

AHEC launches Indonesian furniture design competition in Jakarta

Indonesia is the latest country in Southeast Asia to benefit from support for design by the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC). The 2009 Indonesian Furniture Design Competition (IFDC) was launched in Jakarta on November 9, to call for entries from designers.

Nurturing design talent throughout Asia has been the aim of AHEC since 1992 by supporting design awards from Japan and Korea to Singapore and Vietnam, albeit with a strong, but not exclusive, emphasis on hardwood. AHEC has continued to extend this long-term support for nurturing design talent, particularly in Southeast Asia, with the latest initiative now in Indonesia.

Indonesian manufacturers have been consistent users of US hardwood particularly

in the flooring and door manufacturing sectors in recent years. "But" says John Chan, AHEC's Director for Southeast Asia "we believe that there is a strong case for increased use of American hardwoods in the furniture sector. We have a highly sustainable growing hardwood resource in a range of species that the world appreciates which can supplement Indonesia's own forest resources and provide more choice to designers."

Indonesia is an important wood processing country with its established industry infrastructure and skills-base and is among the top furniture exporters of the world. This is based partly on competitive cost production and production strengths, so AHEC hopes that through improved

design Indonesia will appreciate some of the performance characteristics and yield benefits of American hardwoods for furniture.

AHEC working closely with such organisations as Asmino, the Indonesian furniture industry association and HDII, the Indonesian Society of Interior Designers, has also supported a series of seminars to improve the understanding of American hardwood species, grading and creative opportunities. Several AHEC technical publications are now available in Bahasa Indonesia and can be ordered online at www.ahec-seasia.org