

# PROCEEDINGS



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IN THE WORLD OF STONE**

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## StonePT – Certification trust and quality excellence of Portuguese dimension stones

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### **Synopsis**

The main objective of the StonePT – Portuguese Stone Brand, is to certify the Natural Stone product, so that StonePT companies can technically communicate their products, with customers and prescribers, being easily identified through its BRAND, its Identity – StonePT.

The StonePT brand is supported by a certification system, aiming at the international recognition of Portuguese natural stone construction products, not only for its physical and mechanical characteristics, but also for the Portuguese transformer knowledge. This certification system, based on technical specifications and harmonized European standards for construction products using natural stone, aims at fulfilling a market gap with regard to guarantee of origin and quality assurance associated with the processing and , not least, the suitability of using each type of stone for different applications.

The advantages of using STONEPT brand by the companies could be listed as follows: a) Increases customer acceptance of products; b) Makes the difference compared to competitors; c) Increases competitiveness by reducing the costs of non-quality; d) Reinforces the image of the company; e) Facilitates access to new markets and, f) Allows to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements.

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### **Keywords**

StonePT, stone certification, stone market, Portuguese Dimension Stones.

### **Rationale for the creation of the StonePT brand**

Natural stone, which can be used as ornamental rock, is an abundant geological feature in Portugal, although there is no complete knowledge of the potential and effectiveness of each type of stone explored. In order to fill this gap, a certification system was developed, aiming at the international recognition of Portuguese natural stone construction products, not only for their physical and mechanical characteristics, but also for the ancient Portuguese transformer know-how. This certification system, based on technical specifications and harmonized European standards for construction products using natural stone, is intended to fulfill a market gap with regard to guarantee of origin and quality assurance associated with processing and , not least, a suitability of use that each type of stone for different applications. All this process, based on an image of quality and trust, is been disseminated all over the World as the StonePT Brand.

### **StonePT certification process**

The StonePT Brand certification process, is based on qualification projects for Portuguese dimension stones companies, supported by COMPETE2020/PORTUGAL2020 program, and is conducted through four essential steps: i) implementation; (ii) evaluation; iii) management and, iv) certification. After the implementation of the specific StonePT requirements, companies undergo an evaluation process, which will lead to product

certification. After that, the company will have to maintain and manage the implemented process control mechanisms.

The certificate is voluntarily requested by companies that must demonstrate to accomplish the requirements based in the following scope:

- Guarantee of origin for Portuguese stone products
- Product Quality requirements
- Quality assurance associated to the transformation processes
- Service Quality
- Time of Delivery;
- Complaint management
- Stones adequacy of use
- Stone material traceability

### Certifications

Product certification is an instrument for producers to demonstrate, in an impartial and credible manner, the quality, reliability and performance of their products at three levels:

**Certified** – The StonePT mark of certification (Fig. 1) intends to fulfil an existent void in natural stone market in what concerns the extraction locations and quality assurance associated to the transformation processes and, not less important, to the adequacy of use that each type of stone has for different applications, particularly those employed in the construction sector.



Fig. 1 StonePT Certified stamp.

The companies certified with StonePT demonstrate to accomplish the requirements based in three main pillars: origin of stone, skills to transform and control the final product, and knowledge related to the adequacy of use for each type of stone in each application (requirements for the end-user).

**Verified** – The environmental protection is a concern of any organization. The political discussions surrounding the subject and the consecutive increase in legislation imply a selection of suppliers that must have environmental awareness.

The StonePT Verified certification (Fig. 2) is the evidence concerning the social responsibility of the company in respect to general environmental concerns, from residues, water effluents to the impact of improving measurements in the surrounding environment.

This environmental certification is completely addressed towards the extractive and transformation industry dealing with natural stone.



Fig. 2 StonePT Verified stamp.

The StonePT Verified mark is granted to the companies that fulfil a system that commits with environmental requirements, properly adjusted to the activity leading to the transaction of Portuguese natural stone products showing also StonePT certification.

**DOC** – It is the CONTROL OF ORIGIN of Natural Stone (Fig. 3). It is assigned through the classification defined for each type of stone (the original raw material) that will be equivalent/tracked to those established through national or international institutions at the nomenclature level, and is granted to the quarry upon proof by the producer of the place of extraction, in particular at the level of geographical location and petrographic characterization. It has the advantage of accompanying the product, allowing manufacturing companies to acquire raw block while maintaining this distinctive Brand.



Fig. 2. StonePT DOC stamp.

### Advantages of using STONEPT brand by the companies

**StonePT** consists of a signature that distinguishes the Portuguese Stone from all products of the competition, using independent and credible stamps and certificates – internationally – for the recognition of Portuguese Stone as a contemporary quality product while:

1. Increases customer acceptance of products;
2. Makes the difference compared to competitors;
3. Increases competitiveness by reducing the costs of non-quality;
4. Reinforces the image of the company;
5. Facilitates access to new markets;
6. Allows to demonstrate compliance with regulatory requirements.

### Achievements (until now...) and concluding remarks

In the first phase of the project 20 pilot companies covering 52 stones were enrolled in the certification process. 18 quarries were certified with the DOC Stone PT subsystem; and the Stone PT Verified (Environmental Stamp) was only assigned to 6 companies, which demonstrated compliance with the environmental requirements set out in the environmental product verification specifications. There's an up to date free to use directory where the Stone PT companies are listed in the following address: <http://stone-pt.com/en/documents/>

What does it mean to be **Stone PT**? It represents a National value. Or better still, it represents national values. This is why we have captured the Portuguese soul to show what it means to be the hallmark of the Portuguese ornamental stone. The Portuguese Stone Brand presents itself with an international communication strategy, inspired by Portugal. Allusive to the slogan "We offer the Best (from Portugal to the World)", which is a declaration of Portuguese singularity, values and Portuguese raw material. Fado, football, sea and wine, ambassadors of the Portuguese name on the planet, meet the most varied types of national ornamental stones for a true celebration of what is Portuguese and are used together in outdoors publicity panels to promote Portuguese Stones.

Taking the old memories written in stone we can state that "If you want to do something to last long, just do it in stone!"

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