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KUALA LUMPUR: The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (Frim) has found a chemical-free technology to treat wood, which is via a high temperature drying (HTD) system.

Its director-general Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod said Frim secured the patent for the system from the United States Patent and Trademarks Office (USPTO) last March and had filed the patent in Malaysia and six other countries, namely Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, China and India.

He said the new technology could resolve the dilemma faced by the wood industry in the country, particularly rubberwood-based furniture manufacturers who were required to abide by stringent trade conditions to use environmental-friendly products.

"This HTD system which can also treat other wood species, will potentially make Malaysia, among the first countries in the world to offer treated wood that are safe and environmental-friendly," he said in a statement yesterday.

He said more than 80 per cent of Malaysia's exported furniture were of rubberwood, which was also used by almost half of the furniture industry in Asia. - Bernama