



Summer 2007



# Garden Furniture and the Environment

**6 billion acres of tropical rainforests used to cover the globe, about 2.5 billion acres remain today.**

**26 million acres of tropical forests in Asia, Africa and Latin America disappear each year.**

**Every day, we lose an estimated 140 species of rainforest plants and animals.**

*"At the current pace of cutting, natural forests in Indonesia and Burma will be exhausted within a decade... These forests are a bulwark against global warming, capturing carbon dioxide that would otherwise contribute to heating the planet. They hold some of the richest flora and fauna anywhere, and they have supplied generations of people with livelihoods that are now threatened."*

*- "Corruption Stains Timber Trade" by Peter S. Goodman and Peter Finn, The Washington Post, April 1, 2007*

**G**ardens and the outdoor spaces around our homes provide relaxation and a place to reconnect with nature.

We often decorate these spaces with furniture produced from tropical hardwoods specifically created for outdoor use. Unfortunately, if we don't choose our furniture wisely, our backyard enjoyment may accidentally add to the destruction of tropical rainforests around the globe.



Photo: Eyewire/Getty Images

Deforestation of tropical rainforests from illegal and unsustainable logging is one of the biggest threats to global biodiversity and one of the large contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Since the U.S. is one of the largest consumers of outdoor furniture made from tropical wood sources, we have both a responsibility and an opportunity to move to more sustainable sources of tropical wood with our outdoor and garden furniture purchases.

## NWF's Garden Furniture Campaign



Modeled on a similar successful campaign in Europe and building on NWF's backyard wildlife programs for homeowners, NWF has launched a **Garden Furniture Campaign** in the U.S. This campaign is working with garden furniture retailers and manufacturers to help ensure their tropical wood comes from responsible sources. For NWF, responsible tropical wood means that it is

legally harvested and procured and, ideally, has been certified under the globally recognized Forest Stewardship Council system. To learn more about FSC visit [www.fscus.org](http://www.fscus.org).

As part of this campaign, NWF will produce an annual scorecard of performance by retailers and

manufacturers. Look for this handy scorecard when you make garden furniture purchases at [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org). We will offer updates to the scorecard annually – creating an ongoing incentive for companies to shift their garden furniture collections toward well-managed forests and demonstrate progress over time.

## Shopping With A Conscience

Whether it be food, cars, energy, or building products, all over America consumers are beginning to shop with a conscience. Price and quality are always primary concerns, but increasingly the environmental story behind our products makes a difference too. The number of Americans who consider themselves “green consumers” is steadily rising.

There are thousands of companies selling outdoor furniture in the U.S. Many of the largest manufacturers in the global marketplace with its \$3 billion annual sales, are U.S. based companies. Buying garden furniture from responsible sources is a great way to show you care about wildlife, biodiversity, and reversing global warming pollution.

- ▶ To learn more about this campaign contact Stacy Brown at [browns@nwf.org](mailto:browns@nwf.org) or (802) 229-0650
- ▶ To learn about NWF's Wildlife Habitat Programs visit <http://www.nwf.org/gardenforwildlife/>

Choosing FSC-certified garden furniture ensures that forests are managed to protect water, soil, and wildlife habitat in addition to providing wood products.



Photo: Fox-Wilmar Productions

*“Western consumers are leaving a violent ecological footprint in Burma and other countries,” said an American environmental activist who frequently travels to Burma... “Predominantly, the Burmese timber winds up as patio furniture for Americans. Without their demand, there wouldn't be a timber trade.”*  
– *“Corruption Stains Timber Trade” by Peter S. Goodman and Peter Finn, The Washington Post, April 1, 2007*