

## WORLD FEDERATION OF TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS

### PRESS RELEASE

#### WORLD FEDERATION OF TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT ORGANISATIONS ADDRESSES GLOBAL ISSUE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCT DECLARATIONS

...Federation planning far-reaching benefits to manufacturers of innovative construction products

**Prague, Czech Republic**, the World Federation of Technical Assessment Organisations met on 10 – 13 September 2012 to further discuss the issues of critical importance to the manufacturers and exporters of innovative and non-standardized construction products.

The federation now comprises 24 organisations from 22 nations, including organisations from the Pacific Rim, Europe, Africa and the Americas. This is the 17<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the organisation and it was hosted and chaired by the Czech member of the organisation, Technical and Test Institute for Construction Prague (TZÚS Praha, s.p.).

During the General Assembly the globally important issue of sustainability in the construction sector was again the key feature, and the General Assembly included a site visit for the members to the AZ Tower construction site in Brno. The AZ Tower will not only be the tallest building in the Czech Republic marking ability of Czech construction sector, but it will also embrace the newest technologies in construction products in order to reduce substantially its environmental foot print.

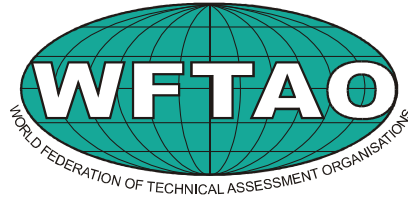
After visiting building site of AZ Tower, the members of WFTAO and distinguished guests from various Czech institutions such as Professors from the Faculty of civil engineering at the University Prague and Brno, university researchers and builders the Czech Republic, had jointly attended the seminar where representative of construction company PSJ a.s. and architect of the project presented the objectives and their implementation at AZ Tower building. In return top managers and CEOs of reputable European and overseas assessment bodies presented their situation and initiatives with specific emphasis on energy and energy saving policies. Extremely interesting information were presented and all participants could gather within short time the latest news and verified experiences from not only European but mainly from developed overseas countries. The seminar was hosted by TZÚS Praha, s.p and supported by CZB, JmSS and EGAR.

As the primary stakeholder of WFTAO are the manufacturers of innovative construction products and non-standardized construction products, a key issue of the sustainability of the building is the performance of the products and the impact of the products to the overall performance of the building. It is globally recognized that the Environmental Product Declarations (EPD's) for construction products is an important tool for the manufacturers.

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On the global market there is a number of certification schemes for buildings (LEED, BREAM, HQA, SBTool, CASBEE, etc.) and each of these schemes stipulate relevant information about the products going into the building – in many cases this key entry information is required in the form of Environmental Product Declarations (EPD's). For manufacturers and exporters of innovative construction products operating on the global market it is a major challenge to find a uniform way of presenting the relevant indicators for their products.

WFTAO members addressed this critical issue and the organisation finds itself in a unique position to respond the manufacturer's needs and has therefore established a task group with the purpose of addressing question further.

Other highlights of the meeting:

- The WFTAO agreed on further actions to promote the organisation and its mission and to provide more detailed information on the competence and service of its members. Mutual trust and recognition has been always highly valued.
- A decision for renewed and targeted promotion of the organisation towards potential new member institutes well established and representative for their countries
- The creation of a task group to consider the possibility of developing a common format for Environmental Product Declarations in the framework of WFTAO

The above mentioned initiatives will be emphasized throughout the coming year, and will be a priority for the 2013 General Assembly.

Our vote of thanks should definitely reach the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic for overall support, the team at TZÚS Praha, s.p. and its supporters for excellent organisation and logistics as well as company PSJ a.s for allowing us to visit the AZ Tower building site

For more information on the World Federation of Technical Assessment Organisations, visit [www.wftao.com](http://www.wftao.com)

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