

Congotali

Family. Sapotaceae

Botanical Name(s).

Letestua durissima

Continent. Africa

CITES. This species is not listed in the CITES Appendices (Washington Convention 2023).

Description of logs

Diameter. From 70 to 90 cm

Thickness of sapwood. From 5 to 8 cm

Floats. No

Log durability. Good

Description of wood

Colour reference. Red brown

Sapwood. Clearly demarcated

Texture. Fine

Grain. Interlocked

Interlocked grain. Marked

Notes. Possible presence of wind shakes.



Quarter sawn

Flat sawn



Physics and mechanics

The properties indicated are for mature wood. These properties may vary significantly depending on the origin and growing conditions of the wood.

Property	Average value
Specific gravity ¹	1.10
Monnin hardness ¹	15.1
Coefficient of volumetric shrinkage	0.73 % per %
Total tangential shrinkage (St)	10.8 %
Total radial shrinkage (Sr)	7.8 %
Ratio St/Sr	1.4
Fibre saturation point	23 %
Thermal conductivity (λ)	0.35 W/(m.K)
Lower heating value	20,160 kJ/kg
Crushing strength ¹	92 MPa
Static bending strength ¹	190 MPa
Modulus of elasticity ¹	26,700 MPa

¹ At 12 % moisture content, with 1 MPa = 1 N/mm

Natural durability and preservation

Resistance to fungi. Class 1 - very durable

Resistance to dry wood borers. Class D - durable (sapwood demarcated, risk limited to sapwood)

Resistance to termites. Class D - durable

Treatability. Class 4 - not permeable

Use class ensured by natural durability.

Class 4 - in ground or fresh water contact

Notes. This species is listed in the European standard NF EN 350 (2016). This species naturally covers the use class 5 (wood permanently or regularly submerged in salt water, sea water or brackish water) due to its high specific gravity, its hardness and a high silica content. According to the European standard NF EN 335 (2013), performance length might be modified by the intensity of end-use exposition.

Requirement of a preservative treatment

Against dry wood borer. Does not require any preservative treatment

In case of temporary humidification. Does not require any preservative treatment

In case of permanent humidification. Does not require any preservative treatment

Drying

Drying rate. Slow

Risk of distorsion. High risk

Risk of casehardening. No known specific risk

Risk of checking. High risk

Risk of collapse. No known specific risk

Notes.

Suggested drying program.

Phases	Duration (H)	MC (%) probes	T (°C)	Rh (%)	UGL (%)
Prewarm 1		> 50	40	86	17.0
Prewarm 2	4	> 50	43	85	16.5
Drying		> 50	45	83	15.7
		50 - 40	45	80.0	14.6
		40 - 35	45	77.0	13.8
		35 - 30	45	74.0	12.9
		30 - 27	47	69.0	11.5
		27 - 24	49	61.0	9.9
		24 - 21	50	52.0	8.4
		21 - 18	53	48.0	7.7
		18 - 15	56	41.0	6.6
		15 - 12	59	36.0	5.9
		12 - 9	61	30.0	5.0
		9 - 6	65	29.0	4.7
Conditioning	8		58	(3)	(2)
Cooling	(1)		Stop	(3)	(2)

(1)) Cooling: until the temperature inside the kiln no longer exceeds external temperature by more than 30 °C.

(2) UGL = final H% x 0,8 to 0,9.

(3) Subtract RH from the UGL determined in (2) and temperature, using the Hailwood-Horrobin equation.

Sawing and machining

Blunting effect. High

Sawteeth recommended. Stellite-tipped

Cutting tools. Tungsten carbide

Peeling. Not recommended or without interest

Slicing. Not recommended or without interest

Notes. Must be sawn with the highest moisture content possible.

Assembling

Nailing and screwing. Good but pre-boring necessary

Notes. Very high specific gravity: gluing must be especially performed in compliance with the code of practice.

Commercial grading

Appearance grading for sawn timbers.

According to the ATIBT grading rules (2017), the main choices are: FAS (First And Second), n°1 Common and select, n°2 Common (see details of these rules on the ATIBT website).

Visual grading for structural applications

No visual grading for structural applications

Fire safety

Conventional French grading.

Thickness > 14 mm: M3 (moderately inflammable)

Thickness < 14 mm: M4 (easily inflammable)

Euroclasses grading. D-s2, d0

Default grading for solid wood, according to requirements of European standard EN 14081-1+A1 (August 2019). It concerns structural graded timber in vertical uses and ceiling with mean density upper 0.35 and thickness upper 22 mm.

End-uses

- Bridges (parts in contact with water or ground)
- Bridges (parts not in contact with water or ground)
- Decking
- Heavy carpentry
- Hydraulic works (fresh water)
- Industrial or heavy flooring
- Sleepers
- Vehicle or container flooring

Notes. Can be used as substitute for EKKI (*Lophira alata*).

Main local names

Country	Local name
Congo	Congotali
Gabon	Kong-afane