

*Cupressus lusitanica*

## Cupressaceae

Mexico, Guatemala

**English:** Mexican cypress**Nyanja:** Saipuresi, lubani**Ecology:** Widely planted in the tropics as a quick-growing softwood. It requires good rainfall and does best at high altitudes (1,300–3,300 m) in well-drained soils. Popular in Chipata.**Uses:** Firewood, **timber** (furniture, construction), poles, **ornamental**, windbreak, **live fence**.**Description:** An evergreen conifer to 35 m with a straight trunk and generally conical but **not regular**; branches wide spreading. The branchlets grow in many planes and hang down. **BARK:** red-brown with vertical grooves, grey with age. **LEAVES:** dull blue-green in 4 ranks, with **spreading pointed tips**. **CONES:** male cones, like fat tips on branchlets, produce clouds of yellow pollen dust; female **cones** round, 1.5 cm across, coloured **waxy grey** when young. Cones ripen in 2 years, becoming brown; scales open to release many winged seeds. Scales bear a slender peg.**Propagation:** Seedlings.**Seed:** Germination rate about 40 % in 15–20 days. No. of seeds per kg: 160,000–290,000.**treatment:** Not necessary.**storage:** Seed can be stored for six months.**Management:** Trimming as a hedge. Pruning and thinning of trees in woodlots.**Remarks:** Can produce poles after 10 years, general purpose timber after 20 years. Not good for intercropping as leaf litter decomposes slowly and the shallow roots spread over a wide area. Commonly used as Christmas trees. The timber is pale brown, seasons well, making a very good lightweight wood that is widely used for furniture.