

## *Plastics and Durable Wood Products: Impact Climate*

1. Plastics are made from petroleum – a limited, **nonrenewable resource**. Petroleum is a leading source of greenhouse gases that cause global warming.
2. In 1987, the U.S. used almost 1 billion barrels of oil, just to make plastic.
3. In contrast to plastics, North-American Hardwoods are **renewable resources**. Furniture from sustainably managed forests can be replenished by regenerating forests, providing a dependable supply of both trees and wood products while providing other ecosystem services, such as clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat and recreation. Specifically, wood products can significantly reduce greenhouse gases and **address climate change**.

**Burned as fuel displacing fossil intensive fuels:** At the end of a wood products life it can be recycled for a second life, burned as a fuel displacing fossil intensive fuels, or landfilled, extending the storage for decades until decomposed. When wood products or biofuels displace fossil intensive products or fuels, a permanent reduction in fossil carbon emissions occurs, equally as important to mitigating climate change as storing carbon from the atmosphere in the forest.

**Storing carbon in furniture:** hardwood furniture acts as a carbon sink that can help mitigate climate change. In contrast to plastic laminates, which are made from petroleum sources that emit greenhouse gases, harvested hardwoods serve as reservoirs of carbon that are not immediately released to the atmosphere when harvested. The amount of carbon sequestered in products depends on how much wood is harvested and removed from the forest, what the products are harvested for, and the half-life of wood in the products.

“Because wood can substitute for other, more fossil fuel-intensive products, the reductions in carbon emissions to the atmosphere are comparatively larger than even the benefits of carbon storage. Research both in the U.S. and internationally (Borjesson and Gustavsson 1999; and Valsta et al. 2008) has suggested that this effect – the displacement of fossil sources – could make wood products the most important carbon pool of all. (Malmsheimer, 2008)”



“A well-managed tree farm acts like a factory for sucking CO<sub>2</sub> out of the atmosphere, so the most climate-friendly policy is to continually cut down trees and plant new ones... Plant seedlings and harvest them as soon as their powers of carbon sequestration begin to flag, and use the wood to produce only high-quality durable goods like furniture and houses.”

Farm the Forests – Wired - June 2008

## *HARDWOODS FROM CERTIFIED FORESTS*

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Furniture that makes sense