

# PLASTIC LUMBER PRODUCED BY THE ATRES COOPERATIVE RECYCLING PLASTICS IN CUBA

The [Atres Non-Agricultural Cooperative CNA](#) based in the Province of Matanzas, Cuba, works with plastics recovered from the environment to develop plastic lumber products.

The process of recycling plastic waste to plastic wood is well known in different countries. In Cuba, the Atres Cooperative is pioneer in the exploitation of this material, which arises from the fusion of various plastics, from post-industrial and post-consumption waste.

The Atres Cooperative, promoted by a small group of artists, was founded in 2014. It currently has 170 members, among whom the profits are distributed according to their contribution. The growing demand has stimulated the Cooperative to diversify the products and required the opening of new branches in the provinces of Havana, Mayabeque, Pinar del Río and Cienfuegos.

The plastic lumber is very valued in Cuba in the manufacture of exterior works, thanks to its good physical-chemical properties that provide clear advantages over other materials. The plastic lumber is resistant to corrosive substances, to cold and heat, ultraviolet rays and humidity, does not suffer biological attacks, does not crack, does not need maintenance and has high adaptability, durability and resistance.

Main common plastic wood products of the cooperative include trash baskets, picnic tables with umbrella, sun loungers and pergolas; small, medium or large fences; entrance doors and facade structures; walkways to beaches or natural spaces; platforms for swimming pools, beaches or natural spaces. Furniture such as shelves, bureaus, tables or chairs are also produced. The Cooperative can give a guarantee of up to 50 years of life of the structures created with the plastic lumber.

The Cooperative produces plastic lumber recycling all kinds of plastic, without the need to use virgin resin. The mixtures produced by recycling the seven main groups of plastic in different percentages, offer great advantages in terms of functionality and performance compared to the procedures that allow recycling a single specific type of plastics. The machinery that is used, the mill and the extruder that shapes





the final product, has been installed by the workers of the Cooperative recovering machines in disuse in the country.

In 2019 the Cooperative has recycled approximately 250 tons of plastic. Atres offers, besides the material, the services of assembly, maintenance, repair, restoration and ambience settings.

The raw material comes from the National Enterprise of Raw Materials that has found in Atres a valuable resource to give a final destination to the large volumes of stored plastic. Part of the raw material is also delivered to Atres by the Self-Employed Workers who collect solid residuals in cities and rural areas.

Atres is part of the national strategy [Tarea Vida - National Plan for addressing Climate Change](#) and actively collaborates with institutions that operate to improve environmental conditions in the country. Atres joins environmental initiatives for waste collection in the territories, organized by the private sector and public entities such as the Environment Agency, the Cuban Botanical Society, the National Aquarium of Cuba, National Parks, among others.

The Cooperative has achieved great visibility in Cuba thanks to the quality of its products, which are also attracting the attention of renown tourist structures, and for its capacity to convert tons of plastic wastes of the country into useful products for homes furnishing and public spaces.

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[Article in guardabosquescuba.org](#)

[Article in tribuna.cu](#)

[Article in america.cgtn.com](#)

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