

Fair Stone:

For socially acceptable standards in the natural stone industry!

First International Standard (Health, Safety, Labour Rights) for Natural Stones from Emerging Economies

Competition works only if social and environmental standards are incorporated.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel 2008

Increasingly, purchasers of natural stones from emerging economies demand that these products are complying with social standards and are willing to pay a higher price. This is a sign of their global responsibility. A lot of small-scale factories in China neglect safety and health at the workplace. Therefore silicosis, harms by noise and accidents occur at a high rate. Inappropriate labour rights also worsen the situation, especially of subcontracted workers.



Missing drive guards imply a great accident risk

Fair Stone

The mission of Fair Stone is the improvement of working conditions and the health situation in the natural stone industry of Asia. A social standard for natural stones from emerging economies has been collaboratively developed by the WiN=WiN Agency for Global Responsibility (see <http://www.fairstone.win--win.de/>), the German importer Seltra with its two Chinese partners SFS Stone and Delta Stone, the Setion Mining of the International Social Security Association (ISSA), and international experts for labour rights.



Two years ago, this programme started with the financial support of the German government (DEG) and is at the final stage now. In November 2008, the German Technical Board (TÜV) will carry out an audit of the Fair Stone social standard in Xiamen, China. Last year, the first 20 supply factories joined Fair Stone after declaring by signature that they are free of both,

child and forced labour. They committed themselves to the continuous improvement of the working conditions. Now their staffs wear breathing protection to avoid silicosis, and ear protection against hearing damage. Moreover, measures have been taken to enhance workplace safety, powersaving, and cleanness in the factories.



Gerhard Czuck, Germany, measuring the noise level at the work place

A vital element: Occupational Safety & Health

With the expertise of ISSA's Section Mining, the **FairStone OSH-Standard** has been defined. Meeting the criteria is a requirement to obtain the FairStone-Label.

The FairStone OSH-Standard at a glance:

- considers all the experiences from the factory visits
- simple structure
- clearly formulated requirements
- requirements are easy to control within the audit

The existing standard draft has been discussed with TÜV experts, the participating companies, and the Xiamen Stone Chamber.



Earplugs - a simple, but important method to avoid permanent health damage

As part of the Fair Stone Handbook "Social Standard for the Natural Stone Industry", an **OSH minimum requirement** has been defined. The Table of contents spans :

- 1. Organisation of Safety and Health
- 2. Risk Assessment
- 3. Training and Instruction
- 4. Maintenance and Inspections
- 5. First Aid and Fire Prevention
- 6. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- 7. Workplace Safety
- 8. Silica Dust and Mineral Dust
- 9. Noise and Vibration
- 10. Hazardous Substances
- 11. Machinery and Equipment
- 12. Electrical Appliances
- 13. Storage
- 14. Transportation and Lifting Gear
- 15. Ergonomics at Work: healthy work habits
- 16. Auxiliary
- 17. Shipping

