



Press kit – April 2012

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## **Green Blade : green innovation for decoration**

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[www.fibandco.com](http://www.fibandco.com)

When architects and designers seek exclusive and responsible decorative solutions, FIBandCO innovates with the launch of Green Blade, an exceptional upmarket finish, 100% natural and eco-designed.

Winner of the Batimat 2011 innovation prize, this new product, with remarkable aesthetic qualities, transforms in Martinique the fibre in the stems of banana plants, traditionally unused. Transformed according to a technical process patented by two young French engineers, it becomes veneer. Its virtuous paradox is to present a “natural wood look”, without taking part in deforestation. Indeed, the banana plant is not a tree, but a giant grass which gives to this product its specificity without equivalent; it is already available in 4 colours, with the possibility of templates and made to measure patterns.

A unique solution on the market, acclaimed by architects, interior architects, designers and industrialists looking for decorative natural veneers, which can be recycled and are ethical.

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## A “haute couture” veneer

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Green Blade

Green Blade is the result of several years of research undertaken by two young French engineers. A unique decorative veneer, it transforms important waste from banana farming into a semi-finished product that is upmarket, eco-designed and that can be recycled.



Green Blade

### ***Wood look and natural colors***

Entirely natural, Green Blade presents an elegant “wood look”. It comes in four warm colors (Bahamas, Havana, Aruba, Saint-Barth) obtained through the manufacturing process, without use of water, nor chemicals.

### ***Applications for interior architecture, design and industry***

Mainly used as veneer, Green Blade is applied as a finish to architectural panels, kitchens, furniture, design objects and even car dash boards. Flexible, it can according to its thickness, be translucent and naturally lend itself to the creation of lighting.

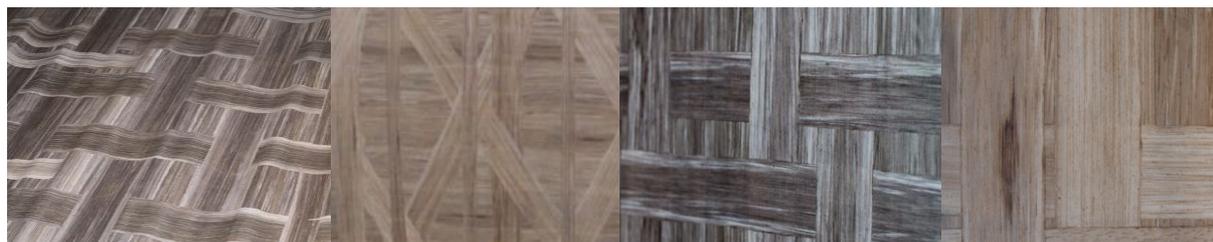
A few references: Tesla Motors, Day Glow Lighting, Pigment France, Mundy Veneer...



Green Blade

### ***Hand assembled for a made to measure product***

Being hand assembled, Green Blade defies the standards of uniformity and allows for outfitters, interior designers, designers and industrialists to benefit from a made to measure product. Proposed in a standard format of 1250mm by 2500mm, Green Blade veneers are also available in templates and patterns upon request, according to a process which evokes marquetry. A new subtlety that no other veneer can provide.



Green Blade

## **A 100% sustainable solution**

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Winner of the Batimat Innovation prize 2011, Green Blade is the result of a unique patented process.

Its originality resides as much in the raw material that it uses, as it does in its manufacturing model. Beyond being innovative, it aims to be rigorously ecological and ethical.

100% organic, eco-designed, with the possibility of being recycled, Green Blade is an example of a virtuous product. To fully understand, it is necessary to go back to its source, in the banana plantations of Martinique.

### ***A renewable and abundant raw material, which does not take part in deforestation***

Where there is no forest, there is no deforestation! Contrary to what is generally thought, the banana plant is not a tree, but a giant grass, that reaches its peak of maturity and fruit-bearing production every nine months. At the end of this cycle, the banana tree dies where it stands and grows back from its bulb.

Green Blade is exclusively manufactured from the stems of banana plants which decompose naturally every nine months. Thanks to partnerships established with banana plantations committed to responsible production, FIBandCO has an inexhaustible resource, the exploitation of which does not degrade the quality of the soil. Indeed, as this part of the plant constitutes only 9% of its dry matter, its use does not take part in the impoverishment of the ground.



Green Blade thus recycles an abundant agricultural waste, a particularly virtuous renewable raw material, in particular compared to bamboo, cultivated for its transformation and

whose peak of maturity takes much longer to attain.

### ***A rigorous eco design***

The production of Green Blade is part of a global ecological approach. The manufacturing of the veneer exclusively uses the stems of banana plants from integrated farming, of which the fibre is transformed, without using water or chemicals.

In the same way, the four Green Blade colours are strictly natural, generated by subtleties of the manufacturing process.

To remain coherent with the intrinsic qualities of the product the founders of FIBandCO wished to promote responsible manufacturing.



Thus the veneers are produced in micro manufacturing units, established in the heart of the banana plantations to limit transportation of the raw material. Moreover, electricity necessary for the transformation is produced via photovoltaic panels.

## ***A sustainable and biodegradable material***

100% organic, Green Blade is a sustainable material, respectful of the environment at all stages of its life cycle.

At the end of this cycle, the material which is organic and biodegradable does not constitute a polluting waste. A quality which makes it possible for Green Blade to answer to the evolving standards in automobile production. Indeed European directive 2000/53 fixes as an aim to recycle 85% of the components of a car and to recover 95% of them, by 2015.



*Green Blade*

## ***Quality and ethics Made in France***

Manufactured in the French West Indies, in the French overseas region of Martinique, Green Blade is produced according to French and European legislation regarding labor laws, which guarantees fair remuneration of the employees who produce it.

The process of transformation and recycling of the stems of banana plants developed by the fine tuning of Green Blade manufacturing, takes part amongst other things, in local development. It fully coincides with the Europe 2020 growth strategy and for this reason receives active support from the European Community. The company thus foresees creating 44 jobs in the near future, including 25 indirect employments in the harvesting of the raw materials in the plantations. FibandCO forecasts the transformation from 500 to 1000 stems of banana plants per day, to ensure an annual production of 150 000 m<sup>2</sup> per production unit.

### **Characteristics**

Composition	Pseudo-stem of a banana plant
Origin	Produced and transformed in FRANCE
Assembled	Manual, made to measure, no added glue
Surface appearance	Sheet 100% natural, untreated
Dimensions	Standard 125cm x 250cm
Thickness	Simple fold            0,004 inches to 0,08 inches Double fold            0,01 inches to 0,014 inches Double fold pattern    0,01 inches to 0,014.
Bending	Very good aptitude for bending and cold post-forming: possible to fold in concave and convex directions. Translucent important on the simple fold without backing

## About FIBandCO

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Founded in Martinique in 2009 by Vladimir Hayot (30) and Nicolas Cheminon (32), two young French engineers, FIBandCO is a company dedicated to sustainable development.

Together the two former students of ESIEE developed a technical innovative process which makes it possible to transform, in small production units established in the middle of the banana plantations, the fibre of the stems of banana plants. This abundant resource, until now unexploited, is recycled into decorative veneers called Green Blade. A new material that knows no compromise: upmarket, eco-designed and responsible, with many possible applications for the outfitting, architectural and the design world.

Launched at the end of 2010, Green Blade, receives in 2011 during its first presentation at Batimat, the Innovation Prize and “Special mention SME”. In April 2012, it is presented to international architects and designers in the ‘France Design’ event, organized in margin of the Milanese Design Week.

Within the framework of this event several designers put into perspective through original creations the technical and decorative potential of this unique veneer.

Supported by the European Union, the company which opens new prospects for responsible design takes an active part in local development. It thus envisages in the near future the creation of 44 jobs, including 25 indirect employments in the harvesting of the raw material in the heart of the plantations.

### **Interview with Vladimir Hayot**



Vladimir Hayot – Co fondateur de FIBandCO

#### *Where did the idea of recycling banana plant stems come from?*

Being from Martinique, I have been aware for some time of the potential in recycling the waste generated by the production of bananas.

As I wished to return to my native island to settle down, I decided to actively research the idea. When I was employed by a large international group, I travelled enormously, and I was in a privileged position to see how other countries were transforming banana plant stems.

My wife being an architect, I was exposed to her needs regarding responsible solutions.

I quickly understood that there were still non-existent possibilities for industrialization and I continued my research by inviting Nicolas Cheminon to join me. He accepted and we set up a company.

*In which outfitting sectors is this new product in demand today?*

The architecture and the car industry are two sectors that are particularly on the lookout for new eco-responsible products. Green Blade answers this requirement with a strong added aesthetic value. Green Blade's force is in proposing a 'wood look', without being from trees, which is unique.

That enables us to be on the same wavelength as the expectations formulated today by the automotive industry. The first Tesla Motors cars are the proof as other car manufacturers follow with cars increasingly cleaner, not only from a mechanical point of view, but also in their interior fittings. As for architecture, the 'LEED' (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards from the United States give us a strong position in North America.

*Are there any Green Blade equivalents on the market?*

No, Green Blade is unique. It is the only upmarket veneer from banana plant stems on the market today.

*How are the roles shared with the cofounder of FIBandCO Nicolas Cheminon?*

Nicolas drew the majority of the prototypes and the machines which enabled us to assemble the first factory. Today he continues to develop our technology for our future factories and works in close cooperation with the R&D departments of our industrial partners.

On my side I plan the establishments of the new FIBandCO production units and I also manage the teams in order to optimize our production.

*What are your development perspectives?*

We have 2 main axes of development. The first is to impose our product on the American and North European markets, in branches of industry where our decorative veneer constitutes a relevant answer to the environmental requirements of the industrialists and their clients.

We are therefore developing our offer for the automotive industry, the architectural panel industry, but also the wall coverings industry. We are also frequently solicited for very diversified applications, such as packaging, tableware or even fashion accessories...

Our second axis is technological and industrial development in zones where the banana culture is an important activity as in Martinique, in the Caribbean zone and in Latin America. The opening of our second production unit is already programmed for the end of 2013 to answer customer demand.

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