

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**SUGI: Japan's "Hidden Treasure" is The Next Major Material Trend in Eco-Chic, Luxury Furniture Design**

**NEW YORK and TOKYO-May 2008:** Sugi wood is quickly emerging as the next key material trend in furniture design. Its durability and sustainability, combined with its embracing warmth and luxurious feel have made it a favorite design material for many of the design world's elite influencers. Japanese atelier, Hida Sangyo, is on a mission to expand the visibility of Sugi beyond Japan to the rest of the world, through its beautifully designed, eco-chic and sustainable furniture collection, which uses Sugi in a unique and revolutionary way.

Sugi, which is called *cryptomeria japonica* by botanists, is one of Japan's most precious hidden resources. While hidden to the rest of the world, amongst the Japanese people, Sugi is a familiar textile that has been used for centuries to build statuesque Japanese structures. According to tradition, Sugi was often farmed near Buddhist Temples and Shinto Shrines for use in building and maintaining the Temple and Shrine structures. Sugi therefore has a long spiritual and historical connection to the Japanese.

After the Second World War, Sugi was planted throughout Japan to aid in the country's reconstruction. However, it took more than 50 years for the Sugi forests to mature to the point where they could be useful. Unfortunately Sugi is now rarely used in construction, so today the Sugi forests, which comprise 13 percent of Japan's land mass are an essentially untouched and untapped natural resource. However they must be farmed and used in order to protect Japan's environment. If left untouched, the forests will ultimately damage the local eco-system, which in turn will have negative consequences on the environment at large.

To encourage more widespread use of Sugi, and to call attention to the environmental issues at stake by not using the material, Hida Sangyo and internationally renowned industrial designer Enzo Mari, have joined together to create an entire furniture collection made from Sugi.

But in order to make Sugi an appropriate material for furniture, Hida Sangyo had to develop and incorporate a unique and innovative compression technology into the production process in order to increase its durability.

The result is a breathtaking and stunning furniture collection that features the most soft and gentle feeling wood imaginable. After all, Sugi is not just durable and sustainable, but also warm, soft, and supple to the touch, almost plush feeling. As such, it has proven to be the perfect material for creating rich home and office furnishings.

Sugi is already receiving recognition and is a favorite of influential style and design icons. In fact, well-known, minimalist designer John Pawson has expressed interest in Sugi himself and is very impressed with the quality demonstrated by the HIDA products.

### **About Hida Sangyo**

Founded in 1920, Hida Sangyo is one of Japan's oldest and most esteemed furniture ateliers. HIDA is gentle on the environment and the people who manufacture it, making the collection eco-friendly and human-friendly. The internationally renowned industrial designer Enzo Mari has collaborated with Hida Sangyo to launch a collection in the US that helps spread the message of sustainable furniture design and human ecology.

### **For Additional Information:**

Lauren Davis

Kwittken & Company

[ldavis@kwitco.com](mailto:ldavis@kwitco.com)

1-646-747-7158