

## iLanga Chair



These were the first words of awe we heard when the initial prototype of the iLanga (the isiZulu word for SUN) chair was revealed. And how right those words were because yes, this chair is different in so many ways.

### THE DIFFERENCE

This is the only chair designed and manufactured by Homewood that is not 100% wood - with the framework being made of steel. But the reason for this is simple and mindful. The story revolves around alien flora, job creation, the environment, water conservation, collaboration, design and killing a few birds with one stone.

*The starting point of this story is where it always begins with Homewood...*

### THE WOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Climate change is undoubtedly upon us, with its effects witnessed nationwide. Most metros have been staring down looming water crises, and due only to the recent rains down south, the emergency has presently been averted. For most of us, we're watching nervously as the water levels in dams drop. We take shorter showers, set up grey water systems, grow water-wise gardens and imagine how we might survive if day zero arrives.

It's easy to blame the government for not taking this situation seriously and for squandering money that could have been used to mitigate climate change risks. The Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs has been working their budget as best they can for the past few years and have teamed up with passionate environmentalists, in an effort to solve the looming crisis. But they can't solve this issue alone. They need the business sector's talent and resources to make a real impact on water security and sustainability. To stop the spreading of alien flora from sucking up our water, we need to build a strong commercial demand for alien invasive plant biomass. Demand, in the form of Gum, Wattle and Poplar tree-based products could aid the advance of the invaders, resulting in a bigger budget for the sustainable clearance of these trees.



*So, what are Homewood and Nando's doing about this?*

We have partnered with the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries as well as Avocado Vision to make this vision come true. The wood used in the new iLanga chair is 100% Poplar and Wattle (Blackwood), sourced from the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries who then, in turn, clear these from our waterways. This will ultimately go a long way in securing our future waterways. The objective? To create a solid virtuous cycle of good, sustainable business, powerful social outcomes and environmental imperatives that support our ability to not only survive but to combat climate change in South Africa.

*What is Poplar and what is the wood like?*

Poplar is one of the most common utility hardwoods in the United States. Its sapwood is white, sometimes with stripes; the heartwood is usually tan. The wood is straight in grain, uniform in texture and moderate to light weight. It has a medium to low density. Therefore, it machines and glues well, and takes excellently to a variety of finishes. Yellow Poplar is used in furniture, doors, millwork, baskets and picture frames. However, due to its low density it is not the ideal wood to use in structural applications like chairs - hence the iLanga chair's steel frame.

The combination of steel for strength and durability, plus wood for warmth and a natural element, is all held together with a wonderful traditional weave (using a polyester rope which is available in various colours) - The iLanga (SUN) chair is the perfect addition to the Nando's Casa chair line up!