

## **B&Q Becomes First Retailer to Buy 100 per cent Responsibly Sourced Wood**



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After a campaign that spans over 20 years when B&Q became a founding partner of the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council), the retailer announces today that it is the first major UK retailer to achieve its goal of only buying timber products from proven responsible sources. Last year just over 90 per cent of B&Q's timber products were traceable to responsible sources and from February, the UK's largest home improvement retailer can ensure that 100 per cent of timber in their products, can be traced back to well managed sources. As the first major UK retailer to achieve this target, the pressure will now be on for others to follow suit. B&Q started its sustainable timber campaign nearly twenty years ago when it was challenged on the sourcing of its wood. The journey to fully traceable wood products involved it becoming a founding partner of the FSC in the in the early 1990s – when there was no agreement on what well-managed forests meant. FSC is widely regarded as one of the most important initiatives in recent times to promote responsible forest management worldwide. B&Q has consistently improved its timber credentials and was proud to have been awarded one of the largest chains of custody certifications under both the FSC and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) schemes in the world. B&Q is so committed to helping more forests achieve credible forest certification that it also works with organisations like The Forest Trust to help producers achieve FSC certification. When surveyed 92 per cent of customers said that they would choose responsibly sourced wood every time if they knew there was no extra cost and that is what B&Q has delivered. From garden furniture to

kitchens, over 16,000 products at B&Q contain wood – either as timber or as a wood derivative, and B&Q is now committed to only buying products that are traceable to sources that have met legal, social and environmental standards that have been independently verified. B&Q will continue to work together with suppliers and independent regulators to ensure full transparency with its timber policy. The policy applies to all timber derived products from the products obviously derived from trees like sawn timber, wallpaper, flooring, doors, furniture, hand tools, books, decking, fencing, firewood, sheds, paint brushes, windows, garden furniture, plywood to those where the wood is hidden like mirror backs, garden tools and even baths. The aim of B&Q's Forest Friendly campaign is to highlight the importance for people to check the sustainability credentials of timber before they buy, to help preserve endangered species and habitats and to ensure local communities are prosperous and protected. It is vital for biodiversity that forests are made commercially viable and for local communities as this means that those communities will protect their forests for future generations. If forests are not commercially viable, local people will be tempted to clear them to make way for other businesses that do deliver a profit like cattle ranching or palm oil production. The criteria for Forest Friendly forestry relies on credible forest certification schemes to set strict standards to ensure that trees are only taken from a forest at a rate that it can replenish. For example, in the case of B&Q's tropical plywood, just six trees from an area the size of three football pitches are felled. This area is then left along to regenerate naturally for 20 years.

Matt Sexton, Director of Corporate Social Responsibility at B&Q says;

'Today is a milestone for B&Q as we show our support for responsibly managed forests. We've been working very hard to close the gap and hope that other retailers will follow as we lead the way in sustainability. Our Forest Friendly campaign continues to raise awareness of the need for consumers to demand that their timber products come from well managed sources and now our customers can shop safe in the knowledge that B&Q only buys products that conform to this. Each of our 330 stores are covered by our own FSC and PEFC chain of custody certification and customers can see on their receipts which products are certified under which scheme as well as looking at the label on the timber product.' -Ends- For further information please contact

Suzi Smith at ZPR on 0207 896 3207 or e-mail [bandq@z-pr.com](mailto:bandq@z-pr.com) Notes to editors

- \*B&Q's sustainable timber policies saw it top Greenpeace's Garden Furniture League table, every year it took place (2004 - 2006). For the last four years B&Q has also provided FSC timber for a skate ramp Greenpeace has built and taken to Glastonbury as a fun way to engage with people about the importance of deforestation and responsibly sourced timber products.
- B&Q is part of Kingfisher plc, Europe's leading home improvement retail group. Kingfisher, together with other leading European retailers, form the Timber Retail Coalition, who have called for and welcomed European regulation to prevent illegal timber entering the market
- FSC is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. Established in 1993 as a response to concerns over global deforestation, The FSC label provides a credible link between responsible production and consumption of forest products, enabling consumers and businesses to make purchasing decisions that benefit people and the environment. Chain of Custody enables the retailer to trace our timber all the way through from forest to store.
- B&Q is a supporter of the Prince's Rainforest Project, a campaign to stop deforestation.
- B&Q is the current holder of the Observer's Ethical Business Award and is listed on the Sunday Times Best Green Companies list.
- B&Q has achieved a 16 per-cent absolute reduction in carbon emissions over the last few years and is working towards a 20 per-cent reduction target by 2012. To see more about what B&Q is doing to reduce its environmental footprint, visit [www.diy.com/oneplanethome](http://www.diy.com/oneplanethome).
- B&Q is the largest home improvement and garden centre retailer in the UK and Ireland with 330 stores, employing more than 30,000 people nationwide, more than a quarter of whom are over 50 years of age, with a similar number under the age of 25. For more information about B&Q please go to [www.diy.com/aboutus](http://www.diy.com/aboutus).

• B&Q Timber Policy is:

- FSC Certified Sources with FULL chain of custody certification.
- PEFC Certified Sources of non tropical species with FULL chain of custody certification under the following exceptions:
- PEFC certified sources of European wood acceptable with full chain of custody certification and confirmation that all material used originated in Europe.
- Other sources of PEFC certified wood accepted when supported

with full chain of custody certification AND evidence of independent assurance that the sources comply with the requirements of the FSC controlled wood standard (FSC-STD-40-005). • Products made from pre- or post-consumer waste recycled. Sources that are progressing towards certification, • TFT (The Forest Trust) • WWF GFTN • SmartWood Smartstep