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FRIM to work with UK lab on Euro standard

KUALA LUMPUR: In a move to boost the export of Malaysian timber and construction products to Europe, the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) is working with the United Kingdom's Trada Technology Ltd (TTL) as an approved testing laboratory.

Frim and TTL, a construction products testing arm of the BM Trada Group, inked the agreement last Monday at the BM Trada Group head office in Buckinghamshire, UK, said Frim in a statement here yesterday.

Frim was represented by director-general Datuk Dr Abdul Latiff Mahmood, and TTL, by director Andrew Abbott.

Under the agreement, which is for CE Marking and Q-Mark schemes – a declaration that the product complies with the essential requirements of European countries – TTL will look at two areas.

They are, wood durability by the Frim Wood Mycology Lab-

oratory, in accordance with EN350, and the strength testing of structural timber by the Timber Engineering Laboratory.

In the statement, Abdul Latif said the durability of wood used in plywood production would have to be tested, in accordance with EN350 to ensure that Malaysian durability rating would not be downgraded.

"This will be a big slap to our higher quality plywood exported to the European Union (if Malaysian durability rating is downgraded). Similarly, sawn timber for construction without CE mark for the same market will be downgraded if not tested against similar technical requirements stipulated for the CE marking.

"This will affect our sales to EU (European Union), which is one of our major markets," he said.

He said, in efforts to boost export of higher value-added wood-based products, in line with a target set by the National

Timber Industries Policy and help the country attain higher economic states by 2020, Frim was exploring various means to contribute actively towards the achievement of those objectives.

"One of the effective ways to push the Malaysian products up the value chain is to comply with international or regional standards for relevant products, although compliance with many of such requirements may be challenging, both in terms of technicalities and cost."

At the function, Abdul Latif also signed an extension agreement between Frim and another BM Trada Group subsidiary for furniture testing services accredited by the Furniture Industry Research Association.

The collaboration established since 1995 has enabled local manufacturers to test their products at Frim and obtain an internationally-recognised certificate. - Bernama