

CORMARK INTERNATIONAL

Cormark & the Environment

Our Mission Statement

Sustainability and sound reforestation programs are a key factor to our organization. We have a strong commitment to the environmental issues that face our industry and will only purchase from reputable and environmentally sound saw milling groups. We have through the years managed to build up long lasting relationships with saw milling groups that have a strong environment, social and humanitarian obligation to the areas and communities they work in.

Sustainable Harvesting & Re-Forestation

Harvesting techniques today are more sophisticated than they were 50 years ago and many medium to large size logging operations use hi-tech equipment to harvest lumber concessions. It is estimated that in the USA alone only 65% to 70% of the sustainable yield is harvested annually, leaving + 30% to add to existing inventory. European based logging companies are heavily involved in the African lumber industry and many have been around since the early 1800's. Sustainability of the concessions they work in are paramount to their survival and many contribute to environmental & humanitarian programs within those areas and beyond.

Globalization has made it easier to obtain a variety of lumber species from various countries around the world, which in turn has made it important to monitor the volumes that are being harvested and exported / imported. Species that are in limited supply are monitored very strictly and in most cases it is very difficult to obtain export permits from the country of origin if annual quotes have already been met, furthermore special permits are required to import hardwood species into the USA, all shipments are subject to search by Customs, Agriculture & the FDA.

There are two main forms of harvesting; the first method is called selective harvesting. This method involves logging within timber concessions of specific hardwoods by selectively choosing and marking the logs for cutting. These logs are then cut and removed, with emphasizes on minimal impact to the surrounding area. Areas that are subject to selective harvesting are generally only re-visited every few years (as determined by the amount of mature trees left behind after each harvest); this allows the harvested area to sustain itself.

The second method is called plantation harvesting. This method is generally used for high demand species and is a very successful program that over the years has added greatly to many countries standing hardwood inventory. In this method land is generally reclaimed from farming enterprises or alternatively from land that is deemed useless for any other industry. Tree sapling farms are established to generate seeds into saplings (infant trees) and these are then taken into the allocated area and planted in neat straight rows. These infant trees are monitored on a regular basis and as they begin to mature are regularly pruned and tested for diseases or genetic problems. Once the trees reach maturity they are harvested through clear-cutting techniques that take into account many factors such as top soil run off degradation of the plot of land etc, minimal damage to these important aspects is crucial and strictly followed. The land is then once again prepped for the new batch of saplings to be planted.

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Misconceptions of the Lumber Industry

The largest challenge facing the lumber industry today is not the challenges in harvesting using correct and non-invasive techniques but rather the misconception of people regarding the industry as a whole. The industry can not survive without careful planning; correct management techniques and responsibility to the areas that the loggers work within. It is in the best interest of the various lumber companies to sustain and protect this vital resource in order to guarantee the continued survival of the industry as a whole.

Today more natural habitat is lost to farming and commercial / industrial development than to any one logging operation. Unfortunately many laws have been passed to protect habitats from logging but not enough is done to curb over zealous farmers and developers from clear cutting and burning natural habitats.

Conclusion

Education is paramount to insure that future generations understand the importance of such a valuable resource. We strive to work with our distributors and their customers in these aspects and are always willing to explain in depth the amount of planning and logistics that we go through to offer beautiful woods from around the world. Our commitment at Cormark to the environment is long term and will look towards the future to insure our continued prosperity.

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