San Giovanni al Natisone (Udine), 11th October 2017

CATAS LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

After many years, Catas gets back to Sicam in Pordenone, the international exhibition of components and accessories for the furniture industry, which represents a fundamental appointment for the whole sector.

*"It is a strategic presence for us -* observed **Franco Bulian** just before the exhibition opening *- being this a period of a significant renovation for our laboratory, now more sensitive to the market dynamics that in recent years have changed many of its reference points and in a very complex regulatory context. This is the reason why we decided to come again to this fair being also an active part of its different events. In any case we are well aware that we can meet here many of our partners among the several exhibitors and visitors"*.

At **Catas’ stand**, in pavillon 4, for the duration of the exhibition, the tests and services offered by the Friuli laboratory, **today the largest Italian and European institute in the field of wood and furniture**, have been presented to operators who arrived in Pordenone.

The presence at Sicam was also a valuable opportunity to meet the sectoral international press during a press conference and a convivial evening arranged in the laboratories of San Giovanni al Natisone, an opportunity to fully illustrate what Catas is today, what are the projects for the future and to show its importance and recognition at international level.

The managing director of the institute, **Andrea Giavon**, has briefly introduced Catas outlining the history of the Institute during the nearly fifty years of activity. The mission of Catas is to create tailored services for the increasingly modern and innovative wood and furniture industry, which is daily facing new standards and regulations that are intended and developed to protect the end consumer, especially in the fields of "safety" and "quality".

“*Catas was born in 1969 –* told Giavon *– on the initiative of the Udine Chamber of Commerce to support the manufacturers of the "Chair District ". Today Catas is an internationally renowned center of excellence, with a turnover of over 6 million Euros, more than 10,000 square meters of laboratories, 50 highly skilled technicians, two locations and a very wide and complete tests catalogue. Catas carries out more than 43,000 tests per year for two thousand customers around the world, the 40 percent of whom are foreign, from China to the United States States* ".

Catas managing director then presented the project of the **new "finished-product lab**", a facility of over 2,500 square meters, plus other 800 square meters of warehouse space, for a total investment of over 3 million euros. "*An investment that we will run in full autonomy and which will allow us to have more space and even more modern equipment, as well as areas to host training events and international standardization and certification bodies meetings in which we are an active part*", he said. The construction of the new building has just started and it will close by 2019: a work that will allow to expand and further enhance the test offer dedicated to the furniture sector but also the training, research and certification activities that are the other pillars on which the institute is firmly founded.

THE WORLD….

Catas is a reality that have been looking at the global market for many years: more than 40 percent of turnover comes from the activities for the big multinational groups and for many of the most famous and celebrated international design brands. Giavon provided relevant figures about this, including the ranking of the "**top fifteen customer countries"** for Catas being located in Poland, followed by Romania, Slovakia, Germany, Russia, Lithuania, United Kingdom, China, Portugal, France, Denmark, Brazil, Sweden, Turkey and Belarus.

However, taking into account only the number of customers, Germany is ranked at the first placed, followed by Poland, China, Romania, Lithuania, Turkey, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands, Bulgaria and Slovakia.

In any case, Catas has daily relationships with more than **two thousand customers in 50 countries** across the world, thanks also to the recognition of Catas work by government agencies, accreditation bodies, associations and international bodies.

THE "HOT TOPIC" FOR THE FURNITURE WORLD

Another point that Giavon has drawn to the attention of the numerous journalists was the recognition of Catas as a **TPC-Third Party Certifier** by **EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)**, the US agency which has also the formaldehyde emissions from wood based panels controls and certifications among its tasks.

The lab managing director has stressed what is the importance of the adoption of the California standards, started in 2009, in all the United States.

This new regulation prescribes that all the wood based panels, semi-finished product and finished furniture exported to USA must comply with the new regulation demonstrating their formaldehyde emissions through the certification of a recognized certification body.

This is another evidence of the competence and credibility of Catas that once again is ready for this important new service for the wood and furniture industry. By the end of the next year, **manufacturers, importers, distributors and panel suppliers** will have to comply with precise limits if they want to operate in US territory: 0.05 parts per million (ppm) for plywood panels; 0.09 ppm for particle boards; 0.11 ppm for MDF panels and 0.13 ppm for thin MDF panels (up to 8 millimeters).

Giavon then informed the journalists of the developments of a recent standard - **UNI11674: "Furniture - Requirements for determining the Italian origin of furniture "** - which for the first time makes the meaning of the words **"made in Italy"** objective. The origin and quality of a product in Italy are certainly globally perceived and recognized, but what are the conditions for this label to actually have a real value? How to prove that a chair rather than a sofa is actually made in Italy? Giavon presented to journalists a project made public at Sicam 2017, during a meeting with the value chain companies, a real "brand" that will make **Italian origin and quality** immediately recognizable and "proven".

The promoters of this initiative, which aroused the interest of many, are **Catas** and **Cosmob** - the two leading national laboratories for testing, and certification of the wood and furniture sector - together with **FederlegnoArredo**, the Federation of Confederation Associations of the wood furniture sector and in collaboration with **Friuli-Venezia Giulia Furniture Cluster**, the innovation point for the local furniture industry.