

Criterion Africa Partners Successfully Exits Global Woods to Strategic Buyer



Bethesda, Dec 6, 2020 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Criterion Africa Partners Successfully Exits Global Woods to Strategic Buyer

Criterion Africa Partners, Inc. (“CAP”), a private equity firm investing in the forestry sector in Sub-Saharan Africa, has announced that its portfolio company Global Woods AG (“GW”) has completed the sale of its Uganda timber plantation to Nile Fibreboard Ltd. (“NFB”), a local strategic buyer.

Global Woods established the 8,500-hectare pine and eucalyptus plantation in 2002 in the Kikonda Forest Reserve near Hoima. The plantation is now one of the premier forestry estates in East Africa. When it reaches full maturity, it will produce over 200,000 m³/year of pine sawlogs and eucalyptus poles for local and regional markets. Furthermore, its 8,500 hectares of plantations will have sequestered over 2.5 million tons CO₂, playing an important role in global climate change mitigation.

CAP’s investment in 2015 financed the establishment of the last 3,000 hectares of plantation and supported the ongoing operation of a company which created hundreds of local jobs. In addition to providing strategic and technical support to the company, CAP also brought a renewed focus on worker health and safety as GW transitioned from tree planting to harvesting and industrial operations.

Global Woods has been certified since 2012 by the Forest Stewardship Council (“FSC”) as meeting high standards of environmental, social, and economic sustainability. The company has made extensive investments in community development in the surrounding villages, positively impacting thousands of local families through agricultural extension work, job training, village savings programs, boreholes, and support of local schools.

GW has prioritized gender development, training and promoting qualified women and striving for safe and equal working conditions for all employees. In the past two years, GW’s most senior manager in Uganda was a woman, Ms. Enver Mapanda.

Global Woods has played a leadership role in the development of the Uganda forestry sector and served as a training site for many of the hundreds of smallholders who have established their own plantations across Uganda in the past decade.

“The sale of Global Woods’ plantations to Nile Fibreboard represents a successful outcome for all stakeholders involved,” said Jim Heyes, CAP’s Managing Director responsible for East Africa. “CAP is pleased to be handing the reins to a family-owned local company. With their existing wood manufacturing facilities and market channels, Nile Fibreboard is well-positioned to operate the plantations sustainably for decades to come.” NFB will continue to employ GW’s staff and contractors and will maintain the plantation’s FSC certification.

In addition to the positive climate and economic development impacts of its investments in Global Woods, the proceeds of the GW sale have secured an attractive risk-adjusted return for CAP’s investors in the Africa Sustainable Forestry Fund and the Africa Forestry Fund II Limited.

About:

Criterion Africa Partners is an independently owned private equity firm investing in the forestry value chain in sub-Saharan Africa. The firm advises two funds with assets of \$275 million on behalf of prominent European Developmental Finance Institutions and Multilateral Development Banks.

Nile Fibreboard Limited, a family-run enterprise based in Luwero, Uganda, is the regional leader in timber value addition. It is part of a group of companies that manages over 20,000 hectares of planted forests in East Africa.

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