



FAIR&PRECIOUS

How proper management of tropical forests could be an asset for the planet

PARIS, 13 December 2018 – On the first anniversary of its **Fair&Precious** brand, the International Tropical Timber Technical Association (ATIBT) reminds us of some of the lesser-known facts about forest management while remaining committed to promoting a sustainable tropical timber industry.

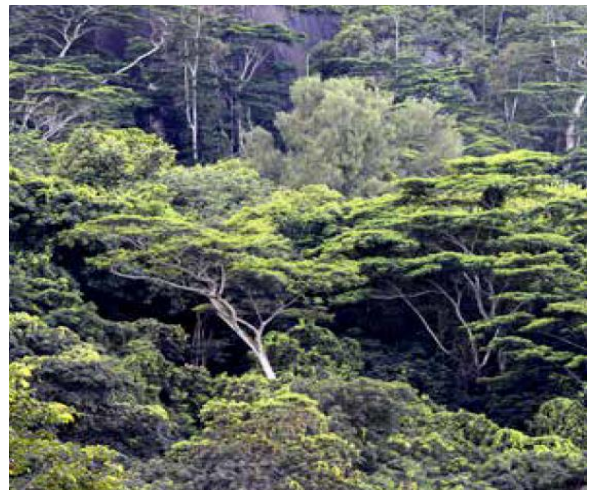
Sustainable forest management protects against deforestation

When we talk about the exploitation of tropical forests, many people associate it with deforestation. They imagine thousands of hectares of virgin forests destroyed, century-old trees burned to the ground and nature disfigured forever – all for the sole purpose of creating agricultural land or grazing to obtain land.

Yet there is a major difference between deforestation and sustainable forest management. **Robert Hunink, President of ATIBT** explains:

“European consumers misunderstand the role of forest managers in attributing tropical deforestation, mainly due to the “mining” of forest soil fertility for agriculture or firewood.

Through the Fair&Precious brand, they will learn that the actors of our ecosystem do not plunder, but on the contrary only pick one or two trees per hectare, on the same plot, once every thirty years.”



Example of sustainable forest management

To date, only companies certified in legal and sustainable forest management (certifications are issued by FSC or PEFC and controlled by certifying bodies such as Bureau Veritas, SGS Quailfor or Rainforest Alliance) can benefit from the Fair&Precious brand. In addition to these certification standards, they must comply with the country’s applicable forest code (after validation of control procedures and obtaining legal certifications). The certification is then valid for a period of five years.

The ratio of trees harvested is far lower than those left to grow naturally



At present, the vast majority of tropical timber comes directly from the virgin forest (without harvesting control) or from large plantations which are gradually replacing virgin forests.

The first is simply illegal poaching, while the second is a monoculture of exotic tree varieties that degrade the soil, threaten biodiversity and accelerate climate change.

The Fair&Precious programme offers a sustainable alternative: preserving forest resources by harvesting less than its natural increase.

Young trees, as well as seed trees, are systematically left standing, since they contribute to the renewal of the forest.

Forest managers create real local economic and social development

Unlike many unscrupulous players, Fair&Precious members are committed to working for local economic and social development by contributing to generate income for people and by providing them with access to services such as education,

medical care and housing. Local processing is thus favoured and training in various forestry and wood trades is provided by the network's member concession holders. By providing employment and resources to local populations, they are fighting against exodus and urban concentration.

The mission of forest managers is also to fight poaching





With its sustainable approach, the Fair&Precious brand also aims to protect fauna and flora, by ensuring that animals' habitats are made safe. In blocking the illegal trafficking of forest products, they are also able to develop programmes to combat poaching and restock endangered species.

Tropical wood is in fact the most environmentally friendly material available

Today, in the absence of a guarantee, consumers often turn away from tropical wood and choose materials with a much lower environmental performance record.

Fair&Precious aims to restore confidence among tropical wood users and to promote the acquisition of products from sustainably managed tropical forests. The exceptional technical performance of tropical woods and their durability properties are highlighted.



Indeed, these materials have excellent resistance to external environmental factors and require no chemical treatment.

Tropical wood is particularly useful and efficient in the construction of garden decking, interior and exterior furniture, shipbuilding, etc.

Fair&Precious' objective is not to massively increase volume sales, given its commitment to preserving the forests, but to enable these "precious" woods to regain their true place on the market.

About us

The ATIBT (International Tropical Timber Technical Association) was founded in 1951 at the request of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). At the service of the "tropical timber" sector, from the forest to the final consumer, the association plays a leading role in the implementation of international projects dedicated to the sustainable and responsible management of tropical forests. It is also one of the best technical and scientific references on tropical timber resources. In 2016, ATIBT experienced a nearly 50% increase in the number of members, bringing its membership to over 140. Alongside European actors in the "African tropical timber" sector, the ATIBT brings together states (Republic of Congo, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic), NGOs (such as WWF and the Prince Albert II Foundation) and large companies. <http://www.fair-and-precious.org>

PRESS CONTACTS – OPEN2EUROPE

Miléna Mahé +33 (0) 1 55 02 15 17 m.mahe@open2europe.com
Neil Atherton +33 (0) 1 55 02 27 84 n.atherton@open2europe.com