

**Progress and perspective of the ITTO project,  
“Promoting and creating market demand for certified tropical wood  
and verified legal tropical wood”**

**[Background / Objective]**

As one of the measures for the conservation of forests, the area of certified forests is following an increasing trend on a global basis<sup>1</sup>. However, the area of certified forests in tropical countries is growing at a sluggish pace<sup>2</sup>, and one of the causes that can be cited for this is the mismatch between the volume of demand in the countries consuming certified wood and that of supply in those producing it. It can be considered that another cause is that there is not much information put in good order and transmitted to the targeted dealers, though various pieces of such information are transmitted through diverse channels.

In this project, our objective is to organize various pieces of widely spread information in relation to the verified / certified wood, whether positive or negative, and transmit it mainly to the wood dealers and users in Japan to spur more demand for such wood.

**[Efforts]**

Efforts were made for the project for 2 years. In the first year, the demand for verified / certified wood is to be spurred in wide areas by an awareness survey on the part of domestic enterprises, investigation of the influence on the environment / society in producing districts, creation of tools for spreading activities and organization of workshops for domestic enterprises. In the following year, an information center mainly on the web is to be established to transmit practical information in relation to the procurement and supply of such wood to the various parties involved in the handling of wood and wood products, both domestic and abroad. In addition, with a view to focusing on the enterprises for which it is possible to procure or supply such wood and developing a business model for the transaction of such wood, more practical support is to be provided to each of the procurers and producers.

**[Past Achievements]**

A hearing survey was conducted, targeted at 33 domestic enterprises including

---

<sup>1</sup> Forests of about 290 million ha, accounting for 7.5% of the world total in area, are certified by the forest certification organizations.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in Indonesia and Malaysia the certified forests with an area of 5,770 thousand ha account for only 2.7% of the total of these two countries.

trading companies, dealers / wholesalers / manufacturers of building materials, house builders, office furniture makers, paper manufacturers and so forth, as well as 3 organizations related to the wood industry. With regard to the Amended G Law, 31 companies (96%) are aware of it, though the degree of understanding differs among them. In addition, 18 companies (55%) have established a system capable of issuing a certificate of verified wood under the organization certification system. 9 companies (27%) have obtained CoC certification under the forest certification system. However, there is only 1 instance of wood / building materials in which the chain is continuous, and the label is not affixed to the finished product. On the other hand, actually recorded transaction of the wood involving interviewed companies, to which the certificate of the verified wood is attached, are very few, and there were only a few cases in which such certificate was requested by the customer<sup>3</sup>.

From the above, it is apparent that the system is not functioning sufficiently, and is feared to lose substance as the demand is not satisfactory from the government / public institutions as buyers, though the system of procedure for the certification of verified wood has been almost established.

#### [Future tasks / perspective]

In the future, the demand for verified / certified wood is to be spurred by the proper transmission of practical information to the wood dealers through this project. At the same time, an active approach is to be made to the government / public institutions. In addition, hearing and focusing of enterprises in producing countries for which it is possible to supply verified / certified wood are to be conducted to promote the exchange of information with the procurers through the information center. Furthermore, efforts are to be aimed at the realization of the good business for verified / certified wood, including the target wood products in small lots produced from the community forests in the producing countries, without adhering to the existing supply chain.

---

<sup>3</sup> For reference, according to the aggregation for the period of October 2006 ~ March 2007, released by the Japan Wood Import Association, the transactions to which the verified wood certificate was attached accounted for 28.1% of all.