

Seminar on “Engineered Wood” for Construction Industry

The Chamber of Construction Industry of Sri Lanka together with the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Department of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, conducted a seminar on “Trends in Treatment of Wood and Wood-Based Products for the Construction Industry of Sri Lanka”

The seminar was held on the 10th of January 2023 at the Sri Lanka Foundation commencing 1.00pm.

Construction Timber has evolved over time from traditional usage to one “engineered wood” which is considerably stronger and more stable than regular wood. Thus it allows builders, architects, and designers to build better and bigger. This has opened up possibilities for the current use of construction timber to open up with future technologies.

Prof. Hiran Amarasekara, Head of the Department broadly outlined this topic in his opening address at this seminar.

The Conservator General of Forests was the chief guest at this occasion and his key note speech mentioned that “Pinus Wood is freely available for the timber processing industry, because, Government policy has decided to remove all pinus plantation in a systematic manner and not plant new plantations in the future.

Of particular importance and relevance to the country, is that there exists a very large quantity of underutilized Pinus Wood in plantation readily available for harvesting and the Forest Department encourages this utilization. With a favorable method of treatment, these could be converted as dimensionally stable and durable construction timber. The overall benefit therefore by converting such readily available timber hitherto not much used will be as the country could prudently and efficiently conserve its timber resource and also spend less on the import of substitute timber to the country.

Another new technology trend is the innovation of “Glulam” and other engineered wood products for construction. It is exciting that this innovative product could open up vistas for architects/designers and engineers/builders. There was also a presentation and seasoning of timber by the largest treatment operation in the country and, supply trends and grading of timber with special reference to Pinus at this seminar.

The current trend in the flooring industry based on locally available timber and all its possibilities was discussed along with the joinery and furniture industry based on locally available timber.

The seminar was wrapped up by Prof. Priyan Perera on “services offered by the Timber Process Innovation Center, at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura”.

This very informative seminar is a collaboration that gathered together academics, researchers, innovators, and practitioners such as Designers, Architects, and Engineers, in a rare confluence and was arranged by the Chamber of Construction Industry of Sri Lanka for the benefit of the industry.