

Polder frames save tropical forest

You don't need to cut down tropical forest to make window frames. Now there are 'polder frames' on the market, thanks in part to WUR.

As the 'polder' label suggests, the wood comes from the Flevopolder — from a WUR trial field, to be precise. The window frame is the tangible result of a successful EU project to develop a sustainable alternative to tropical hardwood frames. WUR selected the wood type (maple) and assessed its availability.

Researcher Ute Sass-Klaassen (Forest Ecology & Forest Management) is enthusiastic. 'Wood is a fantas-

'Wood is a fantastic renewable resource'

tic renewable resource. If you harvest wood from sustainably managed forests, it is a CO₂-neutral con-

struction material. Wood is incredibly important for the bio-economy.' The wood is treated with acetic anhydride to protect it against mould and warping. The polder frame is modular. The treated maple wood is only used for the outer part, which needs to withstand the weather. The inner part is pine. The two parts click together in a simple fashion.

The new window frames are already in use on campus: the education building Aurora has them.

Sass-Klaassen: 'But unfortunately not with the sustainable maple. The architect and WUR did not want to go for that, so they chose aluminium for the exterior. A missed opportunity.' RK