



Teaknet Bulletin

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One significant event related to teak that happened in November 2012 is the Organization for Latin American Teak (OLAT) Conference held during 12-13 November in Cuiaba, MT, Brazil. Mr. Raymond Keogh who attended the conference has a Press Note to share with the teak group which is reproduced in this bulletin. In the wake of policy regulations on export of teak from Myanmar, he predicts a bright future for growing teak elsewhere in the world.

A look at the OLAT website reveals some interesting observations. For instance, OLAT says, TEAK is the older commercialized wood of the world. It is speculated that its trade has existed since 4000 BC; in that time its timber had been shipped from India to Babylon and Yemen, for ships constructions, palaces and temples. After the European colonization of India and the rest of Asia, TEAK became widely commercialized, especially for ships constructions.

The old Burmese and Thai royal families had considered TEAK as a royal tree. In Indonesia, TEAK is a tree that represents the country (Indonesia's National tree). Native from India, Myanmar, Laos and Thailand, the first reforestation of TEAK occurred in 1680 in Sri Lanka.

During the XVII and XIX centuries, plantations were started in India as security of supply for the British Empire. Since then, TEAK has been planted all over the world. Plantations were established in Java (Indonesia) and the Philippines in the 1880s. Until the XIX century, plantations were being raised in Asia, having Bangladesh and Pakistan the majority of TEAK plantations outside its natural range.

In the late XIX century, TEAK plantations were extended to other tropical and subtropical regions, such as, Africa, Central America and South America.

In Africa, TEAK had been introduced in Nigeria, since 1905. In tropical America, its first experience was in the Caribbean region by 1880, through the Royal Botanic Gardens in Trinidad.

The next major international event in teak is the forthcoming World Teak Conference in 2013 in Thailand. Not much time is left for the event to kick off and the potential participants are encouraged to go on to registration and other formalities associated with their participation. Fortunately, Thailand is one of the countries which issues visa on arrival to citizens of many other countries.

As indicated last time, TEAKNET has planned to bring out a series of research cum review papers of broad coverage on any aspect of teak cultivation and trade. The readers are encouraged to contribute such papers of their expertise.

Of late, IUFRO, the world's premier network in forestry has been admitted as a co-host for WTC 2013. TEAKNET, FAO and the Crown Princess Foundation along with a host of other institutions including IUFRO are waiting for this assemblage for a grand exchange of ideas, information and expertise.

K. Jayaraman,
TEAKNET Coordinator



*We wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year and also
welcome you to Bangkok for World Teak Conference 2013.*

From

TEAKNET (International R & D Network of Teak)

KFRRI (Kerala Forest Research Institute)

FAO (Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)

ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organization)

OLAT (Organization for Latin American Teak)

VITRI (Viikki Tropical Resources Institute)

IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organizations)

RSPG (Plant Genetic Conservation Project Under the Royal Initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn)

Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn – Plant Genetic Conservation Foundation



A bright future for teak in Latin America

Raymond M. Keogh

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It comes as no surprise that Burma (Myanmar) plans to stop exporting teak timber in April 2014. For long, scientists warned that the extension of the country's teak forests has been reducing; the quality declining and the yield dropping. Additional pressures on the natural resource were created through unauthorized export of logs across the territory's northern frontier into China. The remaining countries in which teak grows naturally (India, Thailand and Laos) have all banned harvesting because of unsustainable management. The result is: natural forest teak will soon be a thing of the past in international markets.

The downfall of teak in Burma parallels the situation for top-quality hardwoods across the tropics. Annual supply is maintained through deforestation and degradation of natural resources and, like teak in Burma, these sources will dry up, leaving the world without most of the tropical hardwoods that have been household names for centuries. The unsustainable nature of supply has come to be known as *the tropical hardwood crisis*. Unfortunately, the warning that scientists promulgate about the crisis is, like the depletion of Burma's forests, being ignored.

The demise of forest teak turns the focus of attention on plantations. In fact, teak (*Tectona grandis*) is one of the few high-grade hardwoods that can be cultivated successfully, on a commercial basis, in plantations. It is against this background that the Congress of OLAT (Organización Latinoamericana de la Teca) which took place on 12th and 13th November 2012 in Cuiaba, Brazil, takes on a unique importance.

OLAT is a multinational initiative which involves 15 countries and over 135 companies, representing more than 100,000 hectares of plantations through the region. It is an international initiative, created in 2010 by concerned individuals in Costa Rica, Panama and Europe (Ireland and the Netherlands).

Commercial teak plantations in Latin American are expanding faster and growth rates tend to be higher than in any other part of the world. If these trends continue the sub-continent holds the potential to become the world's centre of supply for commercial teak - if not tropical hardwoods - during this millennium and outpace that of Africa and even Asia - the natural home of teak. Future shortages are likely to be experienced as African sources, which were created in colonial periods, are mined to extinction.

The members of OLAT, who represent the main teak growers of Latin America are becoming conscious of their potential, but the need to overcome pending challenges like land shortages and investment restrictions are clear. The focus of the Congress reflected this outlook. It was clearly acknowledged that many of these difficulties could be overcome through the application of innovative approaches to the cultivation of teak and this could be achieved through cooperation between members across the whole of Latin America and elsewhere.

More information may be found on: <http://www.congressoolat.com.br/en/>

This article is available as a **Press Release** from OLAT provided the source is cited



World Teak Conference– Programme at a glance

Date/Time	Sunday 24 March 2013					
13.00-18.00	Registration					
Date/Time	Monday 25 March 2013					
07.30-09.00	Registration (07:30-17:30)					
09.00-10.30		Opening Ceremony				
10.30-10.45		Coffee Break & Poster Session				
10.45-12.00		Plenary Session				
12.00-13.00		Lunch				
13.00-13.45		Key Speaker Concurrent 1 Genetics, Silvicultures and Utilization	Key Speaker Concurrent 2 Environment & Carbon Trade	Key Speaker Concurrent 3 Economics & Investment	Key Speaker Concurrent 4 Rural Development	
13.45-14.45		Concurrent 1 Genetics, Silvicultures and Utilization	Concurrent 2 Environment & Carbon Trade	Concurrent 3 Economics & Investment	Concurrent 4 Rural Development	
14.45-15.00		Coffee Break & Poster Session				
15.00-16.00		Group Discussion Genetics, Silvicultures and Utilization (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Environment & Carbon Trade (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Economics & Investment (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Rural Development (1 - 3)	
16.00-16.30		Group Symposium Summary				
16.30-17.00		Business Function				
18:30-20:30		Welcome Party				
Date/Time		Tuesday 26 March 2013				

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11:00-12:30	Registration (07.30-18.00)	Concurrent 1 Genetics, Silvicultures and Utilization	Concurrent 2 Environment & Carbon Trade	Concurrent 3 Economics & Investment	Concurrent 4 Rural Development
12:30-13:30		Lunch			
13:30-14:30		Group Discussion Genetics, Silvicultures and Utilization (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Environment & Carbon Trade (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Economics & Investment (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Rural Development (1 - 2)
14.30-15.00		Coffee Break & Poster Session			
15:00-16:00		Group Discussion Genetics, Silvicultures and Utilization (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Environment & Carbon Trade (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Economics & Investment (1 - 2)	Group Discussion Rural Development (1 - 2)
16.00-16.30		Group Symposium Summary			
16.30-18:00		Business function			
19:00-21:00		Gala Night			
Date/Time	Wednesday 27 March 2013				
08.30-09.45	Registration (08.30-14:00)	Plenary Session			
09:45-10:15		Coffee Break & Poster Session			
10:15-11:15		Plenary session			
11:15-12:30		Final Remarks			
12:30-13:30		Lunch			
Date/Time	Friday - Sunday 28 - 30 March 2013				
	Post Conference Tours				

Editorial Committee

Dr. K. Jayaraman, Dr. P. Rugmini and Dr. V. Anitha

Teaknet Bulletin is a biannual electronic newsletter of TEAKNET brought out in March and September of every year through its website. It is intended for circulation among the members of TEAKNET and other stakeholders of global teak sector. The views expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organization. The readers are welcome to express their opinions or pass on information of value to teak growers, traders, researchers or others concerned with teak. However, TEAKNET reserves the right to choose the contributions for publishing and also to make necessary editorial modifications in the articles.

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