

For Immediate Release

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd.

**Bonds with Disaster-Stricken Community Strengthened**  
**Sumitomo Forestry Collaborates on Construction of**  
**Temporary Café for “Rikuzentakata City Living Project”**

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Akira Ichikawa; Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) has begun construction of a temporary café in the city of Rikuzentakata, Iwate Prefecture, which suffered severe damage in the Great East Japan Earthquake, to function as a relaxed community center for local citizens. Part of the Rikuzentakata City Living Project, the Riku Café is being built in collaboration with local citizens, industry, and academia.

**Overview**

A large number of temporary shelters have been constructed in regions impacted by the Great East Japan Earthquake for residents whose homes were damaged or lost. Many residents have commented, however, that there is a lack of places where they can comfortably gather and which can facilitate community communication. Additionally, there is a growing need for places which can facilitate the safety and security of elderly residents and children.

The café's construction site is adjacent to a temporary clinic, dentist office, pharmacy and other medical facilities, along with temporary housing and residential housing lots, making it an ideal place for citizens to gather. Local citizens became the main proponents of the plan to use a part of the area to construct a place where they could comfortably meet. At the same time, Hideki Koizumi, an associate professor at the University of Tokyo who has been deeply involved in the region's rebuilding activities, learned of the plan and took on the role of project leader. University of Tokyo Assistant Professor Yuri Naruse and Tokyo Metropolitan University Assistant Professor Jun Inokuma also joined to help make the project a reality.

Sumitomo Forestry had been working with Associate Professor Koizumi, Assistant Professor Naruse and Assistant Professor Inokuma on a separate project when the professors consulted the company on the construction of a temporary café. Sumitomo Forestry responded by soliciting the help of manufacturers and by providing overall construction support. A joint action plan was then created among the local citizens, academia, and various housing-related companies, including Sumitomo Forestry. Sumitomo Forestry will participate in the project primarily through its MOCCA (Wood Use Integration) Department, newly established in April, and begin to provide assessment support for the construction of a new type of temporary wooden stores throughout the disaster region.

Under the current plan, the temporary café construction precedes the construction of a permanent store next year, and one of its functions will be to act as a multi-purpose wooden store utilizing resources from the Tohoku region. The temporary wooden store will not only offer local citizens a

relaxed community center, but will also confirm the space and functional needs of the permanent store. Research on the needs will be undertaken mainly by a local NPO operating the store.

### **Overview of Temporary Café Construction**

Total floor area: 34.78m<sup>2</sup>

Structure: One-story wooden post-and-beam construction method

### **Temporary Café Construction Schedule**

December 9, 2011: Start construction

January 9, 2012: Café opening