

Demonstrating the Legality and Sustainability of Tropical Hardwood is a Must

“We are entering a new age for timber, a new industrial revolution for timber,” said Peter Latham, Chairman of PEFC international recently at the first Malaysian Timber Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

“This isn’t just a climate-positive story of using a renewable crop, a crop that can still lock in the carbon when at the end of its use; but also one in which certification can demonstrate how we look after our forests, how we cooperate with indigenous people, how we protect worker’s rights, and so much more.”

Peter was addressing the global supply and demand for forest certification and certified timber, its associated challenges and trends, and the outlook and opportunities for forest certification, during his speech on

‘Certification: opening or closing doors to global markets for tropical hardwood’.

“In terms of global fibre consumption, tropical hardwood is a small part, but it is at the top of the pyramid, it is the prestige product,” Latham explained.

“Demonstrating that it is legal and sustainable is a necessity, a necessity that ensures that the product that we value and love is given a true value in the market place.”

The conference, organised by the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC), was held on October 2018 with the theme “Towards a Better Tomorrow”.

Minister of Primary Industries, Teresa Kok in her opening speech emphasised on the importance of sustainability in enabling the Malaysian timber industry to

be well established in the global market place. “Sustainability and certification will determine long term success” for the timber sector she said.

In his welcoming remarks, MTC Chairman, Dato’ Low Kian Chuan, drew attention to Malaysia’s good forestry practices, with sustainable forest management practices incorporated in the national system. He highlighted that Malaysia is committed to maintaining over 50 per cent of forest cover and preserving forests as natural heritage.

The need for certification to prove that products are from sustainable sources was a key point of the panel discussion on forest protection.