

## **PROCUREMENT OF TIMBER AND TIMBER PRODUCTS**

### **Purpose**

1. To provide a reminder of the Executive's policy on timber and timber related products and to detail some useful sources of further advice and guidance.

### **Background**

2. There have been a number of high profile issues regarding the source of timber used in connection with public contracts, the most recent of which was a protest in respect of timber used by contractors working on the refit of flooring in the Glasgow Kelvingrove Art Gallery project. In view of this, you may welcome a reminder of the Executive's policy on timber (all wood and wood products and including any such products used temporarily in the course of construction works).
3. The key elements of the Scottish Executive's policy on timber are set out below.

Purchasers should:

- specify in orders and contracts that suppliers must provide evidence that timber and timber products have been lawfully obtained from forests or plantations that are being sustainably managed;
- where feasible:
  - consider buying reclaimed timber products made from reclaimed timber where it is cost effective and practical;
  - when specifying chipboard and medium density fibreboards (MDF), indicate a preference for those made with a minimum percentage of 80% recycled material
- ensure documented or certified evidence under a credible scheme is provided by suppliers which demonstrates:
  - the operation of an environmental management system, incorporating forest management criteria that complies with internationally recognised principles;
  - certification under a national or country specific scheme which is approved by one or more internationally recognised umbrella or accreditation schemes;
  - that the timber has been acquired in accordance with national legislation in the country of origin and any applicable international agreements (CITES);

where this is not possible, purchasers should obtain full assurance that the timber or timber product has come from a sustainably managed forest or a viable alternative;

- put in place procedures for considering and recording any purchase which cannot be substantiated as coming from sustainable sources which cover:
    - the necessity of the purchase (e.g. for particular species of timber);
    - the specification, e.g. Can another species meet the requirements? Can large sizes be met by gluing? Can supply dates be extended?
    - justification of the purchase in terms of value for money taking account of whole life cycle costs;
    - the use of independent advice
    - an assessment of the effect of using alternative products, e.g. is the alternative (steel, concrete, plastic, etc) likely to be more damaging to the environment;
  - obtain authorisation from a senior manager at least one level above that of the project manager where an exemption to the above is essential
4. Anyone who is developing or managing a public private partnership, including PFI projects involving capital investment, should take account of the policy when writing their specifications.
  5. There has been an obligatory requirement since 1996 to carry out BREEAM assessments of new buildings or substantially refurbished premises. On timber BREEAM says: "all softwood timbers and temperate hardwoods are to be from sustainable sources. Plywood containing tropical hardwoods from unsustainable or unknown origin is prohibited. Only plywood made from softwoods or temperate hardwoods may be used, e.g. Birch or Douglas Fir (an extract from BREEAM 98 for Offices is attached Annex A)

### **Further Advice and Guidance**

6. Further advice and guidance can be obtained from the following websites:

Scottish Executive Greening Government

[http://www.scotland.gov.uk/environment/greeninggovernment/env\\_policy.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/environment/greeninggovernment/env_policy.asp)

Scottish Executive Procurement - Sustainable Development

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/about/FCSD/PCSD-POL/00017839/susdevguide.aspx>

Timber: Buyers Questions Answered -

<http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/improving/partf/timber/buyers/index.htm>

Green Guide for Buyers

<http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/improving/partf/greenbuy/index.htm>

Green Guide for buyers - Action Sheet - Wood

<http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/sdig/improving/partf/greenbuy/28.htm>

CIPS Guide on Environmental Purchasing  
<http://www.cips.org/BigPage.asp?CatID=205>

7. Any enquiries in relation to this minute should be addressed to Dave Cook (Tel: 0141 242 5598 or GTN 7188 5598), email: [dave.cook@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dave.cook@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

**Scottish Procurement Directorate**  
**Meridian Court**  
**Glasgow**

## **BREEAM**

BREEAM 98 for Offices currently says:

All softwood timbers and temperate hardwoods are to be from sustainable sources.

Tropical hardwoods in timber or timber products (e.g. veneers, lippings, boards etc) are generally avoided, they are only to be allowed where the Contractor has provided the following information for each type, and the Contracting Authority is satisfied to the content:

- (a) The species and country of origin of each hardwood timber
- (b) The name of the concession/plantation within each of the countries of origin which supply these timbers/products
- (c) Copies of each of the forestry policies pursued by the concession/plantations that must confirm that a sustainable resource policy is followed
- (d) Relevant shipping documents confirming that the UK supplier has actually obtained these timbers etc., from the given plantation/concession.

None of the relevant material should be ordered before confirmation of the acceptability of this documentation etc.

Tropical hardwoods or products containing tropical hardwoods from unsustainable or unknown origin are expressly prohibited from the use in this building. Tropical hardwoods include “Meranti”, “Sapele”, “Angre”, “Mahogany” and “Ramin”. Temperate hardwoods that are acceptable for use include “Birch”, “Oak”, “Ash”, and “Beech”.

Plywood containing tropical hardwoods from unsustainable or unknown origin is prohibited. Plywood of unknown composition is also expressly prohibited. Only plywood made from softwoods or temperate hardwoods may be used, e.g. “Birch” or “Douglas Fir”.

If requested, the contractor is to confirm in writing to the CA the composition and sources of plywood etc., to confirm that the foregoing is met.

The contractor’s attention is drawn particularly to the following areas of specification:

G20	timber/plywood
L20	doors etc
N10	fittings etc.
P20	trim