

# Barcelona – Responsible Procurement of Timber

## Background

In 2003, as part of the Council for the Environment and Sustainability, a work group was created for the responsible purchasing of timber, as a result of the presentation in Barcelona of the Greenpeace international certified timber campaign.

In December 2003, an Institutional Declaration was approved that urged the Council to contribute to the protection of ancient forests, to not use illegally-felled timber and to promote the purchase of certified timber.

Next, the Council's responsible timber procurement policy was implemented first as a Government Measure and then as a Mayoral Decree approved in July 2004.

The Decree established that in timber purchasing a requirement must be that the timber is certified and as tendering criteria the Decree established a non-exclusive system of certifications of sustainable forest management.

## Objectives

- Encourage rational management, more sustainable use of forest resources, and the exclusion of the acquisition of wood coming from illegal forestry.
- Guarantee the protection of ancient forests and those of interest in the preservation of biodiversity.
- Recognise the rights of indigenous populations.
- Improve the social and labour conditions of timber industry workers.
- Avoid the purchase of timber from illegal operations and clandestine logging.

## Results & Impacts

As part of the Green Office Programme, Barcelona City Council has introduced sustainable criteria for public timber purchasing. These criteria aim to promote acquisition of timber from more rationally and sustainable managed sources that are compatible with the preservation of biodiversity. The Mayoral Decree approved in July 2004, led to the creation of a Work Committee with the purpose of monitoring municipal timber purchases and the application of the Decree. There have been two principal results:

1. The Mayoral Decree, creating a legal framework for the responsible procurement of timber, and establishing:
  - That it is always necessary to request certification of origin, in order to avoid imports from countries in conflict.
  - The preference for the purchase of certified timber, establishing a scoring system in the tendering criteria for certifications: FSC, PEFC, Blue Angel, DGQA ... The Decree also includes wood derived products like paper.
  - A work committee to promote and evaluate measures with the industries, with districts, and autonomous entities involved.
2. The purchase of 2,310 m<sup>3</sup> of certified timber due to the introduction of clauses the specifications included in the contracts for:

- Funeral Services: wood for coffins (FS or in process). Biggest solid wood purchaser.
- Parks and Gardens: street furniture, benches, fences and gates (PEFC or FSC). Since 2003 all parks and gardens carry out the criteria established by the Decree.
- Foment de Ciutat Vella: timber for sheds and plank mouldings (Nordic Stamp).
- Les Corts Districts: daises (PEFC).
- Pro-Eixample: urban furniture (certified 80% recycled wood).
- Barcelona Zoo: all timber used comes from legal forestry.

## **Actors**

A Work Committee was created in order to monitor municipal timber purchases and the application of the Decree. The Committee is made up of:

- Municipal Institute for Parks and Gardens.
- Urban Planning sector.
- Municipal Institute of Funeral Directors.
- Directorate of Legal Services.
- General Services sector.
- Representatives of the city districts and other municipal bodies.
- Directorate of Environmental Programs (coordination).

## **Difficulties**

- It was difficult to gather information about the contracts for timber purchasing from all departments and their results.
- Certificates are often of low quality and therefore present problems of guarantee.
- Chain-of-custody certificates are difficult to introduce.
- Some products may have special characteristics difficult to analyze with the current Decree.

## **Costs/Savings**

- Investment costs: not possible to evaluate.

Ongoing costs: implementing this procedure requires a high degree of commitment from staff; for each individual contract, market research is necessary.

## **Transferability**

Barcelona has been one of the first cities in Spain to introduce criteria for timber purchasing. Barcelona's expertise is serving to spread the responsible purchasing of timber practice. Greenpeace and WWF/Adena to inspire responsible timber purchasing models have already used these criteria. Also, the media has shown interest on it.

The approach adopted by the City of Barcelona, including the questionnaires used, can be used as a basis for making procurement practices sustainable in other European public authorities.

Cities like Sant Boi del Llobregat, el Prat del Llobregat and Benicarló, have carried out similar activities based on the city of Barcelona.

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