



Podocarpus spp.

Family: Podocarpaceae

Podo

Other Common Names: Yellowwood (South Africa), Wiriwiri, Mse, Mushunga (Tanzania), Musenene, Sapta (Uganda).

Distribution: Species supplying commercial timber are widely distributed in the highlands of East Africa, mainly in Kenya south to Zimbabwe.

The Tree: May attain a height of 100 ft or more with diameters mostly 1.5 to 2.5 ft.

The Wood:

General Characteristics: Uniform light yellowish brown with no clear distinction between sapwood and heartwood, sometimes showing red streaks due to presence of compression wood. Texture very fine and even; grain straight; growth rings usually indistinct; resin ducts absent.

Weight: Basic specific gravity (ovendry weight/green volume) 0.43; air-dry density 32 pcf.

Mechanical Properties: (First set of data based on the 2-cm standard; second set on the 2-in. standard.)

Moisture content (%)	Bending strength (Psi)	Modulus of elasticity (1,000 psi)	Maximum crushing strength (Psi)
Green (40)	6,950	880	3,200
12%	11,900	1,170	6,250
12% (1)	10,230	1,385	6,470

Janka side hardness 560 lb for green material and 830 lb for dry.

Drying and Shrinkage: Dries fairly rapidly with some checking and a pronounced tendency to warp. Distortion can be minimized if the timber pile is weighted. Kiln schedule T2-D4 is suggested for 4/4 stock and T2-D3 for 8/4. Shrinkage green to ovendry: radial 2.8%; tangential 5.1%. Movement in service is rated as small.

Working Properties: Easy to work with hand and machine tools, takes an excellent finish, shapes and turns well, glues easily, easy to veneer, moderate steam- bending properties.

Durability: Heartwood has low durability and liable to termite damage as well as other insect attack.

Preservation: Easy to treat, open-tank treatments result in preservative oil absorptions of 14 to 25 pcf. Retentions of around 40 pcf can be obtained with a pressure treatment.

Uses: General construction, joinery, millwork, furniture components, boxes and crates, food containers, utility plywood.

Additional Reading: (1), (3), (6), (40)

1. Banks, C. H. 1954. The mechanical properties of timbers with particular reference to those grown in the Union of South Africa. *J. S. African For. Assoc.* 24:44-65.
3. Bolza, E., and W. G. Keating. 1972. African timbers-the properties, uses, and characteristics of 700 species. CSIRO. Div. of Build. Res., Melbourne, Australia.
6. Chalk, L., J. B. Davy, H. E. Desch, and A. C. Hoyle. 1933. *Twenty West African timber trees.* Clarendon Press. Oxford.
40. Lavers, G. M. 1967. The strength properties of timbers. *For. Prod. Res. Bul. No. 50.* H. M. Stationery Office. London.

From: Chudnoff, Martin. 1984. Tropical Timbers of the World. USDA Forest Service. Ag. Handbook No. 607.