

# Forging Stronger Trade Ties With Greece

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The Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) held its Incoming Buying Mission from Greece (IBM) and Debriefing Session at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre (MITEC) here, on 15 November 2022.

MTC has been actively conducting programmes to enhance trade and the IBM was held after seeing good potential in imports from the Hellenic Republic.

From January to August 2022, Malaysia's export of timber and timber products to Greece was valued at RM24.58 million. The top four products exported were wooden furniture at RM10.63 million, sawntimber at RM7.72 million, mouldings at RM1.82 million, and Builders' Joinery and Carpentry (BJC) at RM0.61 million.

Compared to the same period in 2021, Malaysia's export of sawntimber and mouldings to Greece increased by more than 100% from RM3.14 million to RM7.72 million and from RM0.58 million to RM1.82 million, respectively, while the export of BJC increased by 34.9%.

“Malaysia has been trading with Greece for the past 15 to 20 years and we are very optimistic of generating more trade judging from the recent import patterns,” said MTC CEO Mr. Muhtar Suhaili.

MTC was also part of a Ministerial Mission to Greece that was organized by the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities in June this year to promote bilateral trade for the agricommodity sector where the Council paid a courtesy visit to the Minister of Rural Development and Food of Greece H.E. Mr. Georgios Georgantas as well as the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Konstantinos Fragkogiannis. The Council also had several engagement sessions with industry captains, including a roundtable discussion with the Greek Timber Association and the Greek Wooden Frame Association during the mission.

He added that though Malaysian timber products are exported to over 170 countries, MTC has never stopped seeking new partners or opportunities to boost the global market share for Malaysia.

A Business-to-Business (B2B) Matching Session was conducted of which a total of 12 Greek companies were matched with 21 Malaysian timber-based manufacturers who produce among others, laminated scantlings, glued laminated timbers, veneers and plywood as these are sought-after products in Greece.

Running concurrently with the B2B Matching Session was a Debriefing Session which highlighted the outcomes of programmes undertaken by MTC which included market research visits, marketing mission and raw material sourcing missions.

In conjunction with the IBM, factory visits were also organized where the Greek buyers visited several timber-based factories in both Selangor and Pahang.

“MTC’s programmes are extensive in nature as we try and gather on-the-ground information. It’s all about seeing where you can fill the gaps for the market and grow your business in a way that will allow you to outperform your competitors,” said Mr. Muhtar.

More than 80 industry members attended the debriefing seminar where trade findings of MTC’s visits to the United States, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand were shared.