

Obituary

Professor Dr. hab. Witold Stanisław Dzbeński
(1937-2010)



Professor Dr. hab. Witold Stanisław Dzbeński

Professor Dzbeński was born on May 13th 1937 in Nalik (near Lublin). He studied at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW) at the Faculty of Wood Technology from which he graduated in 1961. Already in 1960 he started working at the Institute of Wood Technology in Warsaw, and since 1962 he worked in the Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW) getting the degrees of D.Sc. in 1969, Dr habilitatus in 1984, and the title of professor in 1990. In the years 1990-1993 he was a Vice Rector of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW) and between 1993 and 1999 was the Dean of the Faculty of Wood Technology. Till 2002 he was the Head of Wood Science Laboratory.

His main scientific interest was mechanical wood technology and in particular processing of wood materials. He is the author and co-author of over 270 papers including some published in worldwide circulation journals (“Holztechnologie”, “Holzforschung und Holzverwertung”, “Holz-Zentralblatt”, scientific journals of universities of Sopron, Moscow, Ljubljana, Nancy). Over 230 of his papers were published in Polish scientific journals such as “Folia Forestalia Polonica”, “Sylvan”, “Zeszyty Problemowe Postępów Nauk Rolniczych PAN”, “Przemysł

Drzewny”, “Annals of Warsaw University of Life Sciences – SGGW” and others. The list of his publications includes over 90 monographs and original scientific reports, 50 review papers, 65 articles popularizing science, one book and 8 chapters in scientific books. He was the author of over 270 unpublished works such as expert reports, opinions, reviews and 9 implemented technological solutions.

Polish wood science owes Professor Dzbeński a great deal. He introduced and promoted the use of nondestructive methods of wood investigation such as ultrasonic, vibrational and radiational. He dedicated great efforts towards widespread implementation of sorting of construction sawn timber according to mechanical strength to promote rational economy of wood use in Poland and also he founded the largest in Poland collection of wood species, including over 5.5 thousand exhibits and wood samples representing about 2 thousand species. Professor Dzben-ski devoted much effort to the studies supporting the activity of museums in the areas of identification of tree species and conservation of archaeological wood objects. He developed cooperation with a number of foreign research centres including the Slovak Academy of Sciences, INIA-Madrid, Technische Universität Dresden, University of Sopron, Brunell Univ.-High Wycombe, University of Technology in Espoo – Helsinki, SCA Concern Laboratories in Sundswall, ENSAM – Cluný. Three international projects with the University of Ljubljana, INIA Madrid, and University of Technology in Ulaanbaatar were realised under his chief management. He was invited to give lectures at many scientific conferences organised in Germany, Russia, Spain, Portugal, Slovenia and Ukraine. Since 1991 was a member of the International Association of Wood Anatomists in Leiden. He was an unquestionable authority in the field of mechanical processing of wood. Since 1987 he was a member of the Committee for Wood Technology, Polish Academy of Sciences, since 1993 – a member of the Section of Wood Constructions in Land and Water Engineering at the Polish Academy of Sciences. Professor Dzbeński was involved in the activity of the Main Board of Association of Engineers and Technologists of Forestry and Wood Science (since 2002 he was the deputy president of the Wood Science Commission) and Polish Forestry Association (since 1962). In the years 1994-1996 he was a member of the P06M Section in the Committee for Scientific Research and in the period of 1978-1981 a member of the Scientific Council of OB-R POLSPORT, and since 2003 also a member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Wood Technology. In the years 1970-1973 he participated in the work of the Editorial Boards of the Polish journals – “Przegląd Techniczny” and “Przemysł Drzewny”. He was a member of Wspólnota Polska Society and co-organiser of the Solidarity Trade Union Branch at the Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW) and an expert of the State Accreditation Commission.

Profesor Dzbeński promoted 8 doctors, two of them have got degrees of doctor habilitatus and one has a title of professor. He reviewed 10 habilitation theses, 7 doctorates, 6 applications for the title of professor, 5 applications for the position of professor and three applications for doctor honoris causa conferment.

For his research activity he was awarded by the Minister of Education (1970), Faculty of Agricultural and Forest Sciences at the Polish Academy of Sciences (1971) and the Secretary for Research Work of the Polish Academy of Sciences in 1982. For his achievements he was honoured with an Officer’s Cross of the Order

of the Restitution of Poland (2002), Cavalier's Cross of the Order of the Restitution of Poland (1995), Gold Cross of Merit (1981), Medal of the National Education Commission (1990) and 12 other medals or orders.

Prof. Dr hab. Eng. Witold Stanisław Dzbeński has greatly contributed to the development of both wood science and engineering of wood materials which is a highly promising area in Polish wood science.

Dr. Paweł Kozakiewicz

Prof. Dr. Waldemar Moliński