

Dear colleague,

The international society ISCOWA herewith presents the proceedings of the international conference WASCON'97, which has been held from June 4 till June 6, 1997 in Valkenburg the Netherlands.

SCOPE OF THE CONFERENCE

Many western countries are still facing the problem of a growing burden of waste materials, accompanied by a shortage of primary materials. Serious problems with cleaning-up old landfills and pollution of the groundwater are currently making disposal of waste very difficult in many countries. The protection of soil and water, the limitation of waste production and the re-use of waste materials are key items in policy concepts, generally stated "**Sustainable Development**".

With respect to waste materials, extensive research has been carried out to find a market for these materials, e.g. powder coals fly ash in concrete and incinerator slag in road construction. Beneficial use of products derived from waste materials can in fact contribute to sustainable development. However, the market for such waste-derived products mostly involves their re-use as construction materials, implying close contact with the soil. If not properly managed, this may result in pollution of the soil, or even of the groundwater, due to the uncontrolled release of contaminants.

In order to predict and control potential contamination, laboratory leaching tests have been developed in several countries, e.g. the USA, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands. The knowledge gained from this research can be used to control or eliminate possible contamination. A problem is the fact that the various tests being used are not comparable, but harmonization is on its way.

The second theme of the conference addresses the state of the art in technical solutions and procedures to use waste materials for the production of construction materials such as concrete, calcium silicate bricks, artificial gravel and other products. Solidification is discussed broadly, as is the treatment and application of MSWI by-products. Various contributions regarding environmental policy and legislation complete the conference. The organizing committee hopes that the conference indeed contributed to the solution of the environmental problems concerning the re-use of waste materials and thus to sustainable development in building practice.

On behalf of ISCOWA
Dr. J.M. Goumans