



Press release

The European Timber Trade Association - FEBO – expects a gradual revival on the timber market in 2010

At the invitation of GD Holz, Board Members of the European Timber Trade Association (FEBO) from 10 countries met in Cologne at the Branchentag for their regular Board Meeting on 11th November 2009. The delegates assessed the sector's economic situation in 2009 as problematic with participating national representatives agreeing that the grave Europe-wide slump in the construction sector is continuing and that timber as a building material is particularly badly affected. It was also reported that the crisis in the timber trade has also begun to make itself apparent in eastern European states.

It is not yet possible to determine the degree to which the economy-boosting measures put in place by several states are bearing fruit in these countries. On the whole, though, the situation is expected to pick up slowly in 2010. The renovation sector is a major stabilising factor in all member countries. In some of these, for example in the UK, an improvement in consumer confidence can be observed which has led to a slight rise in demand.

FEBO President, Franz-Josef Kall, discussed the possibilities of extending FEBO with the members. It seems that in some countries the necessary infrastructure (a national timber trade association) does not exist; this is particularly the case in eastern and southern Europe. However, FEBO intends to continue to expand its base and to win further European states for membership.

A further central topic of discussion was the EU's planned regulation on the obligations of operators placing timber and timber products on the EU market. FEBO is following the process closely. Sweden, currently holding the Council Presidency, is eager to bring the matter to a conclusion before the year's end. The decisive factor will be the degree to which the European Council of Ministers modifies the widely differing drafts from the Commission and the European Parliament. FEBO already issued a statement on the matter on behalf of the timber trade this spring.

FEBO has compiled an overview of CE marking for panel products in construction based on European regulations for use by member associations. The individual national member associations can adapt the chart with their corresponding national standards or building regulations. The overview can be found on the FEBO homepage www.febo.org.

The Board discussed additions to and the update of the Code of Conduct which was adopted in 2005 by the European timber trade and which has served as a tool in dealing with ecological issues since that time. The revised version will be brought before the General Assembly which will take place in June 2010 in Finland.

Secretary General, Lutgart Behets-Oschmann, presented the draft of a leaflet in which the European Timber Trade Association sets out its tasks and targets. The leaflet is designed principally as an aid to lobbying in Brussels as a brief outline of the trade for decision-makers. The draft was approved by the Board; the final layout can now be completed.



On the day before the Board Meeting, FEBO President Franz-Josef Kall, Vice President John White (UK) and the Secretary General, Lutgart Behets-Oschmann, met for an exchange of thoughts with Andreas von Möller and André de Boer from the importing federations UCBD, UCBR and UCIP which have recently merged to form an umbrella organisation. The modalities of future close co-operation were discussed in a friendly, collegial atmosphere.

The next FEBO Board Meeting will be held mid-March 2010 in Brussels and the General Assembly in June 2010 in Finland.

Lutgart Behets-Oschmann
Wiesbaden, 19.11.2009