

At the beginning of 2001 we shipped the last load for setting up the saw mill at **CEVIHAS** . The first part of the freight concerned goods that were too long for container shipment and these goods left the year before by means of conventional freight.

This project consisted in a number of specific assignments, but the most remarkable requirement was that it should be possible to saw lumber with a **length of 18 meters**.

Moreover, there was a specified budget, the whole of the equipment had to be operated by **local people** on a full automatic basis, since this saw mill did not include any European private capital and so there would be no European manager present, to whom one could refer to for personal experience in the wood sector, as is the case for all our other clients in Africa.

There was also the technical handicap since Suriname follows the **American model, i.e.;** **220 volt, 60 Hertz**.

We were also in charge for all of the treatment of spar, i.e. the provision of traverses and their trajectory. It was also contractually agreed upon that SEYNA would see to the **training of people** that would be engaged in the saw mill **annex grinding room**.



Another particularity of this assignment was the fact that our client was not a **saw mill**. The principal isn't even active in the field of forestry. His professional knowledge is limited to an activity fully unknown to us as wood-experts.

[These are the key activities :](#)

CEVIHAS disposes of an impressive landing stage at the Suriname River, where fishing boats dock to bring their catch ashore. Moreover, CEVIHAS sees to it that the ship is supplied with

- fuel
- drinking water
- food
- ice for keeping caught fish cool
- ...

While the ship is being unloaded and provided with new supplies, the crew can take a break at the canteen of CEVIHAS, which is provided with 2 billiard tables and where beer is kept cool in ice cubes. (we are amidst fishers). You can also enjoy a meal at the canteen, which is equipped with its own kitchen.

A little anecdote : on a certain Saturday, 75 crates of beer of 12 bottles each were sold. But then you have to know that in Suriname a bottle of beer contains 1 litre of beer. Need I say more.



CEVIHAS disposes of an American ships lift, capable of lifting 50 tons' ships out of the water to carry the repair working shop by road.

In these repair working shops, ships as provided with a new layer of paint, screws and all parts that are below the water line are checked and repaired. All of this is done at the proper working shop of CEVIHAS .

Painting is important, since the ships used for fishing the rivers and at sea mostly concern wooden ships.

CEVIHAS' last activity is closer to what we, wood-folks, are more familiar with: Cevihás disposes of a full carpentry plant equipped with the most modern carpentry equipment supplied by Constant Philips from Puurs only 2 years ago. They are one by one classic but robust carpentry machines according to the latest state of technique, including electronic measuring, automatic height adjustment, tilting, etc.

At the time, the carpentry plant was fully financed by the Belgian government, namely ABOS, with the aim of aid to developing countries. Therefore, a number of severe requirements were set for the delivery of the machines.

The carpentry plant has following aims:

- Making carpentry and furniture for sale-purposes
- Training of future carpenters
- Part of the boat building project..

As to the boat building project, that is where our delivery of a saw mill comes into the picture.

As is often the case in Suriname, a lot of projects are backed by foreign government aid for achieving 1 specific purpose. CEVIHAS obtained international aid for setting op the project of building boats.

These boats are wooden fishing sloops used for fishing the seas around the Caribbean. For building these sloops, there was need for a hall in the first place, but a carpentry plant and a saw mill are also necessary.



For the real chauvinists, an interesting issue in this project of building wooden fishing boats is the fact that the instructor is a Belgian citizen.

This man assisted in building the very first boat that is still under construction but will soon be put into the waters. He was aided by local carpenters (amongst which 2 girls) and a boat maker from British Guyana.

(Stern of the ship under construction with a total length of 14 meters)



Prow soon to be finished.

At the right-hand in the picture, you can see the square opening, which will be used to put in the ICE -BOX

When the ship sets sail, this box can contain approximately 7 tons of ice.

This will be used to keep the fish cool and fresh until the ship comes back to the harbour for unloading, the fish will be taken out of the ice manually by someone who will stand amid the ice (wearing boots).

When building wooden ships, one must dispose of strong wood that is very long at the same time. For that reason, the saw mill to be erected should be capable of handling logs with a length of 18 meters. As soon as I was asked to deliver such a mill, I got the idea of manufacturing a horizontal machine. Horizontal log band saws have the advantage that the board to be sawn doesn't need to be supported. With vertical log band saws, the board will "hang down" when it is sawn, which will be very difficult to support for board sizes of 1 inch thickness and 18 meters length.

In the range of horizontal log band saws, there is a choice between a machine in which the saw is stationary while the log is driven by the saw by means of a carriage and/or a machine in which the wood is stationary and the saw moves



I have advised my client to take the second option because only half of the space is required compared to the first machine in which the log will be moved from left to right.

These kind of machines are not available on the second hand market (and surely not if a saw length of 18 meters is required). and thus we introduced a new machine LBL-BRENTA-CD model CD 8 with a maximum log diameter of 1,2 meters and provided with an effective saw length of 18 meters. This machine is equipped with an electromotor 60 PK

220 volt 60 Hertz and adjusted for linear velocities for sawing exotic hardwood, as was required.

We also packed 1 new stellite tipping machine MFLS – FOREZIENNE, and furthermore the following second hand machines were shipped to PARAMARIBO

- 1 overhead crane with 14 meters span and a capacity of 8 tons and 1 the same with a capacity of 5 tons, completely with trajectory and cable guiding.
- 1 Grinding plant for band saws CANA – E
- 1 Side dresser for stellite tipped saw blades VOLLMER model EMS
- 1 Levelling – tensioning bench BRENTA

All of them equipment from our stock and revised by us so that they can be operated in the tropical climate of Suriname for many years to come.

Another little story, by way of information :

When we are equipping saw mills situated at the equator, we are still very often asked to also pack and bring along other goods. It often concerns a vehicle (jeep), but it can also be radios, TV sets or refrigerators. This time, apart from some other small stuff, we were asked to buy and pack a peculiar thing, something we had never bought nor transported before, namely a French squatter toilet.

(no need to laugh)

That piece of sanitary equipment was needed to build toilets for the shippers at the harbour.

It was contractually agreed upon that one of our people would take care of mounting, starting-up and training.

Since I myself have never been to Suriname, I wanted to go along and take the opportunity to visit a number of customers at their proper saw mill



Suriname is a very beautiful country with its own traditions and ideas. Population exists in a mix of former black slaves, Hindustanis, Javanese, Chinese, Englishmen, Dutchmen and other immigrants.

Their language is also a mix of this and that. The largest part of that language is Dutch peppered with English words and words of other languages.

A working week counts 5 days and it is very hard to force something in this field. People of Suriname are very keen on their free weekend

As to the saw mills, with the exception of BRUYNZEEL, all of them are private owned companies and mainly work for the local market. Little of the sawn wood is exported from SURINAME, and the one that is exported is almost exclusively destined for the Netherlands. En ce qui concerne les scieries, à l'exception de BRUYNZEEL, elles appartiennent toutes à des entreprises privées et travaillent essentiellement pour le marché local. Très peu de bois scié est exporté à partir du Surinam. Le bois exporté est expédié presque exclusivement vers les Pays-Bas.

The poles made by BASRALOCUS are an export product. The poles are used in the Netherlands for harbour works or for firmly supporting construction works. Given their low degree in optical requirements, these poles are not sawn but chopped out of small logs. This chopping of poles is called in Surinamese "kwijlen".



What stood out to me in particular when sawing the first logs of Basralocus was the enormous weight of that kind of wood.

I dare say that I have seen quite a lot when it comes to hard types of wood during my many travels to the tropics, but this wood really was particularly heavy and hard.

I was impressed by the way these boards were able to clamp the saws by their own weight.

Normally, a horizontal machine is capable of handling 10 inch boards one after another before they have to be removed. This

doesn't go for this type of wood..

In Suriname also WANNA (soft wood), GREENHEART and PURPERHEART are sawn. There are also other types of wood, but I can't remember them all. Fact is that certain names of some types of wood sound in such a way that even local people shrivel up by the thought of having to saw that type of wood. Just to say how hard it can be.



That is probably the reason why the larger part of the saw mills at Paramaribo are using frame saws rather than band saws. Band saws are appreciated for splitting up those logs that are too big for passing through a frame saw. Moreover, Suriname always asks for long wood. A saw mill limited to a saw length of 8 meters is not really appreciated in this part of the world.

To us, that is unique since wood is mostly quite tense and will have to be cut afterwards in order to be straightened.

What I personally will remember from this journey is that each country has its own customs and ideas.

It is up to us to meet the specific wishes of our clients worldwide.

Krist SEYNAEVE