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Seminar on
STRATEGIES FOR THE SOUND USE OF WOOD
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**From Sustainable Forest Management to Sustainable Development of Forest Products:
an NGO View**
Introduction Session

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Summary

WWF firmly supports the concept of wood as a sustainable material. Building demand-side strategies does however need the context of issues at the resource side. Those in the European industry are familiar with issues affecting supplies such as the low prices for roundwood and the use of recycled wood for panel production. From an environmentalists viewpoint there are others: illegal logging (usually manifesting itself as avoidance of taxes); forest restitution and a "race for cash" before EU membership; increasing protected areas (1.6Mn ha in the last 12 months alone); increasing interest in restoration (of wilderness or naturalness); and climate change which will force us to change the way we manage our forest resources.

Since the early 1990's NGO's have been promoting sustainable forest management, and FSC certification as a key tool connecting forests with consumers. Ten years on NGO's have learned to use market and financial levers to create pressure for change and move from sustainable forest management to sustainable development of forest products.

In WWF we take a holistic "protect, manage, restore" approach to forest conservation. This combines policy work with field projects and involves a focus in western Europe on "markets and lifestyles" as well as "rules of the game". Work on certification now happens not just at the forest

level, but along the supply chain to retailers. Our Forest and Trade Networks now work with over 400 companies in Europe to create demand for sustainably managed wood. Producer Groups are a new and exciting natural extension of this work.

We can anticipate that environmental issues will continue to influence global development. NGO's in Europe have a higher approval rating than Governments and corporations. WWF is moving its thinking "beyond certification" to develop new partnerships with industry to help define not just good forest management, but "good processing" and supply chain management. A partnership approach involving governments, corporations and NGO's can be a powerful force for developing "Strategies for the Sound Use of Wood".

Key words: "producer groups", supply chains, certification, "sustainable forest management", partnerships
