

Update of the European Technical Committee CEN/TC 346 -Conservation of Cultural Property-After a five year period

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Introduction

A specific European standardisation activity in the field of conservation of Cultural Heritage is essential to acquire a common unified scientific approach to the problems relevant to the preservation/conservation of the Cultural Heritage. Moreover, this common approach and the use of standardised methodologies and procedures would promote the exchange of information, would avoid the risk of duplication and foster synergy between the European experts and specialists involved in the preservation activity.

The scope of CEN/TC 346 is the standardisation in the field of definitions and terminology, methods of testing and analysis, to support the characterisation of materials and deterioration processes of movable and immovable heritage, and the products and technologies used for the planning and execution of their conservation, restoration, repair and maintenance.

In particular, the standardisation activity on the conservation of Cultural Heritage deals with:

- i) terminology relevant to movable and immovable cultural property, and to the conservation of the cultural property and of the material constituting the cultural property themselves, so that a common European terminology can be created;
- ii) guidelines for a methodological approach to the knowledge of the cultural property and of the materials constituting the cultural property, of the deterioration processes, and of conditions of optimum long-term conservation/preservation work;
- iii) test and analysis methods for the diagnosis and for the characterisation of the cultural property and of their state of conservation with regards to outdoor and indoor environmental parameters;
- iv) test and analysis methods (in laboratory and in-situ) for the evaluation of the performance of the products and methodologies to be used in the conservation work (ordinary and/or extraordinary maintenance);
- v) test and analysis methods for the evaluation of conservation conditions of indoor Cultural Heritage.

Standardisation in the field of conservation of Cultural Heritage will:

- i) improve the efficiency and pertinence of the diagnosis, reduce their costs, with a subsequent better management of funding for the conservation/restoration works and therefore increasing the number of conservation projects and spin-off economic benefits/opportunities for new investment, and consequent job creation;
- ii) give precise and appropriate indication on the kind of diagnostics studies to be performed, avoiding expensive researches, promoting in this way conservation works on an increasing number of artefacts;
- iii) help to develop and improve products, materials, equipment and technologies to be specifically used for the conservation of Cultural Heritage;
- iv) increase the durability of conservation works therefore reducing costs on a long-term range because conservation operations will be spaced out.

In 2003 CEN members approved the Business Plan and in June 2004 in the first meeting Vasco Fassina was appointed to Chair CEN/TC 346 for a six year period. Convenors of 5 Working Groups were fully appointed in the first half of 2005.

CEN members actually are 30: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Island, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

Users of CEN/tC 346

Users of the standards developed by CEN/TC 346 are:

- Public and government bodies (e.g. Ministry of Culture and Education, Government Agencies);
- Public national and international non-government bodies (e.g. ICCROM, ICOMOS, IIC, ICOM, Regional administrations, Provincial administrations or local governments);
- Restoration/Conservation schools;
- Ecclesiastical bodies/organisations;
- Public and private analysis laboratories;
- Restoration companies;
- Professionals in the field of conservation and exhibitions planning;
- Distributors and manufacturers of materials used in restoration;
- Companies specialising in the preparation and organisation of exhibitions;
- Transportation and packaging companies;
- Lighting installation companies, air conditioning and heating installation companies, informatics and advanced technology companies;
- Cultural institutions: museums, galleries, libraries, archives;
- Architecture and surveyors;

Structure of CEN/TC 346 and Work Programme. Chairman Mr. Vasco Fassina (Italy)

The structure of CEN/TC 346 is constituted by 5 Working Groups (WG's), corresponding to the different main areas for which technical development work has to be done. Under each WG the standardisation projects, called Work Items (WI's) will be developed.

CEN/TC 346/WG 1 - General guidelines and terminology. Convenor: Mr. Lorenzo Appolonia (Italy)

This WG has the responsibility for the drafting of:

-guidelines on conservation planning, including monitoring;

-standards on terminology dealing with movable and immovable components, with degradation processes and its graphic and symbolic documentation;

-guidelines on security and safety conditions relating to the use of cultural heritage by the public.

CEN/TC 346/WG 2 - Materials constituting cultural property. Convenor: Mrs. Vasilike Argyropoulos (Greece)

This WG has the responsibility to define tests and analyses methods:

-for the characterization of the materials,

-for the evaluation of the state of conservation/preservation of materials

CEN/TC 346/WG 3 – Evaluation of methods and products for conservation works. Convenor: Mr. Vasco Fassina (Italy)

This WG has the responsibility of drafting documents on criteria to select methods and/or products and operating/working conditions in relation to the conservation/restoration, repair, maintenance and preventive conservation works; and of drafting documents on the evaluation of the methodologies to be used.

CEN/TC 346/WG 4 – Environment. Convenor: Mr. Jesper Stub Johnsen (Denmark)

WG4 has the responsibility for the drafting of guidelines for the control of environmental variables, and of standards on the measurement of indoor, including exhibition and storage conditions, and outdoor environmental conditions, and on cultural property/environment interaction.

CEN/TC 346/WG 5 – Transportation and packing method. Convenor: Mrs. Anne de Wallens (France)

This WG has the responsibility for the drafting of standards on methods of packing and transportation of cultural heritage outside the institutions.

WG1 update

prEN 15898-Main general terms and definitions concerning conservation of cultural property. Scope: definitions of general terms used in the field of conservation of cultural property with particular attention to those terms which have wide use or significance. Sent to the 2nd CEN enquiry. Delivering expected at the end of 2010.

WI00346003: Glossary of damage. Waiting for activation.

WI 00346013-Condition survey of immovable heritage. Start of CEN enquiry by beginning of April 2010.

WI 00346012-Condition report of movable heritage. Start of CEN enquiry by beginning of April 2010.

WG2 update

prEN 16085-Methodology for sampling from materials of cultural property-general rules.

WG3 update

EN 15801-Determination of water absorption by capillarity. Published February 2010

EN 15802-Measurement of static contact angle. Published February 2010

EN 15803-Determination of water vapour permeability (δ). Published February 2010

prEN 15886-Colour measurement of surfaces. Formal vote March 2010. Delivering expected before June 2010.

WI00346001-Surface protection for porous inorganic material-evaluation of methods and products. Waiting for activation

WG4 update

prEN 15757-Specifications for temperature and relative humidity to limit climate-induced damage in organic hygroscopic materials. Formal vote in the first half of 2010 and expected delivering in June 2010.

prEN 15758-Procedures and instruments for measuring temperatures of the air and the surfaces of object. Formal vote in the first half of 2010 and expected delivering in June 2010.

prEN 15759-Specification and control of indoor environment-Heating of places for worship-Part 1. Submission to 2nd CEN Enquiry by February 28, 2010. Delivering expected at the end of 2010

prEN 15999-Guidelines for management of environmental conditions-Recommendations for showcases used for exhibition and preservation of cultural heritage. February 2010: end of CEN Enquiry. Delivering expected: June 2011

WG5 update

prEN 15946-Packing methods-Closure of CEN Enquiry on November 10, 2009. Delivering expected: March 2011

Liason established with International Institutions

Some International organizations made an application form to formally establish a Liason with CEN/TC 346. CMC accepted and the following organizations are now officially linked:

ICOM CC-International Council of Museum. Represents 22.000 members worldwide. (liason established in 2007)

IIC - International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. Represents 2.300 individuals in 65 countries. (liason established in 2008)

ECCO - European Confederation of Conservator/Restorers organization. Represents 5000 members in 16 European countries. (liason established in 2008)

UIA – International Union of architects. Represents 1.300.000 architects worldwide. (liason established in 2009)