



## Italcementi Group opens i.lab centre for advanced research in building materials...the heart of innovation and sustainability

*The Italian Minister for the Environment, Corrado Clini, unveiled today the Group's new laboratory, a place where over a hundred people are engaged in research and technological transfer activities in the building materials sector. The innovative solutions accomplished across 23,000 sq.m. of i.lab are clear evidence of how cement can be an element that generates sustainable architecture and smart buildings.*

**Bergamo, April 16, 2012** - i.lab, Italcementi's new Research and Innovation Centre designed by the US Architect Richard Meier, was inaugurated today in the presence of the Italian Minister for the Environment Corrado Clini. The Minister cut the ribbon in front of a large audience including Giampiero Pesenti, Italcementi Chairman, Carlo Pesenti, the company's CEO, and the Group top management. Also attending were representatives and journalists from 18 countries where Italcementi Group operates.

Located in the Kilometro Rosso Science Park, the building has an overall surface area of 23,000 m<sup>2</sup> and hosts engineers, technicians and researchers from the Research & Development and Laboratories Departments of CTG, the Group Technical Centre, and from Italcementi's Innovation Direction, all engaged in investigating and developing innovative technological, functional and aesthetic solutions for new construction materials.

Built in line with the Group's concept of innovation, sustainability and architectural excellence, i.lab is the synthesis of this trail blazing technology in terms of quality of materials and green construction technologies, a place of knowledge and scientific know-how.

"Innovation is Italcementi's strategic lever to create its own competitive advantage," stated Carlo Pesenti, Italcementi CEO. The Group focuses on the continuous search for sustainable production processes and innovative architectural solutions to meet the growing market demand for applications and products that can enhance the quality of life and of the environment. About 170 people including chemists, geologists and engineers are engaged in Italcementi Group's Research & Innovation activities in Italy, with i.lab, and in France, at the Technodes campus based in Guerville, near Paris. An annual budget of approximately 13 million euro is destined to Research & Development activities, which represents - compared to the total turnover - one of the highest values in the construction sector.

“We have filed 60 patents over the last decade. The Group’s current innovation rate”, continues Mr. Pesenti, “that is the ratio of revenues generated by innovation projects to total sales, is equal to 4 while it was 3.9 in 2010, so gradually increasing as planned. The target is to reach an innovation rate equal to 5 and maintain it in the medium to long term.”

i.lab - concluded Mr Pesenti - conveys two fundamental messages to its community. First, innovation can respect the environment and industry can be the driving force behind a change that is advantageous for everyone, the economy, the environment and the society. The second message is that the future of business belongs to those who have been able to cleverly combine industrial and economic development with a careful use of natural resources and a deep respect for human rights, work and life.

Mr. Bruno Carré, Managing Director of Suez Cement group of Companies (SCGC), of which Italcementi is a main shareholder, also attended the i.lab opening ceremony. “i.lab is set to be a benchmark in sustainable architecture and a careful use of natural resources,” he said, adding that i.lab complies with very strict energy efficiency requirements, which allow it to save up to 60% more energy than a traditional building of the same size and end-use destination.