

MERANTI TIMBER:
THEIR PROPERTIES, USAGE AND TREATMENT

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ABSTRACT

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Malaysia is covered with many type of green forest. They are Diptrocarpus, Coastal Swamp and Mangrove Forest. They all can produce much type of commercial timbers, herbs and flora and fauna which are very useful and beneficial to human and also to environment. Here, I would like to explain briefly about the Meranti timbers. Actually, Meranti timber consists of five groups. One of them is Meranti Bakau which can found at the coastal swamp forest. The characteristic of the Maranti Bakau timbers is similar which another type group of Meranti at the Dipterocarpus forest.

At the Diptrocarpus forest we can find white, yellow, dark red and light dark red Meranti groups. They have similarly characteristic but can be differentiated through their colour and density. Generally, Meranti timber is classed in light hardwood which are relatively must be treated them to increase their strength and prevent from fungi and termites attack. Here, preservative can be divided into two categorized. They are oil and oil-borne preservative and water-borne preservative. Every of them have their own characteristic, advantages and disadvantages.

The treatment also is divided into two protections. They are protection by chemical and protection without chemical. Under protection without chemical, the users have no need to use preservative. Just protect the timber manually such as controlling timber's moisture content and so on. The second type is by applying with the chemical. The users can choose either of the two types of treatment, pressure treatment and non-pressure treatment. Non-pressure treatment, the users can apply preservation by brushing, or spraying, deluding and other methods. Pressure treatment is very popular in Malaysia and widely used by the wood treatment factories because this method can save our time and budget in timber production.

More important, the preservative is very dangerous for human especially who involve direct and indirectly in this treatment process. There are 3 ways these chemicals can enter the body through inhaling, swallowing and contact with the skin. However, some ways can be applied and followed by the human such as using and wearing the safety equipments. The example safety equipment such as safety suit & apron for body, PVC gloves for hands, shoes or boots for feet. Besides that, to safe our eyes and nose and mouth, we also can use goggles, light respirator and mouth mask respectively.