

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION



NEWS RELEASE

Tropical timber gets better rap in market place, and time is now right to raise its profile, says 2015 Annual Market Discussion

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, 18 November 2015: Perceptions of tropical timber have improved immensely in recent years, according to speakers at the International Tropical Timber Council's Annual Market Discussion, held here today as part of the Council's 51st session.

The Annual Market Discussion, which was organized by the Trade Advisory Group, received presentations from leading industrialists and specialists as well as from James Gasana, a consultant, on strengthening the participation of the private sector in advancing the objectives of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

In a statement, the Trade Advisory Group said the time was now right for tropical timber traders to raise the profile of their products in the market place and to challenge the market share taken in recent years by competitors and alternatives. The tropical timber sector had demonstrated that it can verify the legal credentials of its products; now it needed to get that message out to the professionals, the architects, engineers and designers who specify and use wood.

The Trade Advisory Group has been urging the International Tropical Timber Council to forge a stronger partnership with the private sector as a way of furthering its objectives. In 2014, it suggested exploring innovative ideas for a strategy that would better harness the timber private sector by "blending" private-sector expertise and ITTO resources.

The report prepared by Gasana summarized initiatives that other international organizations have embarked on with the timber private sector and indicated how ITTO could develop such a strategy.

"The lack of a strategy for a private-sector partnership is clearly in contrast with the expectations of both ITTO and the private sector for cooperation in achieving the priorities of successive ITTO Action Plans," said Gasana in his presentation. "There is therefore a strong case for improving the situation by building a better defined and more innovative partnership."

Presentations made at the Annual Market Discussion, as well as information on the 51st session of the International Tropical Timber Council, are available at www.itto.int.

Daily coverage of the session by the Earth Negotiations Bulletin is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/ittc51/>