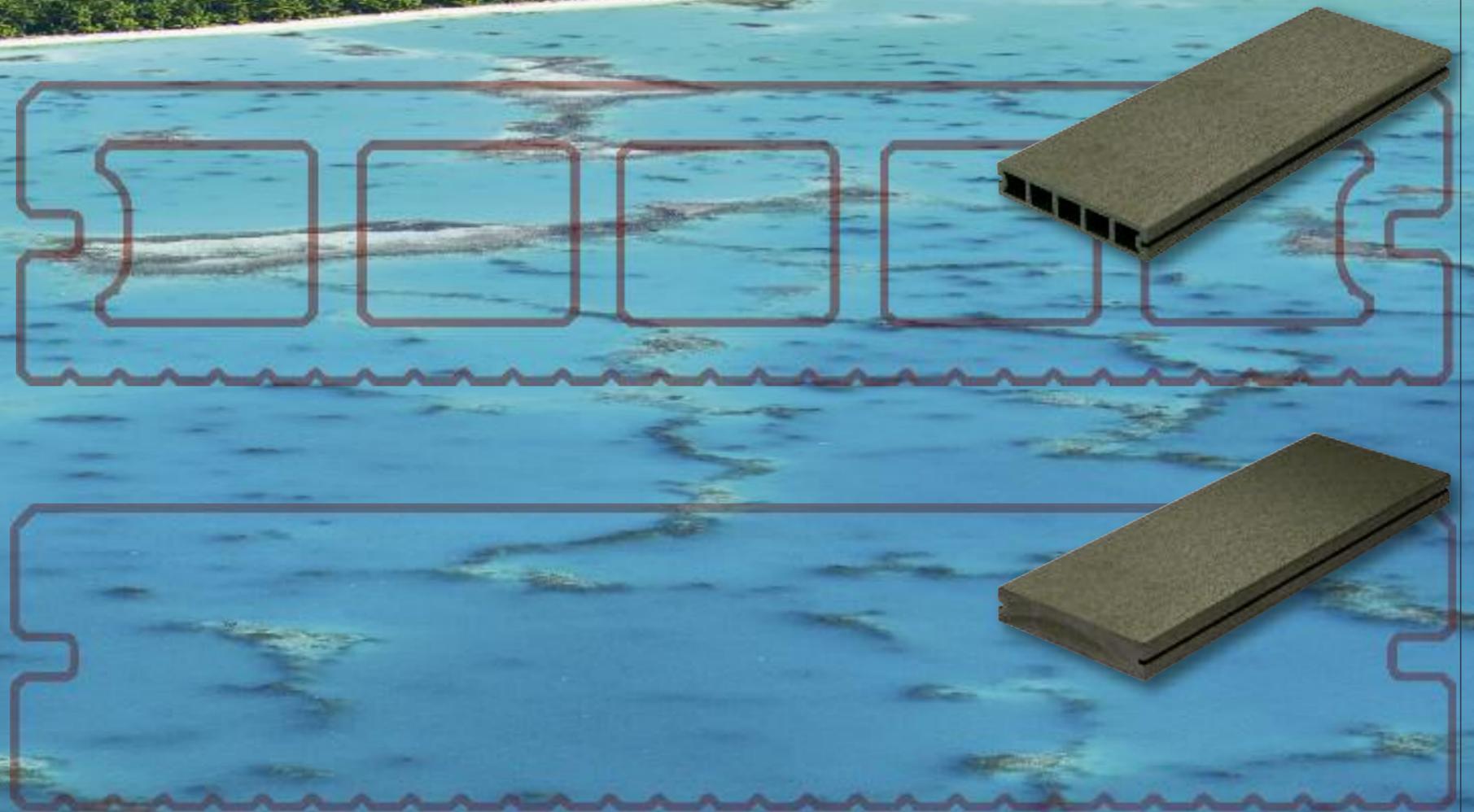


Luxury eco-hotel "The Brando" sets the benchmark for sustainable development

Geolam / Pacific Beachcomber Press Release



The innovative resort hotel 'The Brando' – along with a biodiversity research centre



The innovative resort hotel 'The Brando' – along with a biodiversity research centre – is currently under construction on the Pacific atoll of Tetiaroa, just under 40 miles off the coast of Tahiti. Both the residential complex and the 'ecostation' are designed to meet stringent LEED Platinum criteria for sustainable development and, in particular, will utilise renewable energy and seawater air conditioning (SWAC) technologies to achieve a carbon neutral footprint for the site. President of the Pacific Beachcomber luxury hotel group, Richard Bailey, has appointed wood composite manufacturer Geolam as a partner in this pioneering construction project. Geolam has been chosen not only for its technological superiority, but more importantly because of its environmentally friendly qualities.

LEED Platinum certification

"We deliberately set out to comply with the strictest environmental regulations, with every piece of equipment and construction material LEED certified in order to obtain the most exacting of environmentally friendly qualifications: LEED Platinum certification", commented Richard Bailey. This prestigious American label is comparable to the French HQE, or "High Environmental Quality" certification. Leadership in Energy and Environment Design, or LEED, is a benchmark standard for many similar certifications worldwide, Platinum being the highest achievable level. LEED qualification testifies to energy efficiency, sustainable management of water resources, environmentally friendly waste disposal, and the use of locally-sourced, low-carbon and low 'grey energy' materials, such as composite wood. The project will be the first campus resort in the world to achieve LEED Platinum rating in the 'New Construction' category.

To obtain this certification for 'The Brando', and achieve a 100% environmentally friendly operation, Richard Bailey explains that all services and suppliers have been chosen according to extremely tough criteria: *"We have decided to enter into a partnership with Geolam to build 6,000 square metres of pontoons and walkways. We are also looking at the possibility of installing privacy fencing and screens throughout the site."*



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When he bought the Tetiaroa atoll, Marlon Brando set about implementing his forward-thinking vision to protect and develop the site's unique and extraordinary biodiversity. His curiosity and his ideas, born out of a wealth of personal experience, are embodied in the joint approach developed together with Richard Bailey between 1999 and 2004. Richard Bailey has since carried the research forward, and found new solutions along the way in the face of numerous challenges. The current project is the natural extension of this approach, focused on sustainable development.

'The Brando' is designed to attract the kind of clientele looking for a unique experience on this private island. Visitors will enjoy high-end luxury accommodation, without threatening environmental protection in any way. There are two main requirements to ensure this goal is achieved. Firstly, 100% energy independence with the use of solar energy and the bio-fuel extracted from coconuts, copra oil. Secondly, achieving a carbon-neutral energy footprint.

In parallel, a project closely integrated into the resort development combines scientific research with a sustainable development initiative for the site, that encourages visitors to learn about the archaeological and cultural heritage of Tetiaroa and its biodiversity. An essential part of the job of preserving the islands' cultural treasures is to make visitors to the island and its Polynesian residents aware of them, as well as to publish the results of research and information unearthed by research teams working there.



Eco Mark label



Guaranteed free of glue, chlorine and formaldehyde



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6,000m² of pontoons, decking and walkways on the Island of Tetiaroa



Qualita:
2nd generation hollow profil



Bounty :
3th generation foamed



Mano :
3th generation + foamed

Geolam – superior eco-friendly qualities

Although the environment of the atoll is incredibly beautiful, the salt in the atmosphere and relentless sunshine puts all building materials used under intense stress. The dependability of Geolam's mechanical properties, and the hard-wearing, slip-resistant character of the composite wood boards have, of course, been taken into account in the choices made by Richard Bailey's team. *"Ultimately though,"* insists the group's Managing Director, *"it was environmentally friendly criteria that were the decisive factors in our final choice."*

When Geolam's performance was compared with natural hardwoods, it was found to have the lowest carbon footprint, in particular because it does not involve the destruction of equatorial forests, but above all because it consists of a minimum of 90% recycled materials. Finally, unlike natural wood, Geolam requires no annual treatment and has a lower slip coefficient than natural materials. It was these considerations that led to Geolam being awarded the prestigious Japanese Eco Mark; reflecting the totally benign nature of this material for both indoor and outdoor applications.

Preserving biodiversity

Until now, pontoons, walkways and decking for Polynesian hotels have been built using Kohu, a tropical hardwood also known as Merbau. Following an in-depth analysis, Pacific Beachcomber announced that it has made a decision in favour of Geolam composite wood. *"By taking this decisive step off the beaten track,"* commented Richard Bailey, *"we know that we are helping preserve local biodiversity and natural resources"*.

"The ever higher cost of Merbau, and the annual maintenance it requires using products that are harmful to the environment, have contributed to this decision to use Geolam rather than solutions based on natural wood", added Pascal Lombard, Project Director for 'The Brando'.

Last but not least, a key aspect to Pacific Beachcomber's decision to choose Geolam composite wood is the aesthetic quality of the boards. Their natural, matt finish closely resembles natural wood, both to look at and to touch, and this was a decisive point in their favour.



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Geolam to partner Pacific Beachcomber

Geolam alveolar boards from the company's Bounty range, in the 'Moleskin' colour, have been chosen by the prime contractor on 'The Brando'. These will be used in the construction of some 6,000m² of pontoons, decking and walkways on the Island of Tetiaroa. This new partnership agreement is set to open up new horizons for the Geolam range. *"The technical and aesthetic requirements dictated by this site have led us to develop a new, so-called 'third-generation' type of extruded foam board in the range,"* explains Manuel Garcia, Managing Director of Geolam. *"We have called the new board, manufactured in Japan under licence using Einwood® technology, Bounty. It has very specific characteristics: broader scope for bearing heavy loads, and a very low humidity uptake. It is extremely strong, and lightweight, which makes it ideal for decking and finishing. It is the highest specification product in our professional range of boards, and is the ultimate benchmark for this type of product."*

Bounty boards, in 30 x 145 mm sections, can be worked and installed just like natural wood. Their flush-planed surface can be installed to give a smooth finish, or the classical grooved surface can be used in tandem with Qualita. As the finish and the cross-section are identical, this creates a stunning visual effect and yields a perfect finish every time.

Geolam's impressive superiority

Forty years' research and development in the field in Japan explain why, today, Geolam is the world leader in the wood composite materials sector. With equal care and attention paid to the technological performance and the environmentally friendly qualities of its products, the brand has effectively set its sights extremely high. So it is easy to understand the ground-breaking choice made by Richard Bailey's team to use this product in equipping the exceptional 'The Brando' resort. This decision could be the first sign of a sea change in the construction sector, as another international hotel group has already approached Geolam to help renovate several of its Spa hotels.

Geolam is not content simply to set the benchmark for environmentally friendly products. The technological qualities of its products are impressive, and more often than not, superior to natural wood. The durability of Geolam composite wood is borne out by installations that have already been in place for many years, often in latitudes and under conditions similar to those of the Tetiaroa atoll. The mechanical resistance of these constructions is now clearly proven, as is their user safety record: with an R12 rating for slip resistance under the DIN 51130 standard, which represents an extremely low risk of slipping that makes it especially suitable for publicly-accessible outdoor applications.