



**4th International  
Green Roof Congress**



**PRESS RELEASE**

**22 April 2015**

**4<sup>th</sup> International Green Roof Congress brought together 500 experts from 35 countries**

## **Congress of Superlatives - “Explore the Nature on Rooftops” in Turkey**

**It was a congress which has no equal. Superlative Green Roof projects, outstanding speakers, top-class presentations and an international collegial atmosphere made the two days at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Green Roof Congress in Istanbul from April 20-21, 2015 a Green Roof industry highlight.**

This year's congress of the International Green Roof Association (IGRA), under the patronage of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, was a Green Roof conference that may be considered unique in the world, not only in terms of its 500 participants from 35 different countries.

Featured Green Roofs included projects such as Marina Bay Sands, a landscape park in Singapore standing almost 200 meters above sea level, Bosco Verticale, a double-towered skyscraper in Milan with a façade-forest hosting more than 700 trees, and the congress venue itself, the Zorlu Center in Istanbul, whose roof garden is built on an elevated grade of 33 meters and has an area of 62,000 m<sup>2</sup>, complete with swimming pools.

"The Sky is the limit - Nothing is impossible" - renowned speakers from various disciplines led the participants to the realization that the green building industry is advancing into new dimensions and that, true to the congress motto: "Explore the Nature on Rooftops," there is much to discover in terms of new form and spatial utilization.

The organizers intentionally chose Istanbul, the transcontinental metropolis, as the congress venue where Green Roof experts from East and West came together for an intensive personal exchange. Even in the digital world personal interaction remains to be irreplaceable to establish cross sector contacts and develop new fields of application.

As part of the theme "Green Roofs in Mediterranean and Dry Climates," participants learned how transferring the Oasis Principle can change the concrete deserts typical of urban rooftop locations into charming oases. Projects from Armenia, Italy, Greece, Lebanon, Egypt and Turkey have thereby set new standards.

Providing an exclusive, inside view into the structurally diverse Green Roofs of the Zorlu Center, a **guided excursion** was led by Zerrin Buckalı on the morning of the first Congress day. The excursion was offered by Platinum Sponsor Zorlu Property Group, and was a exclusive happening as many of the Green Roofs are not open or accessible to the general public.

The programme of lectures over the two days was moderated by Fatih Türkmenoğlu, the Master of Ceremonies from Turkey. Within their official greetings Roland Appl, President of the hosting International Green Roof Association, Jean-Nöel Fourel, CEO of Onduline Group and Murat Ermeydan; President of Istanbul Branch of Turkish Chamber of Landscape Architects presented the importance and meaning of Green Roofs for sustainable and future-oriented urban development.

Opening the first round of lectures, Mesut Pektaş, Chief Executive Officer of Zorlu Property Group, delivered “Green Roofs from an Investors Perspective.” Following was Jaron Lubin, principal at Safdie Architects from the USA, who described works of groundbreaking innovation in the field of Green Roofs with his presentation, “Safdie Architects: Recent Works.” A number of impressive photographs, design renderings and short films, for example of the Changi Airport in Singapore, were presented to an appreciative audience. Roland Appl returned to the stage to present his theme, “Ten Steps to Designing and Building Reliable Green Roofs,” providing the foundation material for every professional designer and installer of Green Roofs. Malaysian architect and master planner Dr. Ken Yeang gave an interesting address on the practice of ecological architecture, with glimpses into whole city plans incorporating a vibrant and hirsute green aspect. Emre Arolat, founding partner of Emre Arolat Architects, spoke with local expertise delivering his presentation “A New Neighborhood in the City” from within his own creation, the Zorlu Center in Istanbul. The first day lectures ended with urban planner and landscape architect Prof. Herbert Dreiseitl, who spoke on “Shaping Liveable Cities – The Art to Integrate Blue-Green and Social Factors,” demonstrating the importance of an intentional incorporation of rainwater and green space in the urban environment.

The **IGRA Green Roof Leadership Awards ceremony** – prizes for especially exemplary Green Roof projects and initiatives – rounded off the first day of the congress and were divided into three categories: Trendsetting Architecture Projects, Municipal Green Roof Strategies and Green Roof Pioneers.

Tim Flynn (Tim Flynn Architects, UK) and Udo Dagenbach (Glasser and Dagenbach Landscape Architects) were awarded for their Armenian project "United World College Dilijan" with an IGRA Green Roof Leadership Award 2015. The College is situated near a national park, and includes near-natural Green Roofs and facades with an area of more than

6,000 m<sup>2</sup>, where local companies were hired and students were able to contribute to the greening by hand. Further prizes were given to Caroline Haas on behalf of the city of Paris for its plan to realize 1 million m<sup>2</sup> of Facade and Roof Greening in pursuit of urban improvement. Additionally, the research project "Remote Sensing - Green Roof Inventory and Potential Analysis", led by the German Aerospace Centre (DLR) in collaboration with the German Roof Gardener Association (DDV) and supported by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU). The prize was awarded to Julian Zeidler (DLR) on behalf of all partners.

There are a variety of extraordinary Green Roof projects to be found in Turkey. The final prizes went to two of them. The Troy Archaeological Museum, an underground museum of 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> near Çanakkale, was created by Ömer Selçuk Baz, founder of Yalin Architects, for exhibition, restoration, conservation and storage of artefacts; embedded with cafes, restaurants and active areas in the natural environment, this ongoing project deserved recognition. And for the Zorlu Center, their joint mixed-use project with congress venue, wide green public spaces and grand-scale buildings, the investor Zorlu Property Group (Mesut Pektaş), the architectural planners Emre Arolat Architects (Emre Arolat) and DS Architects (Dr. Deniz Aslan) and the executive company Karaoğlu Peyzaj (Nesrin Karaoglu Otuzoglu) were awarded.

A **boat cruise** along the European and Asian shores of the Bosphorus Sea was provided in the evening by title Sponsor Onduline Avrasya. This was a display of Turkish hospitality at its finest, with a relaxing atmosphere for networking, excellent catered dinner and drinks, and impressive views of Istanbul by night.

In the beginning of the second day of the congress, the participants divided into two parallel workshops according to their main areas of interest. These were, as with all the speeches, simultaneously interpreted in Turkish and English to ensure an intensive exchange experience.

**Workshop 1 “Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Green Roofs”** moderated by Burhan Karahan, CEO of Onduline Avrasya and Murat Ermeýdan, President of the Istanbul Branch of the Turkish Chamber of Landscape Architects, gave an insight into planning, construction and care of Green Roofs. An overview of Green Roof technical basics ranging from waterproofing to system buildups was presented by Melih Kamil, R&D Consultant at Onduline Group-OFITECH and by Ralf Walker, Horticultural Engineer and R&D Manager at ZinCo Germany. Dr. Deniz Aslan, Istanbul Technical University, Faculty of Architecture,, presented on “Green Roof Design at the Architecture and Landscape Intersect”. Barış Işık, Turkish Landscape Architect, delivered an address titled “Plant selection for Extensive and Intensive Green Roofs.” Further discussions included that from Jamil Corbani of Green

Studios in Lebanon, describing “Green Walls in Dry Climates – Practical Experiences” and from Nesrin Karaoglu Otuzoglu, general manager of Karaoglu Peyzaj in Turkey, on the “Installation and Maintenance of Green Roofs in Turkey”.

How can urban densification be combined with the improvement of Green City Infrastructure? **Workshop 2 “Green Roof Policies and Research”** (in cooperation with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality) demonstrated the possibilities of an urban planning tool based on the Green Roof strategies of Istanbul, Hamburg, Rotterdam and Paris, presented by Mehmet İhsan Şimşek (Department of Parks Gardens and Green Fields, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality), Dr. Hanna Bornholdt (Ministry of Urban Development and Environment Hamburg), Paul van Roosmalen (City of Rotterdam) and Caroline Haas (City of Paris, Management of Green Spaces and Environment), respectively. Wolfgang Ansel, director of IGRA, presented “The International Green Roof City Network”, an ongoing project enabling networking in the field of municipal Green Roof policies (regulations, incentives, public relations), and Dr. Heleen Mees described the basis of her recent doctoral work, “Green Roofs and Climate Adaptation.” Under moderation of the Architecture Faculty Deputy Dean of Istanbul Technical University Dr. Çağatay Seçkin, new scientific findings were presented by researchers from Turkey, USA and Germany: Dr. Mert Ekşi (Istanbul University Faculty of Forestry, Dept. of Landscape Architecture) spoke about his “Green Roof Experiments in Turkey and the USA”, while Dr. Serdar Celik described “Energy Aspects of Green Roof Systems” from his experience in mechanical and industrial engineering at Southern Illinois University. Addressing a matter of special interest with an increasingly prominent theme was Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Dickhaut with “Stormwater Management with Green Roofs.”

In the late afternoon, memorable projects were presented by their respective designers under the lecture theme of “**Green Roofs in Dry and Mediterranean Climates**”. Ayşegül Oruçkaptan, the President of the Turkish Chamber of Landscape Architects introduced us to that topic by presenting environmental aspects of Green Roofs in Turkey. Laura Gatti (Studio Laura Gatti, Italy) spoke on the experience and philosophy of her landscape project Bosco Verticale in Milan, and Ömer Selçuk Baz (Yalin Architects, Turkey) described the competition resulting in the award-winning Troy Archaeological Museum near Canakkale, Turkey. The UWC College in Dilijan, Armenia was presented by its architect and landscape architect, Tim Flynn and Udo Dagenbach, respectively. The Karela Office Park in Greece, the first LEED Gold certified building in that country, was described by Maria Kokkinou (Kokkinou+Kourkoulas Architects & Associates) and Helli Pangalou (elandscapes-H.Pangalou & Associates) from Greece. Durmuş Dilekci delivered “Mi’costa Residences-High Class Villas and Apartments with Green Roofs,” and Julian Zeidler from the German Aerospace Center (DLR) made a presentation titled, “What’s next: Remote Sensing- Green

Roof Inventory and Potential Analysis.”, a technique delivering data for sustainable urban planning decisions.

The great interest of the conference participants shows that there is a pronounced and swiftly developing trend for Green Roofs in dry and Mediterranean Climates, with new and unique projects emerging. Perhaps due to this fact, the Municipality of Istanbul decided to serve as Patron of the Congress, bestowing an additional honor and emphasis on the importance of the event to the city and region. The International Green Roof Association sees great potential and a wide range of applications in these regions, with different climatic conditions than those found in the traditional Green Roof regions of Northern and Middle Europe and the US, and as such will be active in these countries in the future.

Further information about the 4<sup>th</sup> International Green Roof Congress can be found at <http://www.greenroofworld.com>. The congress volume with summaries of the speeches and contact details for the speakers can be downloaded as a PDF.

Author: Sabine Frueh

**Contact Details:**

International Green Roof Association IGRA

PO Box 2025

72610 Nuertingen - Germany

Tel.: 0049 7022 7191980

E-mail: [frueh@igra-world.com](mailto:frueh@igra-world.com)

**Pictures International Green Roof Congress 2015**



Filename: Zorlu-Center\_03.jpg

Source: Murat Germen

Caption:

The Zorlu Center venue, partial view of the 62,000 square meter roof gardens which rise to 33 meters above sea level.



Filename: Lecture room\_ Raffles-Hotel.jpg  
Source: IGRA

Caption:  
With 500 participants, the 4<sup>th</sup> Congress issue was the most well attended event in IGRA history.



Filename: Laura Gatti with Bosco Verticale.jpg  
Source: Onduline

Caption:  
The congress participants learn about the interesting background to landscape architect Laura Gatti's already multiple award-winning property Bosco Verticale.



Filename: Award-Verleihung.jpg  
Source: IGRA

Caption:  
Rightly proud winners of IGRA Awards Ömer Selcuk Baz (Yalın Architects), Roland Appl (IGRA), Emre Arolat (Emre Arolat Architects), Nesrin Karaoğlu Otuzoğlu (Karaoğlu Peyzaj) Nihan Şeşen (DS Architects), Mesut Pektas (Zorlu Property Group), Julian Zeidler (German Aerospace Centre), Caroline Haas (City of Paris), Wolfgang Ansel (IGRA), Tim Flynn (Tim Flynn Architects), Udo Dagenbach (Glasser & Dagenbach Landscape Architects)



Filename: Canakkale\_Troja-Museum\_Rendering.jpg  
Source: Ömer Selcuk Baz

Caption:  
One of the awarded projects was the Troy Museum, which is already under construction. Most of the premises will be located under - ground or roof.



Filename: Zorlu-Center\_Excursion\_6503.jpg  
Source: IGRA

**Caption:**  
More than half of the participants took the opportunity to climb the Zorlu Center Green Roofs. (Tour commentary was provided via earphones)