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INTERNATIONAL HARDWOOD CONFERENCE IN BERLIN

On November 20-21 the 2019 edition of the International Hardwood Conference (IHC) took place in Berlin. The international meeting of the hardwood industry is one of the most important trade conferences in the industry and attracts a large number of visitors from all over the world every two years.

The event as usual was co-organized by the European Organization of the Sawmill Industry (EOS) and the European Timber Trade Federation (ETTF). This year the Conference was held in Berlin together with the German sawmill and timber industry association (DeSH). The symposium in the capital attracted 125 participants from 20 nations, continuing the successes of recent years. "The large number of participants has made it clear that Berlin provided an outstanding stage for the IHC 2019. We were able to demonstrate how wood as a building material opens up new markets in growing cities and discussed further opportunities and potentials of hardwoods with proven experts", said EOS Vice President Maria Kiefer-Polz.

Analyses and assessments of the current market development by experts from all over the world were provided during the meeting. Following a relatively positive period in 2018, the European hardwood markets this year have felt the pinch of the global trade tensions and general slowdown of the economy, with Chinese demand for European hardwood slowing down a little. Demand this year in the EOS producing countries is expected to slightly decline by 1.3% while production is expected to slightly slow down by 0.7%.

In addition to an excellent market overview, participants can use the derived trends and specifics of individual regions as a basis for their long-term planning and strategic orientation. Another key topic was climate change and its consequences for the forestry and timber industries. In the context of this discussion, future tree species availability with regards to forest adaptation to climate change was examined. The market flows of tropical timber were also discussed. Under the current political scenario, in which environmental concerns are high on the agenda, the wood products have an enormous potential to help the EU achieve its green objectives.

Dr. Josef Braml from the German Council on Foreign Relations analysed the impact of the current trade conflict between the US and China. Moreover, this year's program specifically addressed the opportunities of environmental product declarations and life-cycle considerations.

"The topics were again as diverse this year as the participants from all over the world. We can look back on a successful event content-wise, in addition to the exchange of expertise and networking

opportunities", summed up Andreas von Möller, former ETTF President and moderator of the Conference, at the end of the event.

All presentations of the event will shortly be available at the following website: <https://ihc2019.berlin/>

The next edition of the International Hardwood Conference will take place in France in November 2021.