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**Wood promotion in Germany –
a joint initiative of forestry and the wood based industry since 1990**
Session II

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Summary

The German Timber Sales Promotion Fund Act came into force on 20 December 1990. The Timber Sales Promotion Fund, established on the basis of this regulation, meets the statutory task of centrally marketing the sale and use of wood products originating from German forest enterprises and the wood processing industry (such as sawmills, veneer plants and plywood factories), whilst taking into consideration international trade rules. For the purposes of the Fund, about €1 million are made available annually that are levied as charges on the enterprises mentioned above (8 per mill of saw log sales).

With this approach, policies at both national and European level have recognised the need for implementing a central marketing tool for the forest and timber sector in order to efficiently support

- a better understanding of multifunctional sustainable forest management (SFM) and
- the sound use of wood as one of the most important renewable raw materials with outstanding ecological benefits.

The mobilisation of existing reserves of raw materials in forests is also a major aim.

An initial image campaign for SFM and wood products (launched in 1994), followed up by a marketing offensive “Pro active timber” in 2001, constitute important elements of the public relations and advertising campaigns for the Fund.

Apart from these principal measures, specific market and marketing investigations, expert advice for timber construction or product research projects number among the major activities of the Fund. The focus is currently on measures designed to stabilize the market position of timber as a structural and basic material and to expand this position in the long run.

The successful development of this special wood promotion instrument may become an increasingly decisive element in convincing consumers of the manifold advantages of SFM and wood as an ecologically-friendly natural product. It may also become more important to pool existing potentials in small and medium-sized forest and timber enterprises to boost their competitive strength vis-à-vis products made of non-renewable materials.

Key words: wood promotion, Timber Sales Promotion Fund, marketing instruments, competition between wood and non-renewable raw materials
