



FEFPEB PRESS RELEASE

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FEFPEB president calls for total certified wood sourcing

FEFPEB president Rob van Hoesel has challenged European wooden pallet and packaging manufacturers to ensure all the timber they use is certified as sustainably produced.

Speaking to delegates at the FEFPEB congress, Van Hoesel said that, against a background of increasing worldwide attention on the environmental credentials of businesses, pallet and packaging companies should seek to guarantee that 100% of the wood they use originates from sustainably managed forests, by purchasing only from certified sources.

“Our businesses and the timber we use are naturally sustainable – but we need to make sure we can demonstrate this by also having all the possible certification,” he said. “My opinion is that within a few years, as an industry we can no longer afford to use any piece of timber which is uncertified. That is our responsibility and how we should move forward.” He added that while business-to-consumer demand for certified wood is already high, companies operating in business-to-business supply chains should take the initiative now to guarantee all its timber is sustainably sourced.

“It’s very important for the industry, because sooner or later someone will walk into your company and say: ‘you say you are sustainable - but can you prove it?’”

Van Hoesel said he would like all members of FEFPEB’s national associations to aim for 100% sustainability within a limited period of years, advising that they should start dialogues with customers and other partners, such as PEFC, in the supply chain to help it reach this goal.

FEFPEB's 69th congress took place at Le Méridien hotel in Hamburg, Germany from October 9 to 11, 2019, and featured a day-long business session, which included further speakers tackling the subject of sustainability, including Martha Buffington, chief procurement officer at Dutch nutrition, health and sustainable living business DSM, who illustrated how the company had put ethics at the heart of its operations; Dr Maarten Willemen, chairman of PEFC the Netherlands, speaking for chain of custody in wood supply chains; and Marcus Kirschner, managing director of German wooden packaging trade association HPE – which this year celebrates its 150th year anniversary, and which hosted the three-day congress. Kirschner gave an overview of ISO 38200 for wood traceability, the benefits of which include greater flexibility and sharing of additional information on sustainability.

The congress programme included a dual programme of visits: a south tour to block manufacturer Euroblock and woodland management at the State Forests Lower Saxony; and a north tour to the facilities at the port of Hamburg, Europe's third-largest port, export packaging company Andresen & Jochimsen Exportpack, and Joh Friedrich Behrens AG, one of Europe's leading fastening technology businesses.

The congress business session included an evaluation of the success of the ISPM15 certification standard and an outlook for future developments by Dr Thomas Schröder from the plant protection department of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). Concluding that ISPM15 had been successful in protecting plant health, Schröder said there is still a need to educate users of wooden packaging in the supply chain about the correct way to implement ISPM15 and the necessity for them to do so.

Professor Bernd Sadlowsky from Hamburg University updated delegates on latest research into protecting wooden packaging and pallets from damage; while professor Michael Köhl presented a rationale for using wood and wood products in terms of the effect on CO₂; and Dr André Wolf of the Hamburg Institute of International Economics gave the congress an overview of the economic challenges that face the European and world economy – including the growing importance of China to global trade.

Brent J McClendon, president of the National Wooden and Container Association (NWPCA) in the US, spoke about the cross-sector #ForestProud initiative that is promoting wood use in the country and

aims to raise awareness of the positive effects of forests beyond manufacturing.

A total of 264 delegates and partners from 24 countries attended the congress, which also featured a partner programme and evening dinner events at Hamburg's sailing club, Le Méridien hotel and the World Heritage Speicherstadt, location of Hamburg's maritime museum.

The congress was sponsored by a very esteemed group of industry suppliers, with exposure facilities throughout the event.

Picture captions:

FEFPEB Congress 1: *Delegates at the FEFPEB congress, 2019 business session*

FEFPEB Congress 2: *Left to right: FEFPEB secretary general, Fons Ceelaert; HPE president, Jürgen Rademacher; HPE managing director, Marcus Kirschner; and FEFPEB President Rob van Hoesel*

FEFPEB Congress 3: *Delegates visit German forest production during the FEFPEB congress*

For more information about the congress or images, please contact:

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Notes:

- The European Federation of Wooden Pallet & Packaging Manufacturers (Fédération Européenne des Fabricants de Palettes and Emballages en Bois – FEFPEB) represents European national timber packaging associations, including the pallet, lightweight packaging and industrial packaging sectors. It was established in 1946.
- It is a not for profit organisation, whose objectives include promotion of timber packaging and representing the interests of the European wooden pallet and packaging industry.
- National professional associations of wooden pallet and packaging manufacturers are full members of FEFPEB.
- Other companies involved in the industry, including suppliers of timber and timber blocks, machines and equipment are associated or individual members.
- The major European pallet pools (including EPAL, CHEP, LPR, IPP and PRS) are also part of FEFPEB.