

NTTA Policy Plan 2006 - 2009

'The roots of timber'



Netherlands Timber Trade Association
(NTTA)



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1 Introduction

The Netherlands Timber Trade Association (NTTA) actively promotes the widespread acceptance of corporate social responsibility in the timber trade. The *NTTA Policy Plan 2003-2005* entitled *Good Prospects for Timber* laid out the route chosen to achieve this, and one which we shall continue to pursue in the years ahead. In this, its latest policy plan, the NTTA therefore focuses on building upon the foundations already laid. In addition, further attention is devoted to other aspects, such as quality, maintenance and applications of/for timber (products). The association also aims to prolong its successful activities, while elaborating those currently being developed and introducing new measures, wherever necessary.

The pivotal feature of this NTTA policy plan is the origin of timber. Public debate has also focused on this issue during the past two years. Together with other parties involved, the association faces a huge challenge to establish certainty as to the origins of all timber, so that we might endeavour to achieve responsible practice in every single link of the production chain. Our objectives for 2009 are as follows:

- By 2009, we should have achieved certainty as to the origins of 100% of the timber traded by NTTA members.
- By 2009, 75% of all timber imported and traded by NTTA members should originate from demonstrably sustainable forests.

Huge efforts are being made with a view to further improving timber production. The Dutch government, the European Union, social organisations, the timber companies – everyone lends a hand in their own way. The NTTA considers these efforts an indication of the value of timber as a product. Timber is an organic material, has unique properties and the applications still increase. All the more reason in the years that lie ahead to continue to focus on the excellent properties of this fine resource and the positive developments taking place in the sector.

In this policy plan, the NTTA first assesses policy in the period from 2003 to 2005 of

the NTTA policy plan *Good prospects for Timber*. Chapter 3 deals with our mission and the code of conduct, which was established following close discussions with interested organisations in 2003, and finally endorsed by all members in 2004. In doing so, our members undertook to abide by the code of conduct, thus earning the right to the title of *Erkende Houthandel®* or *Approved Timber Trader®*. Our mission and code of conduct are still very much up to date, and therefore remain largely un-amended. Chapter 4 focuses on the issue of the origins of timber, while research and development is the topic of Chapter 5. Chapter 6 discusses promotion and public information. The slogan '*Hou't bij Hout*', which loosely translates as *Stick with Timber*, has become a household phrase in the Netherlands, which provides opportunities to lend further structure and content to the campaign. Chapter 7 discusses the NTTA's organisation, with particular regard to working conditions and communications.

And finally, reason for festivity: The NTTA is looking forward to celebrating its centenary in 2009. We are particularly proud to have shared the passion for timber with one another for almost one hundred years.

On behalf of the Management and Executive Boards of the NTTA

C. Boogaardt - *Chairman*



2 Assessment:

Good prospects for timber 2003 - 2005

On 6 February 2003, our Chairman, Cees Boogaardt, presented the first copy of the NTTA policy plan 2003-2005 entitled *Good Prospects for Timber* to Marijke Vos, Member of Parliament representing the Dutch Green Party *GroenLinks*. The plan was the result of an intensive project, in the course of which the NTTA consulted all its members and interested organisations. The policy plan proved the driving force behind various

initiatives within the timber trade in the Netherlands. The fundamental elements of this policy plan comprised the NTTA's mission and a code of conduct for its members. Numerous activities were developed with a view to implementing this mission and code of conduct. These activities are explained in detail in the NTTA Annual Reports. This document therefore suffices with a brief summary.



Table 1. Selection of activities during the period of the 2003-2005 policy

Activities	2003	2004	2005
Compiling and issuing a legality statement			
National documentation systems established and published in Brazil, Indonesia, Cameroon, Malaysia and the Russian Federation			
Helpdesk set up to answer queries concerning sustainable forestry management and certification (Certified Timber Helpdesk)			
Chain of custody developed for legal timber from Indonesia			
Toolbox containing instruments for legal timber developed			
Legality survey of Indonesian timber processing industry supplying products to the Netherlands			
Project Timber Trade Action Plan (TTAP) for Good Governance in Tropical Forestry developed and launched			
Keurhout develops verification protocol for demonstrably legal timber			
NTTA working visit to Indonesia			
Promotion of responsible forest management projects			
Annual meeting with relevant social organisations			
Annual student innovation prize (WoodChallenge)			
Compiling a project book			
Inventory of technical specifications of all relevant types of timber			
Social paragraph in NTTA Annual Report			
Network excursions			
Appointment of a Lesser-Known Timber Species Workgroup focusing on applications other than wall cladding			
Survey of the suitability of six lesser-known timber species for wall cladding			
Promotion of European CE marking for structural timber			
www.vvnh.nl website developed			
Press approach			
Preparation and introduction of approval scheme			
Image campaign for professional and consumer markets			
Open day <i>Approved Timber Trade</i>			
Activities launched in the field of training and education			
Pilot project launched and plan of approach for a Labour Convention for the Timber Trade			
Implementation of agreements contained in the Labour Convention for the Timber Trade			
Reinforcing the internal organisation			

Quantitative assessment

The quantities of sustainably harvested and certified timber imported have risen significantly during the past few years. The

amounts of Keurhout, FSC and PEFC were established by means of the annual questionnaires distributed among our members. While a mere 3000 m³ of



Keurhout was recorded in 2002, the figure had grown to 40,500 m³ for 2004. In 2002, our members traded some 19,000 m³ of FSC certified timber, which rose to around 125.000 m³ in 2004. The quantity of PEFC certified timber more than tripled during the same period, from around 40,000 to 135,000 m³.

This increase in the entire recorded quantity of certified timber, from approx. 25,000 m³ in 2002 to around 300,000 m³ in 2004, is quite significant. The figures show clear signs of a continuing growth curve. Keurhout itself has already approved the stewardship of some 40 million hectares of forest. If we add to this the FSC forest areas, then we may conclude that there was much more sustainable timber on the Dutch

market than the 2004 questionnaire would suggest. The questionnaire is therefore to be extended and improved during the period of the new plan.

Qualitative assessment

Many new initiatives were launched during the past few years. Figure 1 shows a selection of successful initiatives in the form of a pyramid. This symbolises the mission – the key to NTTA policy – and the activities that lend it content. The arrows in the pyramid show that these are not one-off activities, but ongoing and progressive initiatives. This also portrays the association’s long-term vision, in which new policy plans are built on the foundations of former ones.

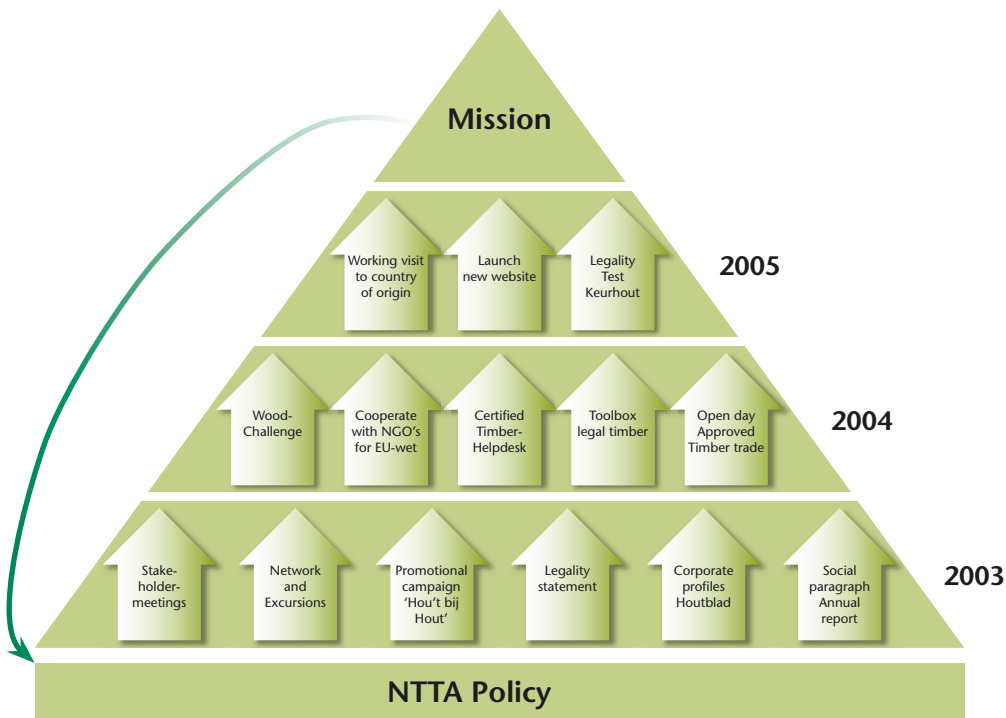


Figure 1. NTTA Policy Pyramid





Conclusion

The implementation of the NTTA policy plan 2003-2005, *Good prospects for Timber*, has created a sound basis on which to address social issues. The phased approach adopted comprising the code of conduct, legality statements and certification on the basis of legality towards demonstrably sustainable timber has therefore been implemented. Thanks largely to this approach, the NTTA is currently viewed as

an organisation that takes problems seriously, is open to constructive criticism and communicates transparently. The association understands that this positive image is the result of sound communications policy and concrete results. The current structure and course plotted provide a solid basis on which to achieve good results during the period of the 2006-2009 plan.



3 Mission and code of conduct

The Netherlands Timber Trade Association (VVNH) is the umbrella organisation representing some 300 timber wholesalers, which can be recognised by their title of *Approved Timber Traders*®. The vast majority of employees in the sector (7,200) work for these companies. There are also a number of related trade associations that are extraordinary members: the Netherlands Association of Timber Agents (NATA), National Association for Forestry contractors, round wood trade and round wood processing industries (AVIH) and Vereniging van Importeerende Groothandelaren in Hout (VIGH). The NTTA is also closely involved in various international organisations, such as the European Hardwood Federation (UCBD), European Softwood Association (UCBR), Union pour le Commerce d'Importation de Panneaux en Bois (UCIP), European Softwood Conference (ESC), European Confederation of woodworkina industries

(CEI-Bois) and European Timber Trade Association (FEBO). Furthermore, as an association of traders the NTTA is a member of the Dutch Wholesalers Association (VNG).

NTTA Mission

- The NTTA is a Dutch organisation with an international perspective, which is in keeping with the global character of the timber trade.
- The NTTA applies a binding code of conduct for all members, on the basis of which it has implemented an approval scheme.
- The NTTA performs its interest-promoting task by a proactive, transparent and constructive attitude.
- The NTTA pursues a strong and positive image for timber and timber products and a financially sound position of the timber sector in the Netherlands.
- The NTTA promotes trade in timber demonstrably originating from



sustainably managed forests and sees to it that its members take the interests of both the employees and the environment in the Netherlands as well as in the producing countries into consideration.

- The NTTA promotes the use of timber by investing in innovations, new applications for timber, research into new species of timber, training and education.

Code of conduct

All NTTA members have endorsed the following code of conduct, and are therefore legally obliged to observe it. They are entitled to present themselves as *Approved Timber Traders*. The NTTA has a system of sanctions, which is applied in the event that members fail to observe any of the provisions of the code. There is also a complaints system in place, to deal with third parties' complaints with regard to the

code of conduct¹. All members report to the NTTA secretariat on their activities annually, on the basis of which the association compiles the 'social paragraph' in its Annual Report.

1. NTTA members shall exclusively bring timber on the Netherlands market in conformity with current legislation and regulations (agreed nationally as well as internationally).
2. NTTA members shall preferably deal in timber demonstrably originating from sustainably managed forests.
3. NTTA members shall dedicate themselves constructively to developments that will lead to more certified timber on the Netherlands market.
4. NTTA members shall search for new production areas with sustainable forestry.
5. The attitude of NTTA members regarding matters such as origin, tree-felling, development of wooded areas, biodiversity and other topical subjects shall be transparent, constructive and straightforward.
6. NTTA members shall exert themselves to maintain the high level of labour situations and conditions in the Netherlands.
7. NTTA members shall endorse the interest of sound communication and the promotion of timber and shall supply information on request.



¹ Please consult Appendix 1. The entire system is described in the VVNH's articles of association. Also see www.vvnh.nl.

4 Origin: the roots of timber



Primary objectives

- By 2009, we should have achieved certainty as to the origins of 100% of the timber traded by NTTA members.
- By 2009, 75% of all timber imported and traded by NTTA members should originate from demonstrably sustainable forests.

Secondary objectives per product segment

- Softwood: By 2009, 100% of the softwood imported by members should originate from demonstrably sustainable forests.
- Hardwood: By 2009, 50% of the tropical hardwood imported should be demonstrably legal timber, while 25% of all hardwood should originate from demonstrably sustainable forests.
- Sheet material: By 2009, 75% of the imported sheet material should originate from sustainable forests.

In endorsing the association’s strict code of conduct, members of the NTTA undertake to market legal timber only, and preferably to market only timber that originates from demonstrably sustainable forests. The NTTA has taken active measures to support its members in this endeavour, and shall intensify its efforts wherever necessary in the years ahead.

The NTTA recognises that a great deal of attention is currently being devoted to the prohibition of illegal felling. Illegality is a pressing problem that undermines initiatives aimed at achieving sustainable timber production. However, it should be stressed that the vast majority of timber sold in the Netherlands is legal, while the percentage originating from sustainable forests is increasing. Without prejudice to any of its efforts to ascertain the origins of all timber, during the next few years, the NTTA intends to devote significant attention to timber species and areas of production in which sustainability is a foregone conclusion.

Demonstrable legally felled timber

Timber that does not comply with the applicable national and international legislation and regulations undermines responsible forestry management and poses a threat to forests as a natural resource. The promotion of legal timber encourages free market trade and realistic pricing. Estimates as to the percentage of illegal timber in circulation vary greatly, depending on the source consulted. It is, however, clearly





evident that an energetic and global approach to the problem is required. The creation of a demonstrably legal timber production process is therefore high on the NTTA's list of priorities. The following stance was established on the basis of the first provision of the code of conduct:

The NTTA is against the import of illegally felled timber and in favour of both an international, global approach to the problem and a statutory ban on the import of illegal timber at European level.

In its active pursuit of these objectives, the NTTA cooperates with prominent national and international organisations to develop methods to combat the trade in timber from illegal origins. The NTTA opts for a systematic approach, similar to that which it launched in Indonesia in 2004, namely: (1) consultation with interested organisations in the Netherlands and the country in question; (2) monitoring

suppliers' legal production; (3) identifying and listing instruments for the distinction of legal from illegal timber; (4) providing insight into shortfalls and alleviating them in cooperation with suppliers/producers; (5) setting up a chain of custody to be monitored by a certifying body, with a view to: (6) importing demonstrably legal timber. This approach is to be implemented within the next few years, adapted to the national circumstances in the following four tropical countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Cameroon and Gabon. The legality of timber from these exporting countries – which are of relevance for the Dutch market – is currently the subject of debate.

The illegality problem has a wide range of causes and involves many interested parties. Due to this the aforementioned NTTA approach – in the most favourable circumstances – will only make the world sit up and take notice of their alarm call. As the NTTA is unfortunately unable to extend



itself beyond the commercial interests of members in the producing countries, it can exert little pressure with a view to resolving the problem. A Europe-wide ban on illegally felled timber would therefore increase its grip on such matters, while turning its alarm call into a more serious basis for persuasion.

Keurhout²: legality test

Although primary responsibility for the prevention of illegal felling lies with the authorities in the countries in question, the NTTA continues to do everything within its power to help solve the problem. Much revolves around the issue of rendering the origin of the timber demonstrable. After all, if this cannot be verified, then it remains impossible to ascertain whether the timber was legally or sustainably produced. Producers who can verify that their timber was legally produced (by means of a certificate or statement) can be checked using the Keurhout legality test, whose development was commissioned by the NTTA. This enables the timber trade to establish the legality of business-to-business timber sales on the basis of Dutch standards. The test offers a solution to the problem that there is a lack of unambiguous legislation and regulation in the focus

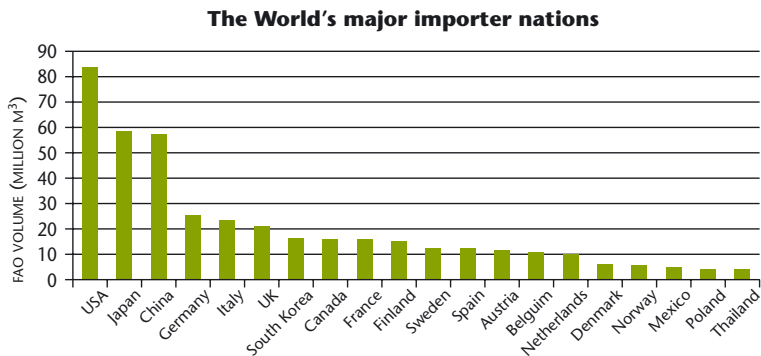
countries and/or that said legislation is not properly enforced. The system complies with the demand for demonstrably legal timber.

Responsibilities in perspective

The NTTA nevertheless remains realistic: the Dutch approach will certainly not put an immediate stop to illegal felling in the producing countries. The World wildlife Fund, for instance, proved by means of a study entitled *China's Wood Market, Trade and the Environment* (WWF/WNF, 2005) that China's demand for timber and timber products is rapidly increasing. Every effort therefore has to be made to ensure that these growing demands do not lead to an increase in illegal felling in other countries. The following graph presents the global import figures. The Netherlands' fifteenth place on the list means that it is a relatively small player in the global market. In stark contrast to a few other countries' timber trades, however, the NTTA does apply a code of conduct that imposes stringent standards for the import of timber.

This code of conduct promotes the legal production of timber, while the ensuing initiatives set an example to other countries.

Figure 2: Source FAO 2002



² Keurhout is the gatekeeper when it comes to assessing certificates for demonstrable legal and sustainable timber. Also consult www.keurhout.nl.



Figure 2 shows that the joint import volume of EU Member States is suitably large to enable them to make a fist on the world stage. The NTTA's efforts are therefore also aimed at cooperation with fellow European organisations.

Demonstrably sustainable timber

All this attention to legal timber production sometimes makes one forget that there are plenty of countries where there is no doubt about legality and sustainability of timber production. This includes European timber originating from countries where legislation and regulation are stringently enforced. The promotion of demonstrably sustainable timber from these areas is one of the main points on the NTTA's agenda. The report entitled *Sustainable forestry management and timber seals of approval, the current state of affairs* (Timber Information Centre, 2005) shows that the Netherlands tops the list together with the UK and Germany in the use of sustainably produced timber. In mid-2005

some 12 to 13% of timber on the Dutch market was demonstrably sustainable. The majority of this timber is used for applications in groundwork, road and hydraulic engineering, and some for residential building projects. However, it is also beginning to make inroads in other sectors. The annual increase in the market share of demonstrably sustainable timber is thanks to the best efforts of the timber trade, forest owners, clients, environmental organisations and government bodies.

The National Environmental Policy Plan 4 (NMP4) set an objective of 25% sustainably produced timber (in the construction sector) for 2005. At the close of 2004, the council of ministers for government authorities announced a more stringent purchasing policy for sustainably produced and legal timber. The NTTA, however, had already set a target of 25% in its previous policy plan, and aims to *triple* this by 2009.

Table 2. Certified area of forest per certification initiative (September 2005)

(x million hectares)	Europe	North America	Central & South America	Africa	Asia	Oceania	Total surface area	%
ATFS	-	10.50	-	-	-	-	10.50	4.0
CSA	-	63.76	-	-	-	-	63.76*	
FSC	32.86	15.34	7.46	1.69	0.89	1.22	59.47	23.5
MTCC	-	-	-	-	4.79	-	4.79	2.0
PEFC	56.19	63.76	1.53	-	-	5.16	126.64	50.0
SFI	-	50.23	-	-	-	-	50.23	19.0
CERTFOR	-	-	1.53	-	-	-	1.53	0.5
CERFLOR	-	-	0.22	-	-	-	0.22	0.0
Other	-	-	-	1.48	-	-	1.48	0.5
Total	89.05	139.83	9.21	3.17	5.68	6.38	253.32	
% of the total	35.0	55.0	4.0	1.0	2.0	3.0		100.0



Source: Report *Sustainable forestry management and timber seals of approval, the current state of affairs* (Timber Information Centre, 2005)

Timber Certification and Sustainable Forestry Management Memorandum (Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, February 1997) achieved

The memorandum – better known as ‘the Dutch government’s minimum requirements’ – which Keurhout applies as the benchmark for sustainability, has been actualised since January 2002. At the time that this policy plan was drawn up, agreement had yet to be reached by the commercial parties involved – including the NTTA, the NGOs and authorities – as to the content of the document, ‘the assessment guideline (BRL)’, and the structure within which the BRL was to be applied as an instrument. From the very outset, the NTTA’s standpoint during consultations was that the sustainability certificates approved by Keurhout in the past should, in principle, exceed the BRL guideline. After all, the disqualification of Keurhout approved certificates would amount to a tightening of the guideline instead of its actualisation. The NTTA is keen to promote clarity within the market, and therefore in favour of a workable BRL and structure. Whether the BRL will actually be introduced and, if so, how it is to be applied in practice, should become clear in the course of 2006. In the absence of a more suitable and workable alternative, the NTTA shall continue to apply the system developed by Keurhout.

Keurhout: sustainability test

In terms of the requirements that a sustainably managed forest has to meet, the NTTA applies the aforementioned *government’s minimum requirements* (Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, February 1997). Table 2 contains a list of the main certification initiatives.

In terms of volume, the PEFC is by far the largest, followed by the FSC, CSA and SFI. Table 2 also indicates Keurhout’s role: to create some semblance of order among the various certificates in the market. Keurhout determines whether a certificate that appears on the Dutch market complies by means of a sustainability test, which is based on the government’s minimum requirements. Should this prove the case, then the Keurhout logo may be applied to the timber. Sellers and purchasers can then rest assured that the timber is the demonstrable product of sustainable forestry. Keurhout’s Board of Experts, which approves or rejects the certificates submitted, is an entirely independent body. The NTTA bears responsibility for general management duties. The sustainability test and the aforementioned legality test enable Keurhout to provide a complete package (comprising both legal and sustainable). Further interest for this concept has also been expressed throughout Europe.

In addition to the NTTA, other parties use their influence to further improve timber production. These include the European Union, which has implemented the FLEGT policy (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade); the Dutch government, which has introduced the Assessment Guideline (BRL) for the certification of sustainable forestry management; various social organisations, which have launched activities and campaigns to attract attention to illegal practices; and politicians, who have proposed legislation, such as the bill proposed by Marijke Vos.



5 Research and development: the importance of progress

Primary objective

- To maintain existing timber applications and to create and promote new ones within the construction sector.

Secondary objectives

- By 2007, the opportunities for the use of timber in the renovation sector should have been established, while by 2009 the actual use of timber in this sector should have increased by 15% in relation to 2004.
- By 2009, the range of timber species suitable for applications in the construction sector should have risen by 10% in relation to 2004.

The timber trade fair 'Hout in Ahoy' in Rotterdam and the Building Trade Fair in Utrecht show just what is meant by innovation: new timber applications, timber sustainability techniques and the introduction of new timber species. In its drive for innovation, the sector eagerly looks forward to these developments. Consider,

for example the research being carried out with a view to discovering new suitable types of timber, which should broaden the range while also reducing the pressure on more scarce types. And last but not least, there are the product innovations, which provide new applications and open up new markets.



Multi-year research and development programme

In order to provide some direction for the research activities, the NTTA and its members have drawn up a multi-year research and development programme. Product innovations are primarily the responsibility of the members themselves. However, the NTTA is expected to play a facilitating and promotional role, for example, in the performance of exploratory research and support for promotional competitions, such as the WoodChallenge and the Timber Innovation Prize. Once exploratory research has been performed, the private sector will have to further develop promising items and suggestions itself. In addition to innovative studies, fundamental and technological research will have to be carried out, as this is essential for the appropriate application of timber products in the construction sector. When it comes to innovation, the opportunities for timber in the renovation sector are the spearhead for the period of the current plan.

Developments envisaged for existing timber applications are focused in the areas of improved quality and reduced maintenance, while opportunities for the application of new timber species are CE markings, fire safety, implementation of Eurocode 5 and the simplification of calculations for timber structures. Wherever possible, research is to be carried out in consultation with interested parties, and performed by prominent research institutes and knowledge centres, such as SHR Timber Research, TNO Building & Construction Research and Delft and Eindhoven Universities of Technology. Wherever it would appear worthwhile, NTTA shall also participate in the initiatives contained in CEI-Bois' action plan *Roadmap 2010*. And finally, innovative products can be publicised using the website www.houtexpo.nl, which was launched in 2004.



6 Promotion and information: promoting the use of timber

Primary objective

- Between 2006 and 2009, the promotion of timber is to be continued, with particular attention to softwood, *Approved Timber Trader*[®] and Keurhout.

Secondary objectives

- By 2009, the environmental and quality perception of (soft)wood and timber products should have improved by 20% in relation to 2004.
- By 2009, the *Approved Timber Trader*[®] should have become a household name among 75% of all customers.
- By 2009, 75% of all regulators and decision makers should be familiar with Keurhout.
- By 2009, all NTTA members should be supplying their sustainably produced timber using certificates and national systems that have been approved by Keurhout.

Figure 3 in Chapter 7 shows the distinction between communications by the NTTA and promotional activities performed by the Timber Information Centre. Wherever communications with those directly involved proves to be a matter of content, such as complicated issues concerning origin, then promotion is intended to bring the story behind timber out into the open for a large proportion of the general public.

The Timber Information Centre is in charge of promotional and information campaigns. It has put a great deal of effort into the promotional campaign '*Hou't bij Hout*' during the past few years. As the construction sector is by far the largest consumer of timber, the Timber Information Centre systematically focuses its campaign on architects, builders, project developers and housing corporations.



Other informational activities include: *Het Houtblad* (a trade magazine) the Timber Information Helpline, websites, the Certified Timber Helpdesk, *De Houtprijs* (a wood architecture & innovation prize), architectural trips, travelling timber consultant, Architect office hours, design competitions, brochures, workshops, a virtual exhibition (houtexpo.nl), training & educational activities including support for university chairs, guest lectures and the WoodChallenge student prize, project seminars, Building and Timber Trade Fairs.

The existing instruments are to be utilised in a more targeted manner during the years ahead, with a view to clearly communicating the positive aspects van timber and timber use.



7 Organisation: efficient and energetic



Objectives

- Between 2006 and 2009 the NTTA shall reinforce its adequate and efficient internal organisation, while focusing on the representation of the broad range of parties involved.
- The NTTA shall do its utmost to ensure that the lines of policy and objectives formulated are actually implemented.

The NTTA is keen to operate both nationally and internationally as an efficient and energetic organisation that represents its members' interests. The previous chapters explain the content and details of the approach to be adopted, the instruments to be utilised and the objective that have been set. The actual activities themselves are listed in Chapter 8.

NTTA's internal organisation and the Timber Information Centre

The NTTA represents its members' interests in the area of the economy, society, the environment, education and technology.

Internally, it concentrates on members, while focusing externally on the government authorities, organisations and institutes involved, such as policymakers, trades unions and nature conservancy and environmental organisations. It cooperates closely with the Timber Information Centre, which is housed in the same building. The Centre provides information and performs promotional activities aimed at a broad section of society, from professionals in the construction industry to consumers. The NTTA is currently the Timber Information Centre's major financier.

Economic aspects

The Dutch timber trade has demonstrated its flexibility during the past few years. The economic recession was clearly evident in the timber sector. Table 3 shows the import figures for timber and sheet material.



Table 3. Import of timber and sheet material by the Netherlands in m³

	2001 Quantity x1000 m ³	2002 Quantity x1000 m ³	2003 Quantity x1000 m ³	2004 Quantity x1000 m ³
Timber	3,811	3,661	3,707	3,657
Softwood	2,954	2,823	2,809	2,709
Hardwood	412	405	474	479
Tropical Hardwood	445	433	424	469
Sheeting material	1,750	1,632	1,631	2,115
Plywood	600	541	528	542
Tropical Plywood	225	225	210	180
Other sheeting material	925	866	893	1,393
Total (Timber and Sheeting Material)	5,561	5,293	5,338	5,772

Source: NTTA, CBS

Social aspects

Collective Labour Agreement negotiations figure prominently in the NTTA's social duties. In addition, it plays its part in the Convention on working conditions for the Timber Trade, which it concluded with the trades unions, *FNV Bouw and Bouw- en Houtbond CNV*, and the Ministry of Social affairs and Employment.

Environmental aspects at corporate level

The NTTA companies are subject to the Woodworking & Construction Industries Decree passed as part of the Environmental Management Act, or have been issued an environmental permit based upon it. Businesses that meet their own heating requirements by burning timber waste, are subject to the Netherlands' emission guidelines (NeR). However, there is also a range of adjoining regulations applicable to the sector, an increasing part of which nowadays ensues from European legislation.

Educational aspects: providing new impulses

The timber trade is partly reliant on the influx of young employees, who take an

enthusiastic view of the timber trade and have attained relevant vocational qualifications. Particular consideration needs to be devoted to educational institutes and training centres, however, to ensure that timber continues to attract students' attention.

Approved Timber Trader®: a term that has gained substance

The NTTA members are entitled to present themselves as an *Approved Timber Trader®*, which stands for quality, service, warranty, sustainability and social responsibility. As the term *Approved Timber Trader®* is still rather general, it is to be further developed during the next few years to ensure that it becomes a recognised quality label. This label is also to serve as an umbrella function for all activities performed by the NTTA and its members.

Cooperation

The objectives described in this policy plan are highly ambitious, and will therefore demand a great deal of effort and commitment from both the organisation and its members. The NTTA is, of course,



not alone in the highly diverse timber sector. Related sector organisations both in the Netherlands and abroad, government authorities and NGOs shall therefore be approached to participate wherever possible in activities aimed at the achievement of the aforementioned objectives. After all, the more parties that lend their support, the sooner tangible results should be achieved.

Communications

The NTTA distinguishes between communications and promotion. Communications is by definition the

domain of the NTTA, while promotion remains the Timber Information Centre duty. The NTTA has implemented new communications policy during the past few years. By actively seeking contact with relevant organisations and institutions, remaining open to constructive criticism and transparently publicising the results achieved, the NTTA has succeeded in developing a more positive image over the past few years. The association is fully aware that this is largely due to a combination of sound communications policy and tangible results.

Figure 3. Promotion, information and communications



8 Implementation activities 2006 - 2009

Chapter 4:

The origins of timber

- Draw up an implementation plan for each country of origin.
- Involve the members/importers in each country in its execution.
- Focus attention on minor members and successful market leaders.
- Strictly apply the code of conduct and system of sanctions.
- Professionalize the reporting system and introduce external checks.
- Confront the government on the issue of non-members' misconduct, which is affecting the image of the trade in general.
- Increase the demand for sustainably produced timber among customers.
- Actively involve sector and umbrella organisations in the implementation and execution of NTTA activities.
- Boost legality and sustainability activities at both national and EU levels.
- Compile a survey of the instrumentation required, CoCs, manuals, etc., and address any shortfalls.
- Compile unambiguous information on the origins of timber.
- Compile basic information documents for focus countries.
- Implement the Timber Trade Action Plan (TTAP), aimed at Indonesia, Malaysia, Cameroon and Gabon. Consider extending the project to other countries.
- Organise regular information and consultation meetings with the stakeholders.
- Proceed with the Keurhout activities, while promoting use and membership.
- Compile an unambiguous and practical list of terminology and definitions.



- Internationalise Keurhout.
- Consider introducing a Keurhout broker.
- Have Keurhout assess existing national standards for sustainable forestry management.

Chapter 5: *Research and development*

- Establish the grades of the various timber species.
- Ascertain the properties of softwood yet to be established.
- Establish the fire characteristics of timber species.
- Establish the non-slip properties of timber decking.
- Perform research into the suitability of lesser-known timber species for various applications.
- Provide further insight into and promote the opportunities for the use of timber in the renovation sector.
- Establish the quality of the various types of finishing for timber wall cladding.
- Provide insight into opportunities to improve quality and reduce maintenance levels.
- Actively promote the broader use of softwood and related products in timber frame construction.
- Supervise the implementation of the timber construction standards, Eurocode 5.
- Supervise the implementation of CE markings on various timber products.

Chapter 6: *Promotion and information*

- The promotional activities performed by the Timber Information Centre in 2005 are to be set forth.
- All NTTA activities and results are to be given promotional support.
- Continue with the WoodChallenge design competition for students.
- Consider holding design competitions for interior design and timber innovations.
- Draw up and implement a promotional plan for the *Approved Timber Trade®*.
- Consider launching a business-to-business promotion campaign for Keurhout.
- Promote both existing and new timber applications.
- Promote lesser-known timber species.
- Devote special attention to the positive aspects of softwood.
- *Het Houtblad* is to remain a prime medium for the promotion of timber.
- Devote continuous attention to opportunities for cooperation and joint activities.
- The websites are to be used to their full capacity for promotional activities and the provision of information.



Appendix 1: system of sanctions applicable under the NTTA code of conduct

Code of conduct

The NTTA code of conduct is also linked to a system of sanctions. Members who fail to observe the code of conduct may therefore face sanctions. Also see www.vvn.nl.

The system of sanctions

The following system of sanctions has been implemented, whereby interested parties may report suspected cases of misconduct to the Mandatory Advisory Committee. Complaints naturally have to be well documented. The committee comprises independent members appointed by Presiding Judge at the Court of Amsterdam. In the event that the Mandatory Advisory Committee considers a complaint justified, then it may impose one of the following sanctions in accordance with the gravity of the offence:

- A warning in the event of a first offence.
- A fine of up to € 45,000.
- Suspension.
- Expulsion.



Appendix 2: terminology and abbreviations used

Terminology

Demonstrably sustainable timber	Timber bearing a certificate that has been designated as sustainable by Keurhout's Board of Experts on the basis of the 'Keurhout Protocol for the Validation of Sustainable Forest'
Demonstrable legally produced timber	Timber bearing a statement or certificate that has been designated as legal by Keurhout's Board of Experts on the basis of the 'Keurhout protocol for the Validation of Claims of Legal Timber'
Exceptional membership	A form of membership applied to enable affiliated timber trades to join forces with the NTTA
CEI-Bois Roadmap 2010	The CEI-Bois policy plan containing objectives and activities designed to promote the use of timber
Chain of Custody	The trade chain, from the forest to finished product suitable for certification
Keurhout's Board of Experts	An independent, self-governing body that assesses the certificates and/or national standards submitted, with a view to approval or rejection
Erkende Houthandel® or <i>Approved Timber Trader®</i>	Title of the NTTA approval scheme. Members of the NTTA have to endorse and observe the NTTA code of conduct. The title of <i>Approved Timber Trader®</i> stands for quality, service, warranty, sustainability and social responsibility
Eurocode 5	A cluster of European standards, containing regulations pertaining to structural timber applications
Certified Timber Helpdesk	The information desk that suppliers, decision makers and executives in the construction sector, government bodies, businesses and organisations may consult on the policy and organisational aspects of the certification of sustainable forestry management and chain of custody guarantees www.centrum-timber.nl/houtinformatie/helpdeskgecertificeerdhout
Keurhout	The gatekeeper in the assessment of certificates for demonstrably legal and demonstrably sustainable timber. www.keurhout.nl
Keurhout Protocol for the Validation of Sustainable Forest	The document 'Keurhout Protocol for the Validation of Sustainable Forest', which describes the criteria that timber bearing a certificate has to comply with if it is to be approved by Keurhout's Board of Experts
Keurhout protocol for the Validation of Claims of Legal Timber	The document 'Keurhout protocol for the Validation of Claims of Legal Timber', which describes the criteria that timber bearing a statement or certificate has to comply with if it is to be approved by Keurhout's Board of Experts
Legality statement	The statement that NTTA members require of their suppliers as primary evidence that the products supplied were legally produced or purchased



Abbreviations

ATFS	American Tree Farm System, www.treefarmssystem.org
AVIH	National Association for Forestry contractors, round wood trade and round wood processing industries
BoE	Keurhout's Board of Experts
BRL	Assessment guideline
CEI-Bois	European Confederation of woodworking industries
CERFLOR	Brazilian Certification System
CERTFOR	Chilean Certification System www.certfor.org
CoC	Chain of Custody
CSA	Canadian Standard Association www.csa-international.org
ESC	European Softwood Conference
FEBO	European Timber Trade Association
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council www.fscnl.org
LN&V	Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
MTCC	Malaysian Timber Certification Council www.mtcc.com
NATA	Netherlands Association of Timber Agents
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NMP4	National Environmental Policy Plan 4
NVG	Dutch Wholesalers Association
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes www.pefc.org
RWS	Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management
SFI	Sustainable Forestry Initiative, US Certification System www.aboutsfi.org
SHR	Independent Timber Research Institute www.shr.nl
TTAP	Timber Trade Action Plan for Good Governance in Tropical Forestry
UCBD	European Hardwood Federation
UCBR	European Softwood Association
UCIP	Union pour le Commerce d'Importation de Panneaux en Bois
VIGH	Vereeniging van Importeerende Groothandelaren in Hout
VROM	Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment
WWF/WNF	World Wildlife Fund



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