

PRESS RELEASE

WHY WE NEED TO CHOP DOWN TREES TO SAVE THE WORLD FROM CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

BRUSSELS, 25 June 2024 - A new book, 'Timber! How wood can help save the world from climate breakdown' is set to cause controversy in the conservative world of construction and in the more traditionally-minded elements of the environmental movement. Timber! will be published on Thursday 27 June 2024.

Book synopsis

The carbon emissions generated by concrete and steel construction are well-known. Why then are we not using more carbon-friendly building materials? In a passionate and compelling argument author Paul Brannen advocates the use of timber in buildings wherever possible. His controversial and counterintuitive argument is clear: **planting trees is not enough to reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere, we also must chop them down and use more wood in our buildings.** The felling of trees is of course followed by new sapling planting so that the whole sustainable process can begin again i.e. no deforestation should occur.

This is the first book to take timber from the margins to the mainstream, from the forests to the cities. It tackles head-on questions about sustainability, safety, the biodiversity of commercial forests and the pressures on land use. The case for timber as a construction material is persuasively made – the creation of new engineered timbers with the structural strength of steel and concrete enable us for the first time to build wooden skyscrapers – and draws on the latest developments in engineering and material science. In addition to the familiar forestry models, the book advocates alternatives such as wood farming and agroforestry that bring with them added biodiversity gains for farms.

With the built environment currently responsible for 40 per cent of the world's carbon emissions, Brannen's message is unequivocal: we must change how we build. *Timber!* offers fresh and inventive ideas that over time could see our expanding cities storing more carbon than our expanding forests.

Reviews

Helen Browning, Chief Executive, Soil Association

"Timber! should be read by all those in planning, housing policy, construction and agriculture, and many more besides. Paul Brannen does a fabulous job of showing how feasible and beneficial it would be if we not only sequestered carbon through growing trees, but then locked it up in our buildings and insulation for many decades to come. With innovations like agroforestry on the one hand, and glulam on the other, it's easily within our grasp to grow and use more wood, with multiple benefits for society, not least to more rapidly solve our housing shortage through modular timber-based buildings."

Shaun Spiers, Executive Director, Green Alliance

"Timber! is a passionate and thought-provoking manifesto for the much bigger role wood and forestry could play in tackling the climate crisis and improving the built environment. It packs in a good deal of fact and analysis, as well as some controversial opinions, but always in an engaging way. I may never be as evangelical about timber as Paul Brannen, but I am now much better informed."

Lloyd Alter, architect & author of *The Story of Upfront Carbon*

“How good is wood? Paul Brannen's engaging and accessible book explains how building materials that are grown instead of mined can change buildings from being a climate problem to part of the solution.”

Accolades

Timber! How wood can help save the world from climate breakdown was awarded ‘Book of the Week’ by Scotland’s architecture bookshop 10-17 June 2024.

Launch of *Timber!*

Timber! will be launched in London at 4.45pm Wednesday 26 June at the UK Timber Design Conference venue Hamilton House, Mabledone Place, WC1H 9BD <https://timberdevelopment.uk/uk-timber-design-conference/>

About the author

Paul Brannen is Director of Public Affairs for the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois) and the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS). He also works for Timber Development UK (TDUK). As a former Member of the European Parliament he worked on climate change legislation and during this period he became increasingly aware of the potential role for wood in decarbonising the built environment.

Publisher

Timber! How wood can help save the world from climate breakdown will be published by Agenda Publishing on Thursday 27 June 2024.

<https://www.agendapub.com/page/detail/timber/?k=9781788217354>

For further information

Paul Brannen (Director of Public Affairs): paul.brannen@cei-bois.org - +44 787 856 5406