

Our sustainable business model draws out the potential of trees

The Sumitomo Business Spirit which started it all, passed down through generations

The Monjuin Shiigaki left by Masatomo Sumitomo (1585-1652), founder of the House of Sumitomo. The preamble of this brief explanation of philosophical business rules states, "Do your best prudently and meticulously, not only in business, but in every aspect of your life." He emphasizes that care should be exercised in all matters and everything should be done with consideration and respect. Sumitomo also left behind writings such as "Value trust and make certainty a principle" advocating the importance of trustworthiness, "Refrain from the pursuit of easy gains" which warns against being blinded by thirst for quick profits, and "Harmony between your interests and those of the public" with which Sumitomo urges harmony with the public interest - between the individual, the nation and society. These words through which our predecessors have kept the company marching forward throughout its long history, as well as the thoughts behind them, are devotedly observed as the Sumitomo Spirit even in the present day.



Picture scroll depicting the Besshi Copper Mine in Iyo Province (stored among Sumitomo Historical Archives)

1691

Founding of Sumitomo Forestry

Besshi Copper Mine opened by the Sumitomo family
Started management of the forests around Besshi Copper Mine used for procuring wood for mine construction and fuel for smelting



Teigo Iba (stored among Sumitomo Historical Archives)

Sumitomo Forestry's origin in the copper mine forestry business

Sumitomo Forestry was established back in 1691 with the opening of the Besshi Copper Mine in present-day Niihama, Ehime Prefecture. It began with the management of forests surrounding the Besshi Copper Mines in order to procure timber for fuel and wood to support mine walls, which was essential to the copper smelting business, and also timber and other materials for the construction of housing for people who lived and worked in mining and smelting.

1865

Saihei Hirose appointed manager of Besshi

1882

Rules of Governing the House of Sumitomo established

1894

Teigo Iba appointed manager of Besshi. Launched the Large-Scale Reforestation Plan

1899

Masaya Suzuki appointed manager of Besshi. Established the sustainable forestry approach

1800s



The Besshi Copper Mine was in a state of degradation during the Meiji era due to the effects of mining operations (stored among Sumitomo Historical Archives)



Mount Besshi in the present day

1900s

1909

House of Sumitomo's mountain forestry business transferred to Sumitomo Sohonten upon its establishment

1919

Forestry Section established at Sumitomo Sohonten

1948

Six companies formed (established) from the Forestry Department of Sumitomo under the government's zaibatsu dissolution order. After two mergers, they became two companies: Toho Agriculture and Forestry (Toho Norin) and Shikoku Forestry (Shikoku Ringyo)

Start of the Large-Scale Reforestation Plan and sustainable forestry

In the late 19th century, the forests surrounding the Besshi Copper Mine were in danger of being devastated after a long period of excessive logging and smoke pollution. With the advocacy of Teigo Iba, manager of the Besshi Copper Mine, in 1894 the company prepared a reforestation plan for restoring forest that had been lost due to mining activities. As a result of large-scale reforestation exceeding two million trees annually at its peak, the area's mountains regained their verdant green landscapes. Afterwards, Sumitomo Forestry established conservation and sustainability minded forestry, a hallmark of sustainability management, by focusing on forest upkeep and development, harvesting, and timber manufacturing.

Evolution as a timber trading company and manufacturer

In the 1950s, Japan arrived at a period of rapid economic growth, and driven by dramatic growth in new housing starts, demand for timber increased sharply. However, the domestic forestry business at the time faced shortages of timber supply in the marketplace because the trees planted soon after the end of World War II were still immature.

Amid this, Sumitomo Forestry began importing timber from abroad ahead of its peers in Japan. The company established timber manufacturing, distribution and sales systems in Japan and abroad and became the largest timber and building material trading company in Japan in terms of volume.



1950s

1955

Toho Norin Co., Ltd. and Shikoku Ringyo Co., Ltd. merged to form Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd., and established a nationwide network to procure and sell domestic timber.

1956

Import business for foreign timber started

Starting with the handling of Philippine lumber in 1955, the company expanded its business to Malaysia and Indonesia, and in 1958 began handling timber from the United States and New Zealand.



Waterfront at the Port of Vancouver. Sumitomo Forestry employees performing inspections at timber yard facility

1960s

1964

Established full-scale plywood manufacturing company in Japan

1970

Started manufacturing business overseas

Established a joint venture, P.T. Kutai Timber Indonesia (KTI), in Indonesia and launched a full-scale building materials business based on plywood manufacturing that would serve as a springboard for its overseas manufacturing business.

1975

Started the custom-built wooden housing business



Custom-built wooden housing

1977

Entry into the greening business



1980s

1986

Full-scale operation of MDF production plant by Nelson Pine Industries Ltd. (NPIL) in New Zealand



NPIL plant

Growth of housing business in Japan and overseas

In the 1970s, in response to changes in socioeconomic conditions, housing policy shifted from securing "quantity" to improving "quality," including the housing environment.

To respond to such social demands, Sumitomo Forestry entered the custom-built wooden housing business in 1975. By making full use of its domestic and overseas timber procurement networks to provide high-quality wooden houses, "Sumitomo Forestry homes" grew into a leading brand of custom-built wooden houses.

Furthermore, in 2003, Sumitomo Forestry started launching a housing business in the United States, where wooden houses are the predominant form of housing. After that, the company also entered the housing business in Australia, where wooden houses are mainstream. In the housing market, where the residential culture of each area is strongly reflected, Sumitomo Forestry expanded its business by partnering with local companies who share its management approach.

Entered the elderly care services business

In 2007, we officially entered the elderly care services business. As Japan becomes a super-aged society, our private elderly care facilities as well as our service-added homes for the elderly and day care business aim to help each resident live independently while offering them high-quality services tailored to their individual needs.

Promotion of medium- to large-scale wooden constructions

In Japan, planted forests usable as a resource are not fully maintained, raising concerns about the loss of the multifaceted functions of forestland. Faced with the urgent task of using trees to maintain forests and revitalize forestry, in 2010 Japan passed a law encouraging the use of timber in public buildings.

To address this issue, the Group has been promoting wooden construction and woodification in the field of non-residential construction. Since then, the company has built up a track record in the woodification of commercial, education, and welfare facilities.

Promotion of renewable energy business

In 2011, the Group entered the renewable energy business after reaffirming the value of forest resources. The company has built several wood biomass power generation plants which use construction waste and unused timber from forestland as fuel.



1990
Listed on the First Section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange

1991
Tsukuba Research Institute established, unified the R&D organization for building materials, housing, and resources



New research building at Tsukuba Research Institute

2003
Started housing business in the United States



Houses built for sale in Seattle

2005
Developed first wooden beam Rahmen structure (Big-Frame construction method) in Japan



My Forest BF

2007
Full-scale entry to the elderly care business



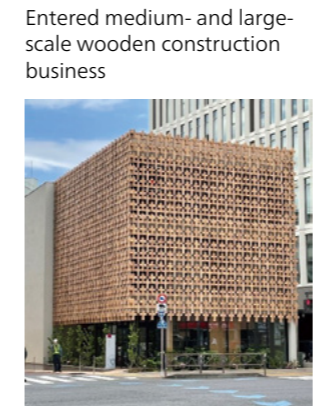
Gran Forest Kobe Mikage

2008
Started housing business in Australia



Show home by Henley Properties

2011
Started renewable energy business
Entered medium- and large-scale wooden construction business



Sophia University Building 15 (Completed in 2022)

2016
Net sales exceeded 1 trillion yen for the first time since the company's founding

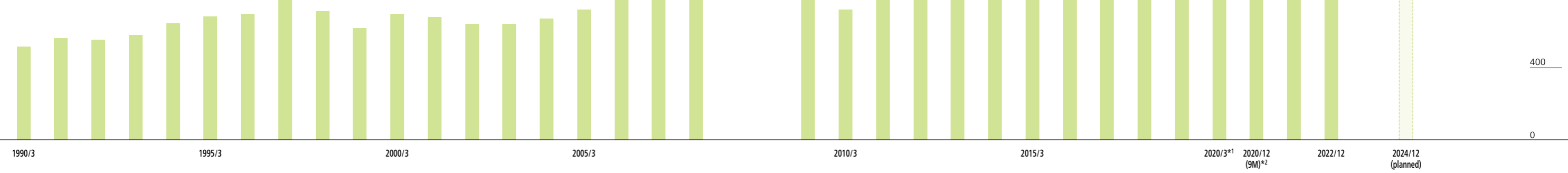
2018
Started full-scale real estate development business in the United States
Unveiling of W350 Plan aimed at realizing "Environmentally-friendly timber-based cities"

2021
Full-scale entry into the large-scale detached rental housing development business in the United States

2022
Looking ahead to 2030, the company announced its Long-Term Vision Mission TREEING 2030, which defines the Group's vision. As the first phase of this plan, the company launched the three-year Medium-Term Management Plan Mission TREEING 2030 Phase 1.

Mission TREEING 2030

Trend in net sales



*1 Accounting Standard for Revenue Recognition (ASBJ Statement No. 29) has been applied since the beginning of the fiscal year ended March 31, 2020.
*2 The accounting period for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2020 is the nine-month period from April to December 2020 due to a change in the accounting period.