

TIMBER AND LOGS IMPORT: AN OVERVIEW

With 12.5 million people, India needs huge volume of timber for fulfilling the basic requirement of habitation in real estate, furniture, housing, packaging etc. Approx 7 million cubic meters timber has been imported in India, worth Rs. 11,664 crore in year 2015-16. Although there has been marginal drop in total timber import value since last two years but the sawn timber import is gradually rising. Last five years have seen a steady fall in import volumes of logs that has impacted the saw milling and peeling operation near ports. Import of Sawn timber has grown by 178% during last five years at Rs.1993 crores in FY 15-16 against Rs. 695.96 crore during year 2011-12. India's timber sector has demonstrated an increased interest in American softwoods, more specifically in softwood lumber as opposed to logs as in previous years," said Charles Trevor, Consultant to American Softwoods. Giving positive projections for India, he has aimed at encouraging the use of American softwoods for both internal and external projects and increasing awareness of commercially available species. India has recorded imports of USD 15.265 million of American softwoods in the first ten months (January to October) of 2016. It is the fact that exports of U.S. softwood logs to India declined from USD 9.821 million to USD 7.826 million for the same period.

The demand of Canadian wood has also been improving in India. The recent awareness drive by Forestry Innovation India and British Columbia in India Market through organizing seminars for influencers, users and importers, they have successfully bagged big orders of SPF in different projects. SPF comes as ready to use sawn lumber from the sustainably managed forests of British Columbia (B.C.), Canada. It is kiln-dried (KD) and heat treated (HT) for durability and performance in state of the art facilities in Canada to suit the end-use. Spruce-Pine-Fir (SPF) from British Columbia (B.C.) Canada is a widely popular wood species for the construction of modular and pre-fabricated homes. SPF's strength, light weight, ease of handling and woodworking properties make construction and maintenance of structures extremely economical, versatile and easy. Its high dimensional stability and stress bearing properties make it ideal for all types of framing applications in construction.

Amid strong fumigation policy by government of India, the timber shipment from European countries also reported increase at different ports. Kandla Port alone received 1.5

lacs cubic meters Pine timber from Germany. There is report of high volume of Heat treated Beech lumber also comes to India. Germany based Holzindustrie TEMPLIN GmbH targets hardwood timber to meet furniture manufacturers' demand. Mr Joerg Maschmann reveals that the Indian market requires a huge amount of hardwood. Due to the decreasing availability of Hardwood in the African/Asian/Caribbean export countries, the demand for hardwood continuously grows. As observed in the enormous local growth, the demand for his products is steadily rising. In addition, the increasing export of furniture and other products of Indian manufactures make the consumption grow in medium and long term. Malaysia based Carl Ronnow (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd has been offering credibly certified wood in many of the species to India market. Mr. Amit Mundhra, Country Head, Carl Ronnow says that his main focus will be to promote hardwood Lumber from Malaysia and Gabon, softwood Lumber from the Baltics and Hardwood Logs from Germany.

Denmark based company DSHwood is leading supplier of logs to India market. Mr. Vikram Harlalka, MD, DSHwood India said that he maintained his shipment of different logs amid slow down. He further said that India has big appetite logs because there are thousands of saw mills and veneer units operational which required timber to fulfill local needs.

Kandla Port, which receives 55 % of total timber import in India, has taken delivery of 32.5 lacs cubic meters timber from first ten months (April 16 to January 17) of Financial Year 2016-17. Pine logs from Newzealand stands on top chart with 13 lac cubic meter followed by 10 lacs cubic meters of hardwood logs of different timber species such as Meranti, Kapur, Keruing, Bata, Kyant etc from Malaysia. For the requirement of peeling veneers for plywood making, the hardwood logs from Solomon, PNG are also reported to come at Kandla Port.

Teak is always a choice for Indian consumers and maintains its market in India. Shipment of Teak is always sustains in India. Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecodor, Ghana remain in top chart of teak procurement. As per Kandla Timber Association, Kandla Port alone received 35 lacs cubic meters, 39.5 lacs cubic meter and 39.2 lacs cubic meter logs in year 2015-16, 2014-15 and 2013-14 respectively. Tuticorin, Chennai, Mangalore, Kolkata, Vizag etc are other ports in India, which receive significant volume of timber to cater the demand of southern and eastern region.





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