



Softwood Export Council Newsletter

January - February 2011

Upcoming Trade Shows

There are a variety of trade shows in 2011, so please look over the destinations and dates. Space may be limited so if you'd like to join SEC in the booth, please contact us. For the entire 2011 trade show calendar, please visit our [website](#).

- Architecture & Construction Show: March 8-11, Tokyo
- Interzum China: March 27-30, Guangzhou
- Dubai Wood: April 5-7, Dubai

Success Story:

Douglas-fir used for Japanese apartment building

In the summer of last year, a group of Japanese design professionals led by SEC Japan staff traveled to the Pacific Northwest to study and source softwood lumber. They toured various sawmills and multi-family construction sites and as a result of their trip, two containers of Oregon Douglas-fir were ordered for a nine-unit apartment project.

According to the apartment's Japanese builder, the quality of U.S. dimension lumber has greatly improved, which they believe to be a result of better sawing techniques.

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UAE Softwood Market Update

By Roderick Wiles

Economy & construction outlook

According to both the wood trade and those involved in the construction sector in the UAE, the downturn, which started in the final



9-story apartment building during construction



Completed apartment building

New Addition to SEC Staff

We would like to introduce you to Natalie Macias, our new International Marketing Manager. Natalie graduated from Oregon State University in December with a Master's degree in Forest Products Marketing. Due to a variety of jobs and internships she's had while attending OSU, Natalie is quite familiar with the forest products industry. However, she looks forward to making new contacts and learning more about the industry through her work at SEC. She will be your contact for future travel needs at SEC.

Contact her at natalie@softwood.org

quarter of 2008, is showing signs of reaching its end. In fact, indications of a return to positive market conditions can be felt everywhere and the UAE economy is expected to grow by 2.25% this year, according to the country's Energy Minister.

The UAE's imports of softwood lumber were severely affected by the global economic downturn, Dubai's debt crisis and the resultant decrease in construction activity. In 2009, the UAE's imports of softwood lumber were around 50% (by volume) of what that had been in the previous year. Since the vast majority of softwood lumber shipped to the market is for general construction purposes, this was an item instantly hit by the downturn in construction activity.

Green building & certification

Having not been mentioned before, the concept of green building is now a hot topic within the UAE's (and wider Middle East's) construction sector. The Emirates Green Building Council (EGBC) was set up in 2006 with the goal of advancing green building principles for protecting the environment and ensuring sustainability in the United Arab Emirates. In addition, in May 2008 the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (UPC), alongside the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD), Abu Dhabi Municipality, and Masdar, announced "Estidama" (meaning "sustainability" in Arabic), which is the programme for sustainable buildings and communities for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

While still a long way off from United States or Europe, the adoption of green building practices in the UAE are gathering pace and



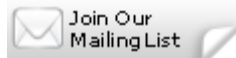
U.S. Exports to Japan

According to data from the Ministry of Finance, the total volume of American softwoods exported to Japan in 2010 was 40% greater than in 2009. The 2010 volume (approximately 350,000 m3) was the greatest export volume from the U.S. to Japan since 2002.

Softwood Export Council - Promoting the expansion of export markets for primary and secondary softwood products manufactured in the United States.

Softwood Export Council

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the use of sustainable building materials, including certified or verified legal and sustainable wood products, is likely to increase significantly in the coming years. This is especially true, since the UAE is now very much in the global public's eye and needs to make sure that it builds a greener image, for which it has not been widely known.

While at least two of the country's largest timber importers - distributors have now achieved both FSC and PEFC certification and are making sure that they are well positioned to take advantage of the growing demand for certified wood products, some market commentators suggest that this is just greenwash. It has been suggested by members of the UAE's timber trade that certificates are not worth the paper they are printed on and that multi-level corruption within the UAE's construction sector will ensure that systems of product tracking and chain-of-custody will be nearly impossible to uphold. Nonetheless, LEED, Breeam and Abu Dhabi's Pearl rating system are all available to architects, who are keen to see their projects win awards for sustainability. So, green building will certainly develop over the coming years in the UAE and this will mean that all suppliers of all wood products from all over the world will need to be prepared.