



Think Concrete, Go precast

Product category rules for concrete products: need for a common document applicable to all concrete products

Different concrete products are standardised in different CEN technical committees, whilst they might be manufactured in the same plant. In order to avoid unnecessary burden due to duplication of rules, it is imperative that the upcoming standardisation (in this case the sustainability assessment, but the principle can be extended to the assessment of the release of dangerous substances) is common to **all these products**.

BIBM calls for the development of a document including “Product Category Rules” (PCR) which can be used by all concrete products, whatever CEN/TC is dealing with their standardisation.

From the sustainable assessment point of view, concrete products are very close:

- same system boundaries (a construction product is coming out of the factory) can be defined in the production stage;
- construction materials other than concrete (steel, insulation etc...) can be included in the final product before leaving the factory;
- use scenarios can be developed following the “intended uses” as defined in the standards;
- special provisions on the use of recycled aggregates (both from internal production and from the dismantling of a building) and on the “dismantling and reuse” option can be developed.

Relevant CEN/TCs:

- TC 50 – Lighting columns and spigots
- TC 125 – Masonry
- TC 128 – Roof covering products
- TC 165 – Wastewater engineering
- TC 166 – Chimneys
- TC 178 – Paving units and kerbs
- TC 226 – Road equipments
- TC 229 – Precast concrete products
- TC 246 – Natural stones
- TC 256 – Railway applications

As a consequence, a **unique document** containing product category rules in line with EN 15804 needs to be developed. Additionally, most of these products are harmonised following the CPD; this document will therefore be used for the assessment of those characteristics which might fall under a harmonisation mandate.

CEN/TC 229, as leading CEN/TC dealing with concrete products, has been requested by BIBM to develop, as soon as possible, such a document. For this purpose, BIBM provided CEN/TC 229 with a draft document for product category rules. This document will be later on made available to all the other relevant CEN/TCs when dealing with concrete products.

Enclosed: *list of “10 reasons” to have a unique document for concrete products*
list of relevant CEN standards for concrete products



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BIBM (from the French acronym “Bureau International du Béton Manufacturé”) is the Federation of the European Precast Concrete Industry; established in 1954, it represents a sector mainly composed of small and medium sized enterprises, with a combined industry turnover of 28 billion Euro, directly employing approximately 190,000 European citizens.

10 reasons for having a unique Product Category Rules (PCR) for all concrete products

1. It is quite common practice that different concrete products are manufactured in the same production plant; those products may be standardised by different CEN/TCs. In order to avoid different assessment schemes within the same plant, the rules must be the same for all concrete products;
2. The same **system boundaries** can be defined at the production stage: a construction product is coming out of the factory, which is then installed on the construction site;
3. **Construction materials** other than concrete (steel, insulation etc...) may be included in the final product before leaving the factory; rules for the accountancy of such materials shall be defined in the document;
4. **Use scenarios** can be developed following the “intended uses” as defined in the (harmonised) standards;
5. Special provisions on the use of **recycled aggregates** (both from internal production and from the dismantling of a building) should be developed in such document;
6. The “**dismantling and reuse**” option can be developed at the end of life stage;
7. As a result of the four previous points, the “**cradle-to-grave**” approach is the common preferred route for concrete products;
8. Most of (all?) these products are **harmonised** following the CPD; the PCR document will therefore be used for the assessment of those characteristics which might fall under a harmonisation mandate, thus allowing a real abolishment of barriers to trade;
9. If the “declared unit” option is used (instead of the functional unit one), all concrete products are measured in “**tons**”;
10. There is a real need for a **quick availability** of such document, thus avoiding the proliferation of “concrete product” PCRs developed by other parties without the transparent approval procedure presently granted by the European Standardisation route.