



Garden Furniture Scorecard: Sustainable Buys Are Widely Available *Retailers and Manufacturers Rated for Forest Stewardship*

Montpelier, VT (May 25, 2010) – The summer heat is coming, and American families are preparing for long warm nights on the patio or in the backyard by purchasing new outdoor furniture. To ensure responsible consumers can keep buying green, National Wildlife Federation has released its fourth annual [garden furniture scorecard](#), a buyer's guide to products that come from well-managed tropical forests.

National Wildlife Federation supports the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification system, which offers the most rigorous system for distinguishing sustainable wood products. FSC-certified wood comes from forest areas that have sustainable management systems in place that protect water, soil and wildlife habitat, as well as community and indigenous peoples' interests.

“The scorecard is a clear and essential guide for people to make earth-friendly furniture purchases for their garden or backyard,” said Stacy Brown, Northeast Forest Climate Manager at National Wildlife Federation. “Retailers and manufacturers are now producing more FSC-certified products than ever, making it easy to buy outdoor furniture that you can feel good about because it reduces tropical deforestation, risks to wildlife, and that won't worsen the global warming crisis.”

Tropical timber, prized for its durability and aesthetic value, is used in the vast majority of garden furniture products available in U.S. stores. However, illegal logging and destructive forest management practices to produce outdoor furniture continue to harm many endangered tropical forests and is a major cause of tropical deforestation. Illegal logging and over-extraction is occurring in at least 70 countries, and accounts for approximately half of all traded timber production in tropical forest nations.

“Every year, tens of millions of acres of tropical forests rapidly disappear around the globe, threatening wildlife dependent on that habitat, displacing human communities, and exacerbating global warming by adding pollution and limiting carbon sequestration,” said Brown. “Ongoing deforestation of tropical forests contributes about 12 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions – equal to that of the total global transport sector.”

To create the scorecard, National Wildlife Federation obtained information from some of the largest U.S. retailers and manufacturers of these products about their wooden garden furniture product lines, including where the wood came from and whether their products are FSC-certified or moving toward FSC certification. Companies received a rating up to five stars based on the percentage of their products that are made from sustainably harvested tropical wood.

This year's rankings include more companies than ever rated at four or five stars, reflecting an expansive variety of green options for garden furniture.

Four companies—[The Home Depot](#), [Pottery Barn](#), [Target](#) and [Jensen Leisure Furniture](#)—have earned **five stars**, having carefully chosen garden furniture products for the 2010 season so that **100 percent** of tropical wood used in products is FSC-certified or involved in a program committed to FSC-certification.

Another nine companies have achieved four stars for having at least 71 percent of their garden furniture offerings made from tropical woods that are FSC-certified or moving toward FSC-certification: [Gardener's Supply Company](#), [Cost Plus World Market](#), [Crate & Barrel](#), [IKEA](#), [Kmart](#), [LL Bean](#), [Lowe's](#), [Sears](#) and [Wal-Mart](#).

“As the Scorecard results this year demonstrate, it has never been easier to support tropical forest conservation and forest-dependent communities when buying garden furniture,” said Corey Brinkema, president of FSC-US. “Selecting FSC-certified garden furniture helps support responsible forest management in parts of the world where forests are particularly vulnerable to illegal and unsustainable logging.”

Transitioning to FSC-certified wood supplies from tropical forests is not a simple overnight effort. However, as the many FSC-certified garden furniture products highlighted in the scorecard demonstrate, it is possible with long-term vision and commitment, collaboration from forest landowners, managers, manufacturers, and retailers, as well as marketplace support.

“FSC-certification helps us share the rich story behind each unique piece of our furniture, and demonstrates that details matter from the forest floor all the way to our customers' backyard patios,” said Max Jensen, CEO of Jensen Leisure Furniture, a manufacturer which has achieved a five star rating in this year's scorecard with all of their collections made using 100 percent pure FSC-certified ipe. “It is vital to consider the long-term well-being of the forests and the people who depend on them.”

“As Americans we buy more wood and paper products than any other country in the world, and are thus given an opportunity to play a significant role in helping to protect forest ecosystems and the wildlife and people who depend on them,” added Brown.

To learn more about the scorecard please visit: <http://www.nwf.org/gardenfurniture>

To locate retailers of various types of FSC-certified wood products, including building materials, paper and furniture visit: <http://www.fscus.org/productsearch/retailers/>.

National Wildlife Federation's mission is to inspire Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. Visit www.nwf.org.

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