ITTO-BMLEH
Teak in the Tropics

Bi-monthly online

# ITTO-BMLEH Teak Newsletter

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The *ITTO-BMLEH Teak Newsletter* support and facilitates teak and other tropical species networking and information dissemination in the Asia Pacific and West Africa through ITTO member countries and partners, and support sharing lessons of the project through short news release, occasional papers, project related research and development information. The bi-monthly newsletter is released online through TEAKNET webpage www.teaknet.org and co-hosted by Kasetsart University, Thailand.

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# Kochi hosted the 5th World Teak Conference 2025

*Sustainable Development of the Global Teak Sector – Adapting to Future Markets and the Environment*

17-20 September, Grand Hyatt Kochi, Bolgatty, Kerala, India

*Report by P.K.Thulasidas[1], Yongyut Trissurat[2], Tetra Yanuariadi[3], Paula Sarigumba[4]*


*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

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Teak (*Tectona grandis* L.f.), the timber of kings, is considered a priority species in plantations nearly 80 countries for large-scale cultivation, and the versatile fast-growing species offers the best investment opportunity to produce quality timber to reach harvestable size with adequate durability and modest strength by 20-25 years of rotation age rather than for waiting longer rotations. Although teak logs account for only a small proportion (around 1%) of tropical log production, they represent 14% of international trade volume and 20% of trade value.

The World Teak Conferences brings together experts and decision-makers from government institutions, the private wood industry sector, universities, research institutes, plantation owners and local communities to share knowledge, and to exchange ideas on the multiple economic, social and environmental benefits that teak resources can provide.

**Organizers:** The fifth edition of the World Teak Conference (WTC 2025) was jointly organized by the Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) in cooperation with the International Teak Information Network (TEAKNET), the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment (KSCSTE), the Indian Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Japan under the theme "***Sustainable Development of the Gobal Teak Sector – Adapting to Future Markets and the Environment***". Technical support was provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Rome, the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), the International Union of Forest Research Organizations Teakwood Working Party (IUFRO Div5.06.02), and the Ghana Forestry Commission. The venue of the event was at Grand Hyatt Kochi, Bolgatty, Kerala, India from 17-20 September 2025.

**Sponsors:** The conference was supported and sponsored by national and international entities, the most important among them the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) through the ITTO/MAFF supported Project "Sustainable Wood Use", the Ghana Forestry Commission, the private companies- Teak Resources Company (TRC), Brazil; Jayaraj Timbers; the Kilombero Valley Teak Company (KVTC) from Tanzania and WaKa-Forest Investment Services AG, Switzerland.

The four-day programme included plenary sessions covering all aspects of teak management, genetics, markets and legal supply chains, smallholder teak plantations and panel discussion on global teak resources assessment and forest landscape restoration. There was one General Keynote at the beginning each session by prominent speakers followed by oral presentations. A total of 18 oral presentations together with 9 papers in ITTO session and the FSC session comprise 7 presentations, besides the 21 Posters.

The five sessions covered the following topics:

⇒ **Session I & II** (combined): Financial Analysis, Value Addition, Markets and Legal Supply Chains

⇒ **Session III**: Recent advances in teak genetics and stand management of natural and planted teak forests

⇒ **Session IV**: Management models for smallholder teak plantations and agroforestry systems in Asia, Africa and Latin America

⇒ **Session V**: Environmental protection, biodiversity conservation and Forest Landscape Restoration

ITTO, Japan organized one thematic Side Event on 17th Afternoon (14:00 16:00 h) to present the outcome of ongoing second phase of ITTO-BMLEH teak project, *'Promoting Quality Timber Production in Smallholder and Community-Based Teak and Other Valuable Species Plantations in the Tropics*[Box 1]. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)- India also convened a Side Event on the '*Responsible Sourcing of Teak under the European Union Deforestation-Free Products Regulation (EUDR)*. In addition, the private sector had the great opportunity to meet in Business to Business (B2B) sessions in all the 3 days of the conference. The Conference had organized a number of exhibition stands displaying products and services related to the global teak market.

More than 300 participants from 43 countries representing 6 continents attended the Conference, They raised a wide range of points about teak, the most important of which are summarized in the following sections.

## Opening Ceremony (Wednesday 17, 2025)

In the inaugural address by Mr. Rajesh Raveendran IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Govt. of Kerala, gave a brief historical antecedent of teak in India, on the ancient tradition of teak trade and ship/boat building in the pre-independence era of British rule and the subsequent establishment of world's first teak plantation in Nilambur, Kerala in early 1840's. Now, half of the total plantation area in Kerala is teak, approximately 78,000 ha under different age classes on a 50 to 60 year rotation cycle.

Inaugural session-Lighting the Lamp

Welcome address; KFRI Director Dr. Kannan CS Warrier

Inaugural address by Mr. Rajesh Raveendran IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force, Govt. of Kerala

Opening Remarks by Mr. KB Singh IFS, MoEFCC, Govt. of India

Presidential address by Prof. KP Sudheer, KSCSTE, Govt. of Kerala

Opening Remarks: Mr. Tomoyuki Honda, MAFF Japan

Opening remarks: ITTO Executive Director, Ms. Sheam Satkuru

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

Dr. Michael Kleine, IUFRO HQ, Vienna

Opening ceremony: A view of audience

*Photo credit: @PK Thulasidas*

In the Opening remarks by Mr K. B. Singh IFS, Inspector General of MoEFCC, Govt of India, touched upon the latest 2023 status report of Forests of India (ISFR). The total forest and tree cover of the country increased to over 25.17% of the geographical area of the country. Inside the forests, Teak (*Tectona grandis*) has an estimated total volume of 4.46% next to *Shorea robusta* (11.43%) in its distribution.

ITTO Executive Director, Ms. Sheam Satkuru in her opening remarks called for knowledge exchange and stronger partnerships to boost the sustainable teak sector. She continued to outline how the challenges facing the teak sector can be transformed into opportunities through science, responsible trade, and collaboration- pointing to ITTO's established track record of projects which advance sustainable teak production.

Dr. Hugh CA Brown, CEO, Ghana Forestry Commission & Chairman of TEAKNET lauded the organisers for holding the 5th edition of WTC in the port city of Kochi and it is highly relevant that 87 percent of the world teak exports are targeted to the Indian consumers. In the opening statement by Mr. Tomoyuki Honda, Deputy Director of Forestry Agency of Japan (MAFF), informed that the Govt of Japan was happy to provide financial support through ITTO, Japan to hold this conference with their Sustainable Wood Use Project. Mr. Kenichi Shono, Forestry Officer, FAO HQ offered felicitations for the successful deliberations and recommendations that would be useful for the future sustainable management of teak and timber trade globally. Dr. Michael Kleine, Senior Advisor, IUFRO HQ informed that IUFRO is constantly fostering and collaborate with Teaknet- India in organising many conferences/workshops in the past and had the privilege to publish two global teak study publications as IUFRO World Series # 36 and the latest Global Teak Resources Assessment 2022 published as # 44 giving the latest update of teak resources globally.

IUFRO established a Working Party exclusively for planted teak under the Division 5 (Forests Products) considering the ever increasing significance of this species of high timber value.

Opening remarks: Dr. Hugh CA Brown, Chairman of TEAKNET

Mr. Kenichi, Shono, FAO Rome

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

Participants of World Teak Conference 2025

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

The inaugural session was followed by social hour and rich cultural display named as '*Colours of India'* combining the different art forms and cultural traditions of the country.

Cultural display - 'Colours of India'

Cultural display and social hour

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

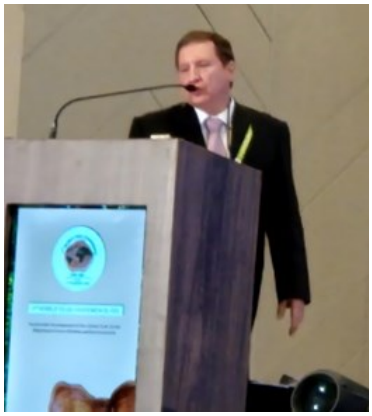
**The combined Session I & II (Financial Analysis, Value Addition, Markets and Legal Supply Chains)** was moderated by Dr. Walter Kollert of WaKa-Forest Investment Services AG, Portugal and delivered the thematic keynote address. In the presentation by Mr. Arvydas Lebedya, Forestry Officer of FAO, Rome on the topic, '*Analysis and evaluation of global trade flows in major teak producing countries*', highlighted the most recent data of teak trade flow from 2024-25 based on the publically available UN Comtrade database (https://comtradeplus.un.org/TradeFlow). In 2024 data showed that the global teak log production ~2.5 million $m^3$ (1% of tropical logs), international trade value at US$ 626 million. India continues to dominate the market, accounting for 87% of global imports from over 40 countries. China follows in second place with 8%. Major exporters include Brazil, Myanmar, Ecuador, Ghana and Panama. Myanmar lost its dominant position as a supplier of mature, high-quality logs after imposing a log export ban. Since 2007, the price of teak fluctuated between 300 USD and 440 USD/m3. Over the past 3 years, the market has declined to levels last seen in late 2000. Regulatory improvements (2022 HS codes) now enable clearer tracking of log and sawnwood volumes traded across the globe.


Thematic keynote by Dr. Walter Kollert, Portugal

Mr. Arvydas Lebedya, Forestry Officer of FAO, Rome on teak trade flow from 2024-25

Dr. M. Sarwar Jahan from Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research highlighted the commercial significance and wide distribution of teak in Bangladesh, with plantations now covering an estimated 144,000 ha. He shared research findings demonstrating increases in wood density, lignin, and cellulose content as trees mature (notably 9–12 year-old stands).

Prof. Mauricio Jerez-Rico (University of Los Andes, Venezuela) presented an overview of current Optimal Technical and Financial Management of Teak Plantations in Venezuela's 5,000 ha of teak plantations, mostly in tropical dry forest regions. Financially optimal teak plantation management was found to require low planting densities, short rotations and a single thinning (625 trees/ha, 18-year rotation, single thinning at 7.4 years (40% basal area removal).



Ms. Ani A. Elias from the ICFRE-Institute of Forest genetics and Tree Breeding, India presented a new innovative approach to use AI tools to determine stand data of teak plantation volume estimation is promising to make forest surveys and inventories more efficient and reducing costs. Further investigation of these methods is warranted. In conclusion, the presentations reinforced the need for integrated data, cost-effective management, and uptake of digital tools to address trade, sustainability, and operational challenges in teak landscapes worldwide.

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

BOX 1

**ITTO-BMLEH Teak Session:** In a side event at the World Teak Conference on the first day, ITTO shared the results and progress of the 2nd phase of the teak project, '*Promoting Quality Timber Production in Smallholder and Community-based Teak and Other Valuable Species Plantations in the Tropics*' supported by the Government of Germany. The session was moderated jointly by Dr. Tetra Yanuariadi Projects Manager and Ms. Paula Sarigumba, Communications and Outreach Officer, ITTO, Japan. The project has been under implementation since 2023 in Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Togo and Viet Nam. Opening the session, ITTO Executive Director Ms. Sheam Satukuru said, supporting the production of high-quality teak is central to ITTO's mission to encourage sustainable forest management and promote legal and sustainable tropical timber supply chains. Teak, one of the world's most valuable hardwoods, is now planted for large-scale cultivation in more than 80 countries in Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America. However, smallholders and community-based plantations still face challenges that ITTO and its partners are seeking to address. "ITTO is making efforts to fill the gaps and create the capacity necessary to surmount these concerns," she said.

Moderators of the ITTO-BMLEH session– Dr. Tetra Yanuariadi and Ms. Paula Srigumba, ITTO Japan

ITTO Executive Director Ms. Sheam Satkuru delivering Opening Remarks

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

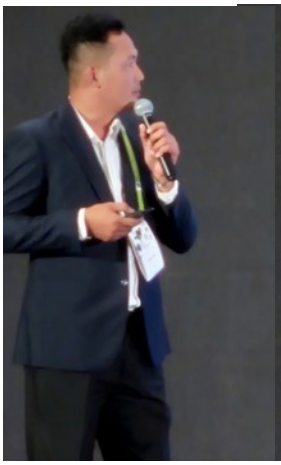
Continuing the session, ITTO Regional Project Coordinator Prof. Yongyut Trisurat gave an overview of achievements already made by the project in the 1st Phase (2019-2022) and the current steps taken in its implementation in the 2nd phase (2023-2026), including improved availability of high-quality planting stock and better practices in silviculture and timber processing and microfinancing for smallholders for interim income for their sustenance until harvest at long rotations of teak. Experts then presented case studies and recommendations from each of the countries participating in the project while addressing overarching issues, before taking questions from the audience. There were a total of 9 presentations from the participating countries covering the following topics.

* The role of smallholder teak plantations in Indonesia's forestry sector,
* Teak plantations in Cambodia,
* Smallholder teak plantations: bridging the demand and supply gap in India,
* Promoting high-value teak timber for sustainable supply chains in Vietnam,
* Teak clonal test plan for selecting superior mother tress for commercial plantations in Thailand,
* Monitoring adaptation and productivity of teak plantations in Togo,
* Precision control and management of teak borer (*Xyleutes ceramica*) in Thailand, and
* Bridging the financial gap for teak smallholders: A review of financial models in South Asia, S-E Asia and W. Africa


Prof. Yongyut Trisurt, Regional Project Manager, highlighting the salient features and objectives of 2nd phase ITTO-BMLEH teak project in the tropics

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

ITTO consultant Dr. Anto Rimbawanto described how smallholder teak plantations in Indonesia has spread from Java to other parts of the country and account for about 40% of national production. Recommendations to further strengthen the sector include providing more smallholders with legal ownership, establishing a national teak seedling programme and strengthening support for certification.



Mr. Cheat Vichet, ITTO Consultant on teak plantations in Cambodia

Dr. Anto Rimbawanto, ITTO Consultant on Indonesia component on smallholder teak plantations

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

Mr. Cheat Vichet, also an ITTO consultant, presented the development of teak plantations in Cambodia, including the performance of the species in demonstration plots in Kampong Speu and Kampong Cham provinces. Promising future avenues include promoting public-private investment and research in areas including genetics.

Detailing the situation of smallholder teak plantation developments in India, Dr. R. Yashoda, Chief Scientist at ICFRE -Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, said selected clones of planting materials could be harvested after 20–25 years that offer smallholders a way to maximise the economic returns from plantations which are more typically operated on longer rotation periods.

Dr. Dang Thinh Trieu of the Vietnamese Academy of Forest Science identified four key avenues which Viet Nam has promoted high-value teak timber and sustainable supply chains: improving teak genetics; enhancing silvicultural techniques, training in silvicultural practices; and disseminating knowledge networking via radio, newspapers, and television.

Ms. Somporn Khumchompoo, Senior Scientist at Thailand's Royal Forest Department, presented on the use of clonal testing to select mother trees for the propagation of commercial planting stock. The top performers among the first series, which dates from 2000, are to be planted in 2025 with support from the ITTO teak project.

Addressing the issue of pest control, Dr. Wattanachai Tasen of the Faculty of Forestry, Kasetsart University, presented the need for intensive and continuous efforts to monitor for the precise control and management of teak borer (*Xyleutes ceramica* Walker) in plantations in Thailand.

Prof. Adzo Dzifa Kokutse of the Laboratory of Forest Research, University of Lomé, Togo described research in her country to evaluate the performance of new teak provenances at the Zogbépimé Forest Station in Togo, where plantations have faced low productivity and poor wood quality due to limited genetic variability.

In the final presentation, Mr. Temesgen Zana Jaffo of the Thünen Institute of Forestry, Germany outlined mechanisms to help bridge the financial gap for smallholder growers of teak and other valuable timber species–including tree-collateral loans, forest grower associations, out-grower schemes, and voluntary carbon markets–and an analysis of their performance across the countries involved in the ITTO 2nd phase of project.

Dr. R. Yasodha, National Coordinator, IFGTB, India on smallholder teak plantations: bridging the demand and supply gap

Dr. Dang Thinh Trieu, VAFS, Vietnam on promoting high value teak timber for sustatainable supply chains

Dr. Somporn Khumchompoo, Senior Scientist, RFD, Thailand on Teak clonal test plan

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

Prof. Adzo Dzifa Kokutse, University of Lome, Togo on productivity of teak panatations in the Guinean Zone of Togo

Mr. Temesgen Zana of the Thünen Institute of Forestry, Germany on financing models for teak smallholders in S. Asia, S-E Asia and W. Africa

Dr. Wattanachai Tasen, Kasetsart University, Bangkok on Precision control of teak borer *Xyleutes ceramica*

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

Attendees heard insights and experiences from researchers involved on the ground project implementation of the ITTO-BMLEH teak project on high quality teak production beneficial for smallholders. Closing the session, Ms. Sheam Satkuru, highlighted that the teak industry can only thrive *"if we showcase science, policy, and practical interface"*, noting that the milestones of the ITTO-BMLEH project exemplify it and are promising for scaling up further.


Closing remarks by Ms. Sheam Satkuru

Moderators and few members of project team presenters line up for group photo on 17th Sept after the ITTO-BMLEH teak session

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

**Business to – business (B2B) meetings**: This session brought together stakeholders from industry, policy, and research to discuss the enabling environment for effective business engagement and trade in the teak sector. Through national, international, and market-focused presentations, the session addressed demand trends, regulatory and certification challenges, supply chain transparency, and organizational networking. The business meeting session was moderated by Dr. PK Thulasidas, Dy. Coordinator, IUFRO Teakwood Working Party (D5.06.02) and the pitch talk session of planters, traders, saw millers, and certification bodies, and property developers was jointly handled by Dr. KC. Chacko, Former Senior Scientist of KFRI and Mr. Sanjay Poddar, SRS Overseas Ltd., New Delhi.

Talking on the teak demand analysis in the Japanese market, Mr. Tomoyuki Honda, Forestry Agency of Japan, told the gathering that teak holds a high-value status in Japan, mainly used for flooring and furniture, yet sector-specific data is rather limited. Japan's teak imports (2008–2024) are dominated by Myanmar, with Indonesia and China also notable suppliers. Oak prices influence teak demand; but mahogany does not. The Japanese market is stable for teak, with growth prospects linked to broader material market trends.


Mr. Tomoyuki Honda, Dy. Director, Wood Products and Trade office, Forestry Agency of Japan

Mr. Jitesh Kumar, Asst. Commissioner of Forests, SU Division, MoEFCC, Govt of India who spoke next informed that India has extensive natural teak regions but relies heavily on imports due to high domestic consumption. National policies emphasize promoting agroforestry, streamline certification, and boost research for quality planting material emphasizing tissue culture and clonal propagation methods.


Mr. Jitesh Kumar, Asst. Commissioner of Forests, SU, Division, MoEFCC, on Teak:, a national perspective.

(*Photo: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*)

Ms. Sreelakshmy M.P., PR and Communication Coordinator of TEAKNET, delivered a brief presentation on the TEAKNET's Achievements, Activities, and Future Perspectives. Her talk highlighted the key milestones achieved by TEAKNET over the years, its ongoing initiatives to promote information exchange and collaboration within the global teak community, and the network's future plans to strengthen its role as a global platform for teak-related research, networking, and development.

Ms. Sreelakshmy MP on Teaknet activities

Mr. Tim Webster and Ms. Virginia Henderson, Authors and Oral historians, from Australia & New Zealand then introduced the new teak book they wrote and published as "Social Life of Teak" to the audience. The book tells the story of teak and its cultivation across various countries, based on travel photography experiences and interactions with diverse individuals who are one way or other involved in the trade of teak, logging practices, and how their social life revolved around the world's renowned wood, the teak. The book, 'Social Life of Teak' is available in the Exhibition stand and with authors.

Tim Webster and Virginia Henderson on their new book, 'Social Life of Teak'

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

Mr. Raja Sekhar, of Jayaraj Timbers, India gave a brief account of the situation of Industry & Market Perspectives – Trends, Challenges, Value Addition. The timber sector in India requires a dedicated Timber Board to advocate for industry needs and support policy improvement. He further addressed certification bottlenecks (FSC), ensure data transparency, and streamline customs requirements. He stressed the need to promote mature, properly treated timber for value addition and improved market image.


Mr. Raja Sekhar, Managing Director, Jayaraj Timbers on Teakwood in transition: trade prospects

*Photo: credits @PK Thulasidas*

Several business-to-business (B2B) meetings were organized for representatives of the international teak industry, as well as two panel discussions on technical subjects and a number of exhibition stands displaying products and services from the teak industry, ITTO, Forestry Commission Ghana, FSC, research institutions etc. Twenty one Posters were also presented.

Pitch talk session Moderators: Dr. KC Chacko and Mr. Sanjay Poddar

Talk on tissue culture teak


Dr. TV Sajeev, Chief Scientist, KFRI on patented biocontrol HpNPV developed for teak defoliator, *Hyblea purea* in teak plantations

B2B Pitch Talk session in progress with panelists and business partners

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*



Exhibition stands


Postern Session

*Photo: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

**Day -2 (Thursday 18, 1025)**

**Session III (Recent advances in teak genetics and stand management of natural and plated teak forests)**

This session was chaired by Prof. Olman Murrillo, Instituto Technológico de Costa Rica. Five papers were presented in the session. In the Thematic Keynote by Dr. Doreen Goh, Managing Director, YSG Bioscape, Sabah, Malaysia highlighted the mass production of superior-quality clonal material using tissue culture techniques based on the characteristics of the parent material has been proven and has emerged as a superior alternative to achieving high productivity and quality, however clonal propagation needs genetically rich base populations to be sustainable and to maintain resilience against diseases and pests. This technique can form an integral part of teak genetic improvement strategies and breeding programmes, as well as supporting the conservation of genetic resources. Clonal plantations demonstrated show considerably higher yields and better timber quality over 20-yr rotations than plantations established from seeds.

On the topic 'Breeding teak in Latin America' Prof. Olman reported significant breeding advances made in Costa Rica (Tree improvement co-operatives-GENFORES) and private company in Brasil (TRC) in the field of strong development in clonal forestry, demonstrated genetic control of teak



wood properties such as heartwood color, density, and stiffness. Established molecular markers such as microsatellites and SNPs are utilized for breeding, assessing clonal fidelity, and early prediction of traits. He concluded that teak breeding in Latin America had successfully moved from conventional approaches to genomics-assisted selection, increasing sustainability and profitability.

Ms. Leonarda Grillo Neves from Brasil reported a milestone in registering 19 new cultivars of teak and these cultivars provided legal protection against cloning, genetic piracy, and uncertified propagation. The cultivar registration strengthened certification, legal security, and traceability across the teak value chain, reduced illegal logging, increased productivity, and added export value. She concluded that Brazil had become a reference point for global teak genetic innovation by linking biotechnology with legal frameworks.

Ms. Leanarda Grillo Neves, Universidae do Estado de Mato Grosso, on 19 new cultivars for technological innovation in Brazil

Mr. Ashwath from UAS, Karanataka, India reported the first attempt to map QTLs linked with drought tolerance in teak. He concluded that identified SNPs and QTLs provided a foundation for marker-assisted selection and climate-resilient teak breeding.

Mr. Ashwath, UAS, Karnataka, India on drought tolerance through QTL mapping in teak

Dr. Naoki Tani from JIRCAS, Japan investigated teak's genomic adaptation and climate resilience in Teak (Java) using 8,948 SNPs from international provenance trials. He reported that Malabar and Central Province Teak (CPT) populations of central India showed strong local adaptation and higher resilience under future climate conditions and the Indonesian landraces are more closely related to Myanmar provenances.

He further said that parts of Java in 2050 could resemble Malabar's current climate, making Malabar teak valuable for future plantations, a critical resource for breeding climate-resilient teak. Dr. Naoki concluded that temperature was the main driver of adaptive genetic diversity.


Mr. Naoki Tani, JIRCAS, Japan on genomic adaptation of teak with climate to achieve higher resilience on Java Island

Q & A interactive session

*Photo: credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

**FSC Spl Session on "*Responsible sourcing of Teak: EUDR and Beyond*"** chaired by FSC India Country Director, Mr. Suresh Gairola, 7 papers were presented. In the keynote address by Ms. Cindy Cheng, Regional Director, FSC Asia Pacific gave a brief overview of global strategies for responsible sourcing shown to the audience a video on FSC Certified Teak. The mission of the FSC is to promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. FSC forests meet the most rigorous and trusted standards for sustainable forestry. FSC is proactively scrutinizing the FSC-certified teak supply chain to ensure it remains free from the risks of illegal logging and illegal trade of timber. FSC decided to proactively, and thoroughly investigate its global network of FSC-certified teak supply chains. No Burmese teak was found in FSC supply chains.


Mr. Suresh Gairola FSC India Country Director on FSC solution to promote forest sustainability

Keynote address by Ms. Cindy Cheng, Regional Director, FSC Asia Pacific (joined online)


The session panelists

A view of session attendees

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

The new EU Regulation on Deforestation-free Products EUDR, the EU wants to increase the demand for 'deforestation-free' legal products originates from sustainable sources and enable traceability all along the supply chains from location of harvest to final products reaching to the consumers in the market. FSC is working on a digital traceability solution through block chain to support delivery of due diligence statements and other information.

**Panel Discussion**: The Panel discussion that followed in the afternoon was moderated by Dr. CTS Nair, Former Chief Economist, FAO, Rome and Dr. Reinold Glauner, Managing Director, Waka-Forest Investment Services AG, Switzerland with 9 panelists from different organisations deliberated on the topic " ***Global teak resources and assessment and trade***", a study sponsored by Teaknet, IUFRO and FAO that culminated in the latest review and assessment of teak resources globally and the report was got published as IUFRO World Series #44. The panelists participated in the discussion are: Dr. Walter Kollert, Portugal; Ms. Sheam Satkuru, ITTO Executive Director; Mr. Balasatish, MES Builders, Chennai; Mr. Sreenivasan, Chief Architect of the Western Command; Mr. Sanjay Poddar, SRS Group, New Delhi; and Mr. Samuel Dalla, TRC, Brazil. The panelists listed the following 6 questions for discussion and invited the audience to contribute.

1) Global resource base & sustainability
2) Productivity and competitiveness
3) Markets & demand
4) Trade policies & turbulence
5) Emerging challenges
6) Future outlook

Dr. Walter Kollert who was the lead author of the study report highlighted the significance of such a study and informed the gathering that teak is being cultivated in over 80 tropical countries in Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America. The global export value of teak is estimated at USD 127 million which represents 3.8% of the total export value of non-coniferous tropical industrial roundwood from all tropical countries. In 2024 the total trade value was USD 626 million/yr or USD 52 million/month on average. India accounts for the lion's share of imports (2/3rd !), followed by China (17%) and EU-27 (9%). Top teak producers and exporters are Brazil, Myanmar, Ecuador, Ghana and Panama (59% combined).

Ms. Sheam Satkuru, ITTO Executive Director told that "teak is more than a premium timber, It provides opportunities to improve the livelihoods of millions of people, contributes to carbon storage and climate resilience, enrich biodiversity, and directly contributes to the SDG's and climate related ambitions".

Dr. CTS Nair and Dr. Reinold Glauner lead the panel discussion

Dr. Walter Kollert on Global Teak Resources

Ms. Sheam Satkuru, ITTO Executive Director

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

Interventions by the participants

Interventions by Dr. Rina from Indonesia


Prof. Olman Murillo, Costa Rica and Samuel Dalla, TRC, Brasil

Mr. Sanjay Poddar, SRS Overseas Ltd, New Delhi

The panelist members

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

Mr. Sanjay Poddar, CEO of SRS group told in the panel discussion that South America is at 3x in terms of teak total export volumes (40% stake) in 2025 so far as per projections; it is expected to close the year with over 900,000 CBM in volume. In the case of African teak export, Ghana is the leader, but export volume of teak halved since 2024. He suggested key implications of teak stakeholders should focus on trade policy shifts, forest sustainability and emerging markets.

**Day 3 (Friday, 19 Sept 2025)**

**Session IV: Management models for smallholder teak plantations and agroforestry systems in Asia, Africa and Latin America**

The session was moderated by Dr. Markku Kanninen, Emeritus Professor, University of Helsinki with 4 presentations on focus. Thematic keynote was delivered by Mr. Irivine Kanyamba, CEO, Kilombero Valley Teak Company (KVTC), Tanzania on 'Smallholder teak plantations in Africa-KVTC experience. The other speakers include Mr. Patric Gomas, Sri Lanka on evaluating performance and volume of teak coppicing; Ms. Valerie Fumey Nassa, FC Ghana on modified taungya system in teak plantations; and Mr. Peter Ige, University of Nigeria on Site management for optimum yield of teak in Nigeria.


Thematic keynote by Mr. Irvine from KVTC, Tanzania

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

The session summarizes the following points for the policy makers to consider.

**Rural livelihoods and food security:** Smallholders and farmers who own teak forests can earn an income through nursery operations, preparing land, establishing and maintaining plantations, and working in wood-based industries. Therefore, planted teak forests support rural development and sustainable livelihoods.

Evidence from innovative management models for successful outgrower schemes and Modified Taungya Systems (MTS) and coppicing systems of teak shows that technical problems pose less of a hindrance to the successful implementation of smallholder teak plantations and agroforestry than organisational and logistical challenges do. Such challenges include controversies surrounding land tenure and governance, the organisation and logistics of logging operations, the absence of institutions and organisations capable of providing qualified extension services, and dependence on a limited market with poor access to product prices.

Methods of improving profitability for smallholder growers include using intercropping systems to generate income during the initial years before earnings from forestry become available, accessing training facilities and tailored financial incentives, organising group marketing, and making better use of marketing data and information.

**Session V: Environmental protection, biodiversity conservation and Forest Landscape Restoration**

Dr. Michael Kleine, Senior Advisor, IUFRO HQ, Vienna chaired the session with 4 presentations. Dr. Sutthathorn Chairuangari, Chaing Mai University, Thailand gave the Thematic keynote on the Potential benefits of diversification of monoculture plantations; Ms. Aswathy K Vijayan from KFRI, India on Evaluating environmental resilience of teak plantations; Ms. Nelly Grace Bedijo, FAO Uganda on monoculture teak plantations- Ugandan perspective and Ms. Gisele Sinasson Sanni, University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin on Teak FLR in Benin.

Dr. Markku Kanninen moderating the session and taking questions from the audience

Thematic keynote by Dr. Sutthathorn, Chiang Mai University

Ms. Aswathy K Vijayan, KFRI- India

Ms. Nelly Grace Bedijo- FAO Uganda

Ms. Gisele Sinasson Sanni, Benin

Interactive session: Speakers taking questions *Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

**Panel discussion on 'The role of planted teak forests in building resilient landscapes'** was also moderated by Dr. Michael and Dr. Promode Kant, Director, Institute of Green Economy, India with 5 panelists shared their thoughts on the subject. The panelists include, Dr. CTS Nair, Former Chief Economist, FAO; Prof. Youngyut Trisurat, Kasetsart University, Thailand; Dr. Pramod G Krishnan IFS, Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt. of Kerala; Dr. Krishnakumar IFS, Former PCCF & Head of Forest Force, Tamilnadu, India and Dr. Reinold Glauner, Managing Director, WaKa Forest investment Services AG, Switzerland.

The panelists were tasked with the following three pertinent questions.

⇒ Teak plantations and biodiversity conservation

⇒ Teak plantations and climate change mitigation

⇒ Smallholder teak plantations

Panel discussion lead By Dr. Michael and Dr. Pramode Kant


The panelists

Prof. Yongyut Trisurat, Kasetsart University

Dr. Pramod G Krishnan, Kerala Forest Dept, Govt of Kerala


Dr. CTS Nair, Former Chief Economist, FAO, Rome

Dr. Reinold Glauner, WaKa Forest Investment services, Switzeland

Dr. Krishnakumar IFS , Former PCCF & Head of Forest Force, Tamilnadu, India

Taking questions from the audience- Dr. Naoki Tani, JIRCAS

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

The key takeaway messages of the panel session are:

**Forest landscape** may comprise natural forest, forest plantations, plantings of non-timber forest products, agricultural production systems, or high-conservation value forests that protect soil and water. The **environmental impact of planted teak forests** on the landscape depends largely on the conditions of the land prior to planting. If managed responsibly, planted teak forests established on logged-over and degraded forest lands, unprofitable or marginal agricultural lands, shifting cultivation areas, or other abandoned and idle lands can be sustainable and contribute to the restoration of rural landscapes for productive and protective purposes. Good management practices will help minimize environmental impacts in this context.

Teak plantations could play a major role in **sequestering carbon** and represent a viable option in Forest Landscape Restoration, in particular on degraded lands. Tapping into the carbon credit markets would provide additional incentives and support the global effort on climate change mitigation.

**Ecological diversification** in monoculture teak plantations requires management interventions on 3 levels: (1) increase the genetic diversity to support the adaptability of the population to the changing climate and to reduce the risk of pests and diseases, (2) support the diversity of species to create different sources of income and habitat for wildlife, (3) enhance the structural diversity of the prevailing vegetation layers. While monocultures are efficient for timber production, diversified system like mixed-species plantations and agroforestry systems are more sustainable, offering better biodiversity, ecosystem services, and resilience.


The panelist members of the session

**Geospatial analysis** based on ecological and social data and the implementation of participatory long-term processes involving all concerned stakeholders generate valuable results that are useful for various decisions on land management, restoration and governance.

Steering Committee of TEAKNET:, The Steering Committee meeting of International Teak Information Network (TEAKNET), the supreme decision making body of the network was convened at the WTC venue in Kochi on 18th September 2025 evening with the members attending the conference, to discuss the future endeavours and activities of the Secretariat. The steering committee members initiated planning for the organisation of the 6th WTC proposed in 2028 and decided to prioritise Latin America, especially Brazil and invite expression of interests from interested organisations. Teaknet membership base should be strengthened by reaching out prioritising, particularly the private sector.

Steering Committee meeting on 17th Sept evening


Group photo: SC members at the selfie stand

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

## Closing Ceremony

The Closing ceremony on 19th evening was marked with the presence of the special guest, Mrs. Kanchan Devi IFS, Director- General, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehra Dun and she delivered the valedictory address on the occasion. Dr. Kannan CS Warrier, Director, KFRI and Chairman of 5th WTC welcomed the gathering and highlighted a broad overview of 3-day deliberations that took place on various topics discussed on the successful organization of the 5th World Teak Conference hosted in Cochin.

Welcome address by Dr. Kannan Warrier, Director, KFRI

VIP's and distinguished guests on the stage for closing ceremony

Mrs. Kanchan Devi IFS, Director General, ICFRE Dehra Dun giving Valedictory address

Dr. Walter Kollert, SC Member of Teaknet presenting the Summary Report of the 5th WTC

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

Closing remarks were offered by representatives of the Kerala Forest Department; MoEFCC, Govt. of India; ITTO, FAO and IUFRO. On behalf of TEAKNET Steering Committee, Dr. Walter Kollert presented the WTC closing remarks and released the conference summary report.


Dr. Pramod G Krishnan IFS, Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt of Kerala

Mr. Jithesh Kumar, Asst. Commissioner of Forests, SU Division, MoEFCC

Dr. Tetra Yanuariadi, Projects Manager, ITTO Japan

Dr. Michael Kleine, Senior Advisor, IUFRO, HQ, Vienna

Dr. Hugh CA Brown, Chief Executive, Forestry Commission of Ghana and Chairman of Teaknet felicitated KFRI and Teaknet and the support provided by FAO, IUFRO, ITTO, MAFF, Japan; Forestry Commission of Ghana and various categories of sponsors for the successful organisation of the event.

Mr. Kenichi Shono, FAO Rome


Mr. Fausto Takizawa, TRC Brazil


Dr. Reinold Glauner, WaKa Forest Investment Services AG Switzerland

*Photo: @PK Thulasidas*

The Sponsors and supporters received mementos from the TEAKNET Chairman, Dr. Hugh CA Brown.

Vote of thanks by Teaknet Coordinator, Dr. S. Sandeep


National ANTHEM

Teaknet Coordinator, Dr. Sandeep offered vote of thanks and wished all the participants take home the sweet memories of days of stay in the port city of Cochin and officially declared closed the 5th edition of WTC.

## Conference Recommendations for Action

At its conclusion the conference delivered recommendations for action to support the development of a sustainable teak industry. The communiqué call for all stakeholders in the sector should work together to:

- Support research efforts to diversify the existing monoculture plantations with multi-species planted forests and agroforestry production systems;
- Explore possibilities to replace harmful fumigating agents with eco-friendly fumigation methods for all imported wood products;
- Investigate new methods using artificial intelligence to record stand data in forest surveys and inventories in a cost-efficient manner;
- Support the mass propagation of superior planting material through the establishment of clonal plantations for higher productivity and better timber quality;
- Investigate further the institutional, organizational and logistical challenges of smallholder growers with the objective to facilitate teak plantation establishment and management;
- Facilitate capacity building for local community and field workers, particularly in teak management techniques and intercropping of teak with profitable agricultural crops;
- Investigate the opportunities of linking teak plantations with carbon credit markets;
- Commit more resources to research and development to advance the sustainable management of planted teak forests with emphasis, in particular on the quality of teak wood grown in plantations to decide the optimum harvesting cycle; and
- Facilitate and enhance the opportunities for TEAKNET to establish comprehensive networks among teak producers, traders and the wood processing industry.

## Field Excursion

Two optional field excursions were also conducted to Nilambur Teak Museum & Bioresources Nature Park, Connolly's plot exploration and to the picturesque Athirappilly waterfalls on the foothills of Western Ghats on 20 September 2025.


Participants in front of world's first Teak Museum at KFRI sub-centre, Nilambur

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

Visit to Athirappilyy water falls

Delegates at Conolly's plot Nilambur

*Photo credit: @Kerala Forest Research Institute/Teaknet*

The presentations of the conference has been posted in the TEAKNET webpage www.teaknet.org

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## Editorial Committee



*ITTO –BMLEH Teak Newsletter* is a bi-monthly electronic newsletter of the Project Team which is intended for circulation among the 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 concerned with teak. However, we reserves the information on the project and publishing through this newsletter for our esteemed readers.


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