumber & flitches	208,124.66	5,827,490.48	Shipper Minrico Lumber Ent. Corp. rep. Mr. Robert Chua. Source: Benting H. Maulana PLTP No. 2003-31 North Upi, Maguindanao, ARMM	On going administrative adjudication (3 months)
Region XIII						
12/12/04	Poblacion Trento, Agusan del Sur	Logs, lumber and flitches of mix-dipterocarp species	34,930.53	424,857.00	Escolastico Hitgano, Purok 7, Poblacion, Trento, ADS	Admin adjudication on going (10 months)
12/12/2004	Poblacion Trento, Agusan del Sur	Flitches/Lumber of mix-dipterocarp species	86,145.27	347,808.36	Victoria Plaza, Purok 2, Poblacion Trento & near cemetery, ADS	Admin adjudication on going (10 months)
12/12/2004	Bgy. Binahanan, San Teodoro, Bunawan, ADS	Logs, Lumber and flitches of mix-dipterocarp species	16,368.04	196,412.42	Rudy Gaorano Rice Mill, Sawmill managed by Mr. Sonny Barrios, Jr.	Admin adjudication on going (10 months)
2/08/2005	Sabang Gibong, Talacogon & Veruela & La Paz ADS	Mix dipterocarp species	559,675.00	3,358,050.00	None	Ordered Forfeited

Note: Aside from this list, shipment of the Wood Plaza Corporation represented by Mr. Edwin So and Luzon Mahogany Timber, Inc. (LUZMATIM), associate and regular members of the PWPA, respectively were also confiscated in two different events. The shipment of Wood Plaza Corporation is composed of seven truckloads of lumber and estimated to be worth P 1.3 M. Accordingly half of each trucks were loaded with Philippine red lauan. After almost seven (7) weeks and finding that all documents were in order, the cargo was released. The shipment of the LUZMATIM, on the other hand, is a shipload of lumber with estimated worth of P 100 M. It is said that the boat is loaded with processed lauan. Similarly, because the documents were in order, the shipment was also released after four (4) weeks.

UN REPORT :

Deforestation not cause of flooding

Deforestation is often wrongly blamed for causing floods, like in Guatemala this month, under a myth that has skewed agricultural policies, an international report said on Thursday.

"There is no scientific evidence linking large-scale flooding to deforestation," the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Indonesia-based Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) said in a report.

The frequency of major floods in the past 120 years, back to the late 19th century when forests were far more abundant, has been stable worldwide, it said. That implied that deforestation was not a cause of flooding.

It said devastation from Hurricane Stan in central America this month had been widely and wrongly blamed on excessive runoff caused by deforestation. The same was said about recent floods in China, Thailand and Vietnam.

The report said it was incorrect to believe that forests acted as giant sponges that soak up water and release it during dry seasons. After heavy rains, excess water runs off waterlogged forest floors like off other surfaces.

The report said tree roots were too shallow to prevent major mudslides, like those that entombed hundreds of people in Guatemalan villages this week.

"Most people automatically believe that if there's a large flood then loggers and deforestation are responsible," David Kaimowitz, director-general of CIFOR, told Reuters during a visit to Oslo. "In most cases it's not true."

Still, it said forests could play a role in minimizing water runoff in

some localized floods but did not have an impact on severe widespread floods.

LOGGING BANS

The report said some governments might cling to the myth that forests help prevent floods to let policymakers blame loggers or small farmers for their own failure to anticipate the effects of heavy rains on dams or cities downstream.

Some governments, like in China and some other Asian nations, had banned logging to try to ease flooding.

"Such misguided views have in the past prompted governments to make life harder for poor farmers by driving them off their lands and away from the forests, while doing nothing to prevent future flooding," said Patrick Durst, a senior forestry officer at the FAO for Asia and the Pacific.

"There are many good reasons to manage forests well without relying on myths," said Kaimowitz. "But you can't sell conservation to the public on false premises."

Forests provide habitats for many species of birds and insects, produce oxygen and soak up heat-trapping gases as they grow, and are a source of building materials or firewood.

And floods are a part of a natural cycle, helping maintain fertility on flood plains. In some parts of the world, crops like rice and jute depend on seasonal flooding.

The report said a surge in the human death toll and mounting economic losses from floods in recent years was largely because more people lived in flood plains.

"As a result, many floods that previously would have been only minor events now become major disasters," the report said. (Source: *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, October 14, 2005)

Not all trees help environment - study

OSLO (Reuters) - Many countries are wasting millions of dollars planting trees because of myths that forests always help improve water flows and offset erosion, a British-led study said on Friday.

Many trees, especially fast-growing species like pines and eucalyptus favoured by the paper industry, suck more water from the ground than other crops, it said. The water transpires from the leaves and so the trees dry out the land.

"Trees on the whole are not a good thing in dry areas if you want to manage water resources," said John Palmer, manager of the tropical Forestry Research Programme run by the British Department for International Development.

"When it comes to wet areas, trees may be beneficial or no worse than pasture and crops," he told Reuters of the study of plantings in India, Costa Rica, South Africa and Tanzania in a four-year project led by British and Dutch researchers.

Forests have many other benefits -- ranging from habitats for birds, insects or animals to human sources of building materials and firewood.

But the report said it was a myth that forests acted as sponges that soak up rain, releasing it throughout the year and ensuring more regular flows in rivers. Instead, trees' deep roots often aggravate water shortages in dry seasons.

It also said it was wrong to believe forests attracted more clouds and rainfall or that tree roots helped slow erosion more than those of short plants. It said the myths had been anchored in cultural history since at least the 17th century.

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Not all trees help environment

"We don't want to be seen as against forests or trees," said Ian Calder, a lead researcher who is also director of the Centre for Land Use and Water Resources Research at the University of Newcastle.

"But there is a need to be careful when you plant forests in the belief you are promoting water resources," he said. "We need policies based more on scientific evidence. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent, if not billions."

The report said Panama was seeking hundreds of millions of dollars from the World Bank to back a project to plant trees on the apparently mistaken belief that it would attract more rainfall to help feed the Panama Canal.

Other countries from China to Mexico also had costly afforestation schemes at least partly based on misconceptions about water.

In the Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, the study said conversion of agricultural land to forests had damaged water supplies, cutting flows by 16-26 per cent.

Availability of fresh water is a constant problem.

The World Commission on Water has estimated that demand for water will increase by about 50 percent in the next 30 years and that around four billion people, or about half of the world's population in 2025, will have problems with supplies.

The study said trees often showed the "clothes line" effect.

Just as wet clothes dry quicker if hung out rather than left lying on the ground, the enormous combined surface of trees' leaves combined with their deep roots meant they transpired more water into the air than other crops, it said. (Source: Manila Bulletin, September 18, 2005)

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ITTO/FAO International Conference...

ESTIMATED AVERAGE PRODUCTION COSTS OF HARDWOOD PLYWOOD IN SELECTED COUNTRIES										
	Brazil	China	Indonesia	Russia	Colombia	Latvia	Finland	South Europe	East Europe	USA
Species	Plantation	Poplar Combi	Hardwoods	Larch	Combi		Birch			
Raw material mill price	45	85	80	42	70	60	72	85	95	130
Wood recovery rate	41%	60%	60%	30%	59%	32%	33%	41%	32%	40%
Waste Compensation		10				20	60			45
Wood cost, net	110	132	133	140	119	168	159	207	297	280
Wages	25	15	20	35	60	50	120	85	40	180
Glue	30	25	25	30	24	35	40	25	35	20
Energy	20	15	15	15	14	30	40	35	20	15
Maintenance	20	10	20	20	17	30	35	40	25	20
Total Variable Cost	205	197	213	240	234	313	394	392	417	515
Fixed costs	25	15	20	30	17	35	45	45	35	35
Total operation cost (USD / m3)*	230	212	233	270	251	348	439	437	452	550
* Comparative Philippine FOB price for 5mm = 270 USD/m3										

Wood Packaging Rules in International Trade

To ensure that wood packaging materials are free from infestations, the Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures endorsed in March 2002 its international standards as part of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's global programme of policy and technical assistance in plant quarantine.

The International standards for phytosanitary measures (ISPMs) are adopted by contracting parties to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and by FAO members that are not contracting parties.

The ISPMs are the standards, guidelines and recommendations recognized as basis for phytosanitary measures applied by members of the World Trade Organization under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Non-contracting parties to the IPPC are also encouraged to observe these standards.

The standards will be subjected to periodic review and amendment and it will be updated and republished as necessary.

The standards aim to reduce the risk of introduction and/or spread of quarantine pests associated with wood packaging material (including dunnage)-- made of coniferous and non-coniferous raw wood -- used in international trade. This

requirement ensures that wood packaging materials are sufficiently treated or processed to remove or kill pests which maybe the source or cause for the introduction of pests.

In the Philippines, the Bureau of Plant Industry is the National Plant Protection Office (NPPO) which implements the regulation of wood packaging materials. It issued BPI Quarantine Administrative Order Nos. 1 and 3 series of 2004 to implement this requirement. The guidelines specifically detail how wood packaging materials will be treated. The treatment methods specify fumigation and heat treatment. The Order also detailed the criteria and accreditation of treatment facilities and service providers.

Other important considerations like marking specifications of imported and exported wood packaging materials were also listed.

BPI Quarantine Division agriculturist Laarni Soliman said that wood packaging materials for export shall also be subject to treatment especially if these are raw materials.

For a copy of the Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade, BPI Quarantine AO 1 & 3 and list of accredited treatment facilities, you may contact PWPA at 8176751/8176885/8121760.

Zamboanga del Sur beauties visit PWPA

Miss Zamboanga del Sur 2005 Caryl L. Malubay, together with contest first and second runners-up Andre Belle D. Espina and Carolyn Retuerto, respectively, paid a courtesy call on PWPA officers recently at the PWPA Office.

They were accompanied by Angelle Lor Ugsod and Martin Lew V. Cerilles, staff and Political Affairs assistant III, respectively, of the House of Representatives; and welcomed by P W P A c h a i r m a n Antonio C. Olizon, along with VP-director Ramon Y. Uy, executive director Leonardo D. Angeles and the PWPA staff. Angeles briefed them on the PWPA and the importance of forests as the cradle of life, and the PWPA's contribution in ensuring their sustainability.

The Search for Miss Zamboanga del Sur 2005 is part of the province's celebration of its 53rd Foundation Anniversary. The Megayon Festival, held last September 12-15, had for its theme, "Padayon Zamboanga del Sur sa imo paglambo" (Go Zamboanga del Sur for your progress). The Province also simultaneously held its "Grow and Agro-Industrial Fair" promoting agricultural crops especially cassava and camote.



PRIDE OF ZAMBOANGA. Ms. Zamboanga and her court at PWPA: (l-r) PWPA executive director L. D. Angeles, 2nd runner-up Andre Belle D. Espina, Miss Zambo Sur 2005 Caryll L. Malubay, 1st runner-up Carolyn Retuerto, and PWPA manager Regino Serafico.

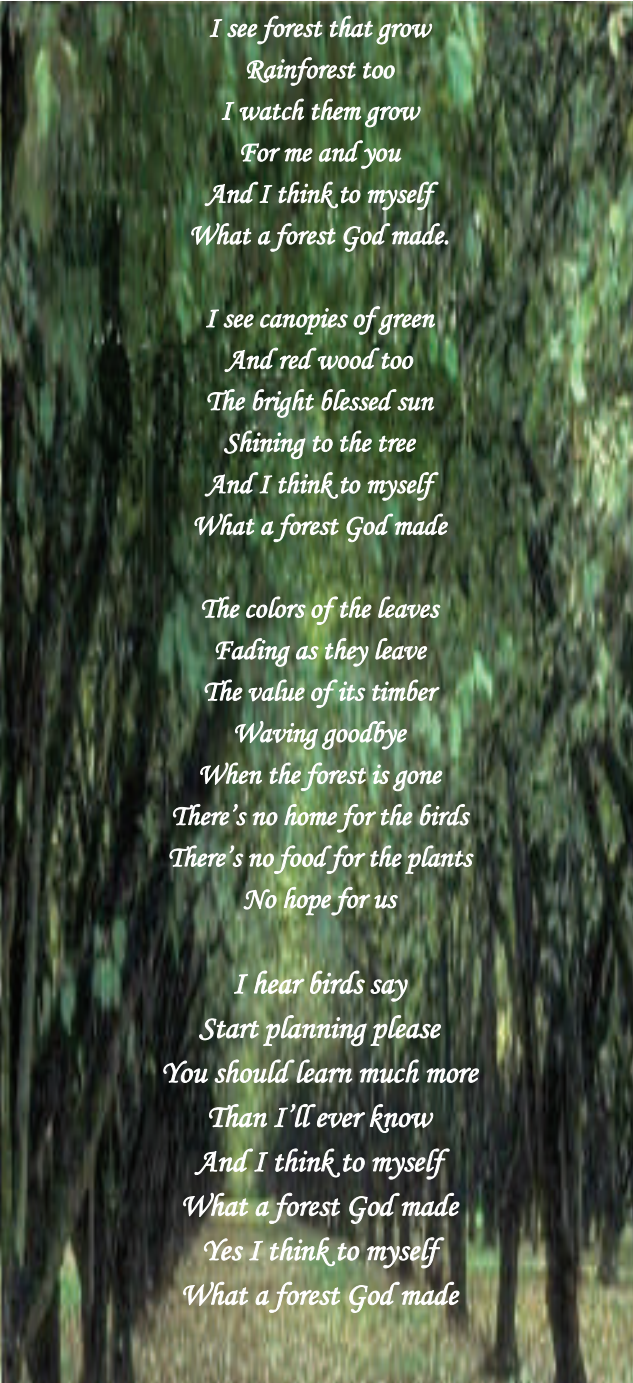


WHAT A FOREST

GOD MADE

BY JERYL SHAWN TAN

Editor's Note: 12-year old and Xavier grade schooler Jeryl is the son of PWPA director-treasurer Stanley and Julie Tan



*I see forest that grow
Rainforest too
I watch them grow
For me and you
And I think to myself
What a forest God made.*

*I see canopies of green
And red wood too
The bright blessed sun
Shining to the tree
And I think to myself
What a forest God made*

*The colors of the leaves
Fading as they leave
The value of its timber
Waving goodbye
When the forest is gone
There's no home for the birds
There's no food for the plants
No hope for us*

*I hear birds say
Start planning please
You should learn much more
Than I'll ever know
And I think to myself
What a forest God made
Yes I think to myself
What a forest God made*

PWPA ACCEPTS TWO NEW MEMBERS

Two new members, whose operations are located in Tagaloan, Misamis Oriental, joined the roster of regular members of the Philippine Wood Producers Association in its recent membership meeting. PWPA's regular members now total 76.

HCH Wood Corporation produces lumber, veneer and blockboard. The rated capacity of the blockboard mill per 8-hr shift per day is 500 panels with 85% average utilization capacity. Its annual log requirement is 6,000 cu m per year with 60% recovery. The company uses falcata logs purchased locally. It's authorized representative is Huang Chun Ming, company chairman/CEO.

Timber Wood Development Corporation produces lumber and blockboard. The rated capacity of its blockboard mill per 8-hr shift per day is 600 panels with 85% average utilization capacity. Annual log requirement is 6,300 cu m per year with 62% recovery. The company uses falcata logs purchased locally. The company is represented by its chairman/CEO Huang Ting Pi.

HCH Wood Corporation and Timber Wood Development Corporation plants had been operational since 2000 and 2001, respectively; however they have only applied for membership in August this year.

PWPA Condoles with Family of PLMA's Josefina Ong



PWPA expresses condolences to the family of a colleague who will always be remembered by many as someone who was always full of life, energy, enthusiasm and love, whose life has profoundly touched many.

Josefina Ong, Philippine Lumber Merchant Association (PLMA) manager, succumbed to cancer last October 26. She had fought the illness for almost two years, not allowing it to hinder her work with the PLMA and its-relationship with PWPA she has helped much.

PLMA and PWPA members and staff went to her wake at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels at Sucat, Parañaque City prior to her remains' cremation last October 30.

PWPA VP-director Ramon Y. Uy, also VP of PLMA, made sure that full benefits were given to the bereaved family of Ms. Ong.

She had been with the PLMA and Greater Manila Wood Producers Association for more than twenty years.

**The loss is great... the hurt severe...
emptiness never ending... memories dear**

Calendar of Events

03 September 2005

Meeting with DENR Sec. Mike Defensor
DENR OSEC Conference Room, Diliman, Quezon City

14 September 2005

Regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors
PWPA Office, Makati City

16 September 2005

PWPA-Haribon Foundation dialogue-meeting
PWPA Office, Makati City

21 September 2005

Public Hearing re: House Bill 4444
House Committee on Natural Resources
Batasan Pambansa, Quezon City

28 September 005

PWPA Lunch Meeting with Myanmar Ambassador and Party
Good Earth Restaurant, The Fort, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City

29 September 005

PWPA co-hosted dinner of ASEAN Forestry & Environment Ministers
Tagaytay International Convention Center, Tagaytay City

04 October 2005

Regular meeting of Plywood Council
Jade Garden Restaurant, Greenbelt 1, Makati City

12 October 2005

Regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors
PWPA Office, Makati City

12-16 October 2005

5th Consumer Trade Fair
Mega Trade Hall 2,
SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City

13 October 2005

BPS/DTI National Quality and Competitiveness
Symposium and Workshop
NISMED, UP Diliman, Quezon City

20 October 2005

Meeting with DENR/FMB Executive Committee
Re: PWPA letter to amend other DENR Orders
FMB Conference Room, Diliman, Quezon City

21 October 2005

Beauty queens from Zamboanga visit PWPA office



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