

27 November 1992

Works Branch Technical Circular No. 32/92

The Use of Tropical Hardwood on Construction Sites

Introduction

The purpose of this Circular is to reduce the amount of hardwood timber used on construction sites.

Background

2. Traditional methods of construction have favoured the use of hardwood which is imported from tropical rainforest areas and to a lesser extent from temperate zones. Timber importers are importing these hardwoods because they have convenient sources of supply and a ready market. Concern is growing over the use of this hardwood and in particular tropical hardwood because it is not produced from sustainable sources. There are alternative materials and although these alternatives are not necessarily readily available, and in the short term they may be more expensive, they must be considered.

3. Also of great concern is the amount of timber being used for construction that is going to waste. This can be reduced if other materials are used.

Policy Statement

4. **As a first step towards elimination of hardwood for temporary works, hardwood for site hoardings, falsework and the shoring of trenches and pits shall be specified as not to be used on all contracts for which the first call for tenders is gazetted (or equivalent) as of 1 March 1993.**

5. Contractors must propose alternatives to hardwoods in their tenders or be directed to use specified acceptable alternatives.

6. The various uses of hardwood on construction sites are listed in Appendix A together with some suggestions for alternatives.

7. This policy will be kept under review to consider broadening restrictions in the use of hardwoods generally.

( H B Phillipson )  
Deputy Secretary (Works Policy)