

## WOOD CONSTRUCTION & FACADES

# Nature meets Architecture

It was evident from the beginning that this home not only needs to be huge, but also as natural as possible: a holistic concept of landscape and architecture. The result is compatible with modern zoo philosophy and appropriate for maintaining the animal species that is in line with the vegetation in the National Park of Thailand, Kaeng Krachan, which is also the name of the newly designed elephant park.

## Nature below a roof

The initial position was an exciting challenge for the Swiss Büro Markus Schietsch Architects that has won the tender against international bidding. The architects used pictures and shapes from the world of vegetables and animals to orient themselves with their "woody" design. The most spectacular element of their natural construction completed in June 2014 is the 6,800 sq. m. large ceiling made of three-layer panels of spruce wood. Despite its considerable size, the flat curved wooden bowl integrates subtly with the surrounding landscape. Forest and Architecture blend with one another into a symbiotic unit; the undisturbed natural experience stands in the foreground – for the human being and the animal.

## Interplay of light and shadows

The ceiling and facade form an atmospheric shell, in which visitors explore the world of the elephants almost as if in the wild and can, in fact, observe the animals very closely while they swim. Just like the roof of leaves of a tropical forest, the filigree, leaf-like ceiling structure filters the sunlight and creates an interplay of light and shadows full of atmosphere. Even the appearance of the ceiling changes, thanks to the characteristic wood glaze finish with which the spruce wood has been coated. *"We have blended the colourless **ADLER Lignovit Lasur** in a highly subtle manner with colour pigmentations and the lustrous silver **ADLER Lignovit Platin** and could thus achieve a lively and changing appearance depending on the incident light"*, explains the architect Philipp Heidemann who was the project manager. Apart from the surface quality of the Lignovit thin coat glaze finish having a natural effect, the architect was also primarily inspired by

### Facts

#### Property

Elephant park, zoo Zurich

#### Planning

Markus Schietsch Architects

### Products used



Lignovit Lasur

the fantastic support provided by the ADLER team: *"We have developed the unique formulation of the glaze finish colour shade for the bottom layer of the ceiling and facade of the elephant house in a cumbersome and comprehensive sampling process"*, says Heidemann.

That the apparently freely floating roof with a span of over 80 metres is an authentic heavyweight in reality cannot actually be perceived by you on account of its network-like transparency – similar to that by the occupants who move around fleet-footed around their new home despite their weight of several tons.

Title

