

MTC MISSION CLINCHES CLOSE TO RM6 MILLION MIDDLE EAST ORDERS

The Malaysian Timber Council's (MTC) marketing mission to Qatar, Oman and Kuwait to boost timber exports to the dynamic Middle East and North African (MENA) market has secured about RM6 million worth of export orders.

The 12 Malaysian participating companies promoted their products through business networking sessions with key timber buyers, importers and distributors and explored joint-venture opportunities to cater to the growth and consumption trends of the 3 countries, which have led to a massive upsurge in construction activity and demand for quality hardwood products. The mission also helped strengthen trade ties and widen existing trade networks in the region for the industry.

MTC's Director for Trade Promotion and Development, Dr. Eric Ng led the delegation of Malaysian timber companies which consisted of Bestwin Resources, Bortim Export, Eco Lumber, E.P.W., Supreme Fame, Welley Timber Industries, Robina Flooring, Segamat Panel Boards, SNL Woods, Top Forest Wood and two Bumiputra companies – MyGlam and Zahan Resources.

Dr. Ng said that the marketing mission was successful and able to highlight positive demand for Malaysian timber products and build strong bilateral trade relations with key market leaders in the Middle East.

"The Middle East has become an increasingly important trading partner for the Malaysian timber sector. Last year, exports of Malaysian timber products to emerging markets, particularly Middle East countries, showed positive growth as mega projects in these countries favour Malaysian timber products, namely sawn timber, MDF (medium-density fibreboard) and wooden furniture.

"Tropical hardwood timbers such as Meranti are also among the top choices for home owners in the Middle East who expect high quality and well-finished hardwoods for doors, door frames, floorings, deckings as well as trimmings and decorative features. With our capabilities and vast resources, we are well positioned to cater to the growing demand for timber products in the region," said Dr. Ng.

Products of focus during the marketing mission were sawntimber, mouldings, panel products (e.g., Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF) and High Density Fibreboard (HDF) laminated flooring) and laminated timber such as scantlings and glulam (glued laminated timber).

The Malaysian companies also participated in a seminar on Malaysian Timber as well as business-to-business (B2B) meetings in Qatar, Oman and Kuwait to promote their products and network with potential buyers from a total of 55 local companies in these 3 countries.

Apart from this, participants also visited 12 local companies in Doha, Muscat and Kuwait City to gain insights into the various types of timber and wood products that are currently in demand in the market.

Total exports of Malaysian timber and timber products to Qatar, Oman and Kuwait contributed RM67.2 million, RM96.8 million and RM112 million respectively, making up a total of 24 per cent of Malaysia's total timber exports to the Gulf Cooperation Council countries in 2013.

Feedback from participants indicated that there are good prospects for Malaysian hardwood sawntimber (in particular, Red Meranti), MDF and HDF laminated flooring. Notwithstanding, continued dissemination of information on other Malaysian timber products such as laminated scantlings and glulam to create awareness and acceptance is also crucial to increase Malaysia's export and market share in the Middle East. Several of the participants are already making plans for follow-up meetings with business contacts made during the mission while the rest expressed interest to join future MTC marketing missions to explore other business opportunities in the Middle East. **[End]**

About MTC

The Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) was established in January 1992 to promote the development and growth of the Malaysian timber industry. MTC was formed on the initiative of the timber industry and governed by a Board of Trustees, whose members are appointed by the Minister of Plantation Industries & Commodities.

MTC's main objectives are to promote the Malaysian timber trade and develop the market for timber products globally, to promote the development of the industry by upgrading the industry's manufacturing technology base, to augment the supply of raw materials, to provide information services and to safeguard and promote the Malaysian timber industry's global image. Further information on the Council's activities can be obtained from www.mtc.com.my

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