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Timber Packaging and Pallet Confederation (TIMCON)



Press Release

TIMCON comments on Kronospan biomass protest

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The Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON) says Friday's day of action by workers at the Kronospan wooden panel factory in Wrexham may be the first of many actions to highlight to the government the severe threat to British manufacturing from heavy subsidies for biomass.

TIMCON President John Dye said: "TIMCON is very much in favour of biomass fuels. However, large subsidies for this area are diverting supplies away from existing British manufacturing, of products such as timber pallets and packaging.

"As demand begins to outstrip supply, prices of raw materials - and therefore the price of finished products - will rise dramatically. This even could end up encouraging the use of environmentally unsound alternatives, such as plastics.

"Our products are made from timber grown in managed forests. As the raw material grows, it stores carbon dioxide from the atmosphere that won't be released until the end of the timber's useful life. As these subsidies make it more attractive to burn wood at the beginning, rather than the end, of this lifecycle, they make little sense from an environmental point of view."

TIMCON is lobbying in the UK to make politicians aware of this threat and working with its counterparts in Europe.

"We welcome studies on the serious UK biomass situation and we want UK politicians to take account of continuity of supply to our industry and to maximise environmental benefits of the cascade model, which currently means as much available timber as possible is used," said Mr Dye.

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"The pallet and packaging industry alone is a hugely important British business, employing 8,000 people directly and a further 30,000 indirectly.

"The government needs to understand the huge importance of wood-based British industries – in terms of jobs and benefit to the environment. Heavy subsidies for renewable energy have huge implications for both."