



Woodfab Timber Ltd.

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Company Activities

Woodfab Timber Ltd. was formed in 1998, producing high quality timber products for the home and export markets. The company has always been conscious of the importance of environmental issues in the successful operation of its business.

Environmentally Superior Timber Fencing Products

Environmentally superior timber products include all those timber products that are produced with minimal, or at least less environmental impact than other products of similar function. This concept is generally accepted to be third party verifiable through the use of eco labels. Eco-labels are developed on a national or communal (EU, USA etc...) basis. A range of eco-labels are currently in existence across Europe. Within the EC eco-labelling scheme, there is currently no label for timber products e.g. timber fencing. This project assessed the environmental impact of road side timber fencing

and identified the basic specification for an EU eco-label for timber fencing.

Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) was used to assess the environmental impact of timber fencing. LCA is an assessment tool that allows the environmental impact of products be weighted, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The LCA pinpoints those stages of the product life-cycle that produce the greatest environmental impact. The information obtained in the LCA may be used to determine whether the product meets an eco-label specification.



The LCA for timber fencing in line with specification RC25 (Specification for Timber Post and Rail Fencing, Rev 3, Forbairt, Ireland) has been undertaken in this study, and was found to be most environmentally potent at the production/processing stages, the milling equipment and kiln using the greatest amount of energy/pollution per tonne of product produced in

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one year. The use of preservative also impacts on the environment through toxic effects, both during and after it's useful life.

The purpose of the study was to identify the basic framework for an EU Eco label for timber fencing to RC25 through the establishment of a preliminary LCA for such. This would serve as a basis for discussion and as an example for demonstrating the timescale and complexities of LCA for Irish timber. The study revealed an increasing EU market for eco-labelled timber products. The availability of an EU eco-label in this area and accreditation to same are a significant market advantage for Irish timber products sold to the home and export EU markets.

The company benefited greatly from the study as a result of examining the environmental impact of it's own processes, from cutting the timber in the forests to transporting it to the customer. It concluded that it is reasonable and logical for the eco labelling of timber products in Ireland to follow the EU eco label approach. There are after all no EU eco labels for timber products within Europe. Through the adoption of an EU eco label for fencing products, Ireland will have set the benchmark for that eco certified product group.

