

International Symposium on Legality Verified Wood 2010
Part Two Report: Activities in Japan to Tackle Illegal Logging Issues

Presenter Information

Name	Tokiharu Okazaki
Affiliation	Friends of the Earth (FoE) Japan
Title	Secretary General
Career summary	Responsible for plant exports at a heavy electric machinery manufacturer for over 30 years. Entered FoE Japan after retirement. Engaged in preparing policy proposals for such fields as environmental and social considerations in climate change and overseas economic cooperation. Attended the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development as a councilor to the Japanese government delegation.

Report Outline

Title: Campaign to Spread the Procurement of Fairwood (wood which does not destroy forests)
<p>Report Summary</p> <p><i>Brief Self-Introduction</i></p> <p>FoE Japan participated in the 1999 WTO (from the standpoint of opposing timber trade liberalization) together with the Japan Federation of Wood-industry Associations and the National Federation of Forest Owners' Cooperative Association. Since that time, we have pursued measures against illegal logging and promoted the use of domestic timber from the NGO perspective.</p> <p><i>Efforts for Legal Wood by Your Organization</i></p> <p>We have been promoting the use of legal wood, wood which does not destroy forests, and wood from sustainable managed forests among (1) the central government and local government bodies, (2) private enterprises, and (3) consumers ever since. "Promotion of Fairwood among all sector of Japanese society" was selected by the Ministry of the Environment as a Best Policy Proposal in 2004 (one of two proposals selected that year). We were deeply involved with preparing the government wood purchasing guidelines during the revision of the Law on Promoting Green Purchasing.</p> <p>In our work with the private sector, we have provided support to Sekisui House, Ltd. and other housing suppliers in compiling wood procurement policies, and supported Fairwood procurement by furniture manufacturers. We have also been advancing public (consumer) education and promotion through the (Fairwood Café) for the past two years.</p> <p><i>Evaluation of Japan's Supply of Legal Wood</i></p>

FoE Japan's forestry team began from works to conserve forests in the Russian Far East, and our measures against illegal logging began from conservation of tropical forests in Indonesia. As for Russia, the Japan Federation of Wood-industry Associations and the import industry have also implemented countermeasures, and it may be said that direct imports of illegally logged wood have dramatically decreased. Regarding Indonesia, we understand that the mixing of illegally logged wood in plywood and other wood products has greatly decreased as well, thanks to government and industry level efforts.

Significance of Efforts Together with the Wood Industry Based on Consumer Trends

FoE Japan's initial efforts were with the Ministry of the Environment, but developed into illegal logging countermeasures involving the wood industry as well when the Forestry Agency got the wood industry involved after the issue was addressed by the G8. We are proud that the information that we have gathered from around the world as an international environmental NGO is proving useful in terms of both quantity and quality. Our Fairwood activities are unique for an environmental NGO as they are a joint undertaking with industry, but we think they have proven effective.

Our public (consumer) and local public body education and promotion activities, however, still have a long way to go. The abovementioned (Fairwood Café) has been held once per month to introduce furniture, wooden tableware, organic sweets and other items, and otherwise make people more familiar with forests and wood, but it has not always attracted enough participants.

Future Issues

We need to expand our campaigns to reach areas that cannot be covered under the present illegal logging countermeasures.

1. Some wood products imported from China, particularly furniture and flooring, contain wood from rare tree species. Furniture and flooring procurement guidelines are awaited.
2. In expanding the use of domestic wood, the distribution of cedar, cryptomeria, and other conifers is getting organized, but the market and distribution for useful broad-leaved timber needs to be reconstructed. While this may be considered a niche market, it is necessary to grasp the resource and demand volumes, and to construct a sustainable supply structure and chain.
3. Turning to domestic illegal logging countermeasures, the question is, how can we revive abandoned and unmanaged forests? If nothing is done, instead of revival, will such forests only increase? The government's Forest and Forestry Revitalization Plan does not include measures to address this.
4. Western countries are beginning to introduce protection measures like so-called (Lacey Act)

as border measures against illegal logging. In Japan, the government says the time is not right for such measures, but are there any alternatives?