



Summary of the 4th Annual EFB-FBB Greenroof-Symposia By Manfred Köhler, March 21, 2006

The European Federation of Green Roof Associations - *Europäische Föderation der Bauwerksbegrünungsverbände (EFB)* - and the German Green Building Association - *Fachvereinigung Bauwerksbegrünung e.V (FBB)* - hosted their fourth annual symposia in Ditzingen, near Stuttgart, Germany on March 9, 2006.

The Ditzingen Symposium has become a major meeting for German-speaking green roof professionals. Speakers from Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, and China presented the latest information about green roof technology in Europe, from a global aspect of "looking into the world." About 130 international participants listened to the one-day programme, and the event was accompanied by a trade show.



Above are some of our distinguished international speakers and guests.

Fritz Hämmerle, former president of the EFB, **Gunter Mann**, President of FBB, and **Paolo Abram**, President of the EFB, introduced the day's topics to our attendees. Following is a brief description of our presenters:

German **Manfred Köhler** presented the opening lecture about energy savings in regards to the selected growing media. New results performed by the University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg were discussed.

Martin Steinbauer of Vienna, Austria, shared new results in planting trees on buildings.

Paolo Abram of Italy spoke regarding the specifications of the Italian Green Roof Guidelines.

The talk of **Stefan Roth-Kleyer** of Geisenheim, Germany, was focused on the blowing processes of growing media from the lorry to the roof sites. It was deemed that this process does not significantly influence the size of volcanic cones.

Jennifer Dörries of Germany presented a new type of “multifunctional roof mat system” which does not utilize any growing media. This green roof system works to clean processed industrial waste water, and actually works like a treatment plant. This technology has approximately 15 years of successful experience with the Possmann and John Deere companies. (An overview of these projects is published in the 2005 book by Earth Pledge - [Green Roofs: Ecological Design & Construction](#)). The green roof as a water treatment plant is a unique example to reduce production costs within industry, and certainly is a rare example of a cost saving technology.

Stefan Brenneisen from Basel, Switzerland, introduced preliminary results of a case study about the breeding successes of selected bird species on green roof structures.

Anton Schühle from the City Administration of Ditzingen explained a new calculation model of the “Environmental Mitigation Regulation.” Now communities can combine all their activities regarding mitigation regulations in one place, and investors can get the permission required for construction easier. Green roofs are highlighted as an important role in this model. (This is a “typical German” regulation!)

Petra Christein from the City Administration of Villingen-Schwenningen, Germany, explained a bonus system for property owners who install green roofs. Vegetated roofs can become totally free as a result of the new rain tax system. Presently, shopping centers and big warehouse complexes are the main sources for paying the rain tax in Germany.

Our guest from China, **Binyi Liu** of Shanghai, shared the big challenges of the green roof market within China. Currently, there exist numerous megacities of more than 10 million inhabitants, with very few roof garden projects in place. She indicated that various research studies and implementation had begun to spread out to several cities in China.

As in previous years, it was a pleasure for **Manfred Köhler** to give the parting speech and offer a final outlook of the two organizations. The green roof market is growing fast - all over the world. The EFB obtained two new country members, as last month the UK and Sweden were added. Greece is planning to become a member next.

Green roof technology has the opportunity to provide answers to sustainable architecture in different climates. Climate-adapted solutions must be developed for different regions. Keeping the green roof world closer together, learning from each other – those are the tasks for the coming month. In comparison to the big problems of the world, green roof technology is a small but important stone in this larger world view and structure – it is certainly worth the effort to be part of this movement.

Satisfied participants left Ditzingen and we know that most of them are sure to come back again next year! And they are most welcome.

Manfred Köhler was the organizer and one of the lecturers of the 4th Annual EFB-FBB Greenroof-Symposia. He is the current German national representative of the EFB (European Federation of Green Roof Associations). Contact Manfred Koehler at:

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General information regarding the FBB can be found on their website: www.fbb.de. For more information about this symposium in German visit: <http://www.fbb.de/Folgeseiten/Aktuell.html>. For more information regarding the European Federation of Green Roof Associations (EFB), please visit: www.efb-bauwerksbegruenung.com