

# Suriname mission highlights certified trade potential

**Seventeen European importers from six countries participated in an ETTF-backed trade mission to Suriname where they learned about the opportunities and challenges for developing the country's sustainable timber export sector.**

The visit last November was co-initiated by Suriname Environmental Services and Support and backed by the European Sustainable Tropical Timber Coalition (STTC). The aim was also to put participants in touch with Suriname trading partners.

Participants additionally learned about the role of the Surinamese Foundation for Forest Management and Production Control (SBB) in monitoring and law enforcement.

More than 400,000ha of Suriname's forest have been FSC certified in recent years, supported by the Guiana Shield Tropical Timber Program and Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH). A further 43,000ha are certified to FSC controlled wood standard.

Since 2010, Suriname's industrial roundwood harvest has also nearly doubled to 493,000m<sup>3</sup>, with Europe accounting for 38% of its 21,000m<sup>3</sup> of sawnwood exports last year.

To make the most of the Suriname forest sustainably the message was that the trade must accept more of its 1000 species – with a project underway to bring lesser-known ones to Europe. Backed by FSC-certified companies in Suriname, the ETTF, Probos and Tropenbos Suriname, this will run a pilot to assess availability and performance.

Mark van Benthem Senior Advisor at Probos, who accompanied the visit, said all participants were 'excited' at the possibilities presented.

"Such a mission is worth repeating," he said.



Mission participants in the forest