

# HÄRING TIMBER: BRINGING TIMBER CONSTRUCTION SYSTEMS TO SINGAPORE AND BEYOND

Mass engineered timber is an up and coming building material due to its environmentally sustainable advantage, among other qualities. However, in certain regions where softwoods do not grow, such as in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, wood buildings are not expected to take off any time soon. Lack of production, difficulty in transportation and high costs are some of the reasons commonly cited by the industry.

It is therefore quite surprising to see Haring timber, one of the most experienced timber construction system manufacturers in Switzerland and the largest glulam producer in Asia, exhibiting for the first time at the upcoming BEX ASIA 2019.

WIA speaks to Chris H. Haring, President of the Haring Group.



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Established 140 years ago, the Haring Group is a fifth generation private-owned leader in innovative timber construction systems based in Switzerland. One of the pioneers in glulam manufacturing, Haring timber has developed a complete system with all their know-hows in the production of glulam structures – from engineering to construction.

The company specialises in ENSPHERE® dome structures, bionic freeform structures, curved structures, earthquake proof midrise multi-storey tower structures, as well as in timber element construction and modular systems. The quality is expectedly Swiss standard.



Large wooden temple project in Hangzhou, China

### PRODUCTION FACILITY IN TIANJIN, CHINA

The company truly believes in the immense potential of timber as a building material of the future. It is therefore not surprising that Häring Timber already has a presence in the Chinese market as early as 2003. “After professional collaboration with a Chinese entrepreneur in 2003, we decided to set up a Chinese Swiss joint venture that is successfully emerging in Asia’s growing market. China is the biggest market, but other operations have been realised in South Korea as well as in the Kingdom of Bhutan,” shared Häring.

Häring Swiss Wood Structures, the production facility based in Tianjin, China, produces structural demanding glulam elements and is one of the largest production lines in Asia. “Production capacity and layout allow for glulam dimensions of 26cm by 220 cm and more than 35 metres in length. The

limit is given by road conditions, job site access or transport regulations,” added Häring.

Since its entrance into the Chinese and Asia market, Häring Timber has provided its products to XX projects. Recent high-profile projects include large temples in Hangzhou, strategic defence structures for the Chinese army in Suzhou and South Korea and specially designed timber structures in the Kingdom of Bhutan.



Häring Swiss Wood Structures, the production facility based in Tianjin, China

**OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PLANTATIONS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA**

“We recognise and welcome the strategy and the efforts of Singapore, as Southeast Asia’s leading innovation hub, to implement sustainable structures with wood. Our strategy is to support architects, engineers, construction companies and project developers in demanding project design, and to support the use of regionally sourced timber, which, for example, can be sourced from sustainably managed fast-growing plantations in Southeast Asia,” said Häring.

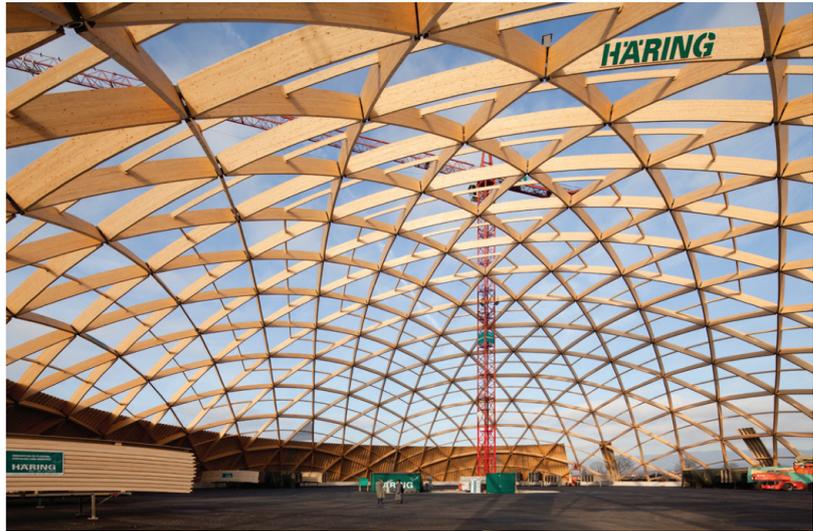
Besides, Häring has plans for the Southeast Asian region. Understanding that shipping large structural timber elements from west to east is not a sustainable activity in the long run, Häring thinks that the regional tree plantations ought to be more utilised.

“It is our conviction that renewable resources should be used in their area of growth. The tropical climate has a huge advantage. Tree growth is much faster in the tropics than in the temperate European climate,” Häring stated.

“With our long history and yearlong practical experience, we aim to support translational R&D activities, engineering design and production technologies.”

Even given the common perception that the warm and humid weather in SEA as well as higher costs compared to other highly popular building materials such as concrete may render wood as a less preferred choice, Häring remains optimistic. Singapore will be his first stop in his venture into the region.

“There is no doubt that cost efficiency with timber structures will soon be implanted in Southeast Asia and we recognise the efforts of Singapore’s ongoing



Saldome, Rheinfelden (Switzerland)



Sales Centre Ulsan (South-Korea)

construction transformation towards increased productivity and sustainability. Wood is a renewable resource on any continent and the western world does not need to export natural based products with exported western production cost.

Southeast Asia has sustainably managed forests with promising resources. For us, it is fair enough to contribute with technology transfer,” said Häring. | WIA

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