



PRESS RELEASE

CIB's total FSC certified area reaches 750,000 hectares

Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, May 26, 2008: Congolaise Industrielle des Bois (CIB), a subsidiary of the Danish DLH group, announced today that its Pokola Forest Management Unit (FMU) has achieved FSC certification. Pokola FMU becomes the 2nd of CIB's four forest areas to reach this significant achievement after CIB's Kabo FMU achieved FSC certification in May 2006. The Kabo FSC certificate has been maintained for another year following a successful surveillance audit carried out by SGS, overseen by Accreditation Services International (ASI) of the FSC.

CIB's Pokola FMU covers 452,200 hectares and together with the Kabo FMU, covering 297,000 hectares, brings CIB's total FSC certified area to almost 750,000 hectares of natural tropical forest.

Robert Hunink, Executive Vice President of the DLH Group, and President of the Supervisory Board of CIB, applauded the accomplishment. *"This achievement was only made possible by the continuous commitment and extraordinary dedication of CIB's management and staff. Under often challenging circumstances our CIB colleagues have not only achieved what many in the industry have long thought impossible but also succeeded in maintaining the exceptionally high FSC standard throughout a series of robust audits. He added, "We are very appreciative for the cooperation of Congo's Forest Minister, His Excellency Henri Djombo, the staff of his ministry, and also the assistance of our other stakeholders during the establishment of Pokola's forest management plan."*

Similar to the Kabo FMU, the Pokola FMU is home to many indigenous peoples and the town of Pokola, where CIB's headquarters is located, itself supports a community of over 15,000 people. The forest supports a diversity of threatened large mammal species including elephant, chimpanzees and gorillas. The application of the FSC's principles ensures that the forest will continue to sustain the biodiversity that the people and animals depend on whilst still representing a much needed resource for economic development in the northern Congo.

Jørgen Møller-Rasmussen, President of DLH, congratulated the CIB team. *"CIB announced in March 2004 that it was going for FSC certification of its entire forest concession area. It hasn't been an easy journey but the Management Team has remained committed, implementing new and innovative approaches that have been globally recognized and that are setting new norms for the African forest industry. Maintaining the Kabo FMU's FSC certificate since 2006, through a series of audits, is an example of CIB team's persistent dedication. For them FSC is not just a standard checked once a year, but rather a set of "rules" that constantly influence every single aspect of their daily tasks. The change compared to a few years ago is remarkable.*

Scott Poynton, Tropical Forest Trust Executive Director added *"CIB has done this despite often extremely challenging market conditions. Let's not forget that the market still accepts timber from dubious origins, effectively undercutting fair pricing for certified timber. Managing a forest responsibly and achieving FSC certification costs money – lots of it -and this has to be paid for by selling wood carrying an eco label. This isn't always easy when end consumers are still prepared to buy uncertified and possibly even illegal timber simply because it's cheaper."*

Robert Hunink echoed this point *“The DLH Group has made significant financial resources available for CIB to reach this important milestone. We’re counting on markets to respond to the increased availability of CIB’s FSC products. Added sales in FSC goods will further support not only initiatives to have the remaining concessions of CIB certified before the end of 2009 but also encourage other FSC projects in the region and around the world.”*

CIB’s certification program is on-going with efforts continuing, not only to maintain the FSC certificates of Kabo’s and Pokola’s FMUs but also to have its remaining FMUs, covering its full 1.3 million hectare area, FSC certified by the end of 2009.

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Notes:

- 1 CIB is part of the DLH Group of companies. For more information on CIB and its FSC project, please contact Lucas van der Walt at lvw@dlh-group.com
- 2 For more information on the TFT and its project with CIB, please contact Scott Poynton at s.poynton@tropicalforesttrust.com