

activehouse newsletter

Highlight



Active House welcomes Global Building Alliance at COP21

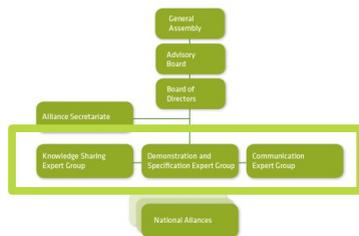
The Paris Climate Conference (COP21) participants have agreed on ambitious, non-binding targets to hold global warming “well below” 2°C with a reference to a long-term 1.5°C target in the text. More than 180 participants brought forward their commitments to reduce CO2 emission in their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). However, since according to analysis these are not yet enough to meet the 2°C target - and would only cap global warming at 2.7°C -, other initiatives have been launched at the conference, which need to be implemented.

Within this framework, the role of buildings were also discussed at a dedicated one-day event with high level speakers led by Ms. Ségolène Royal, French Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy. Acknowledging the huge climate action potential of the sector, a Global Building Alliance for Buildings and Construction - established under the umbrella of UNFCCC and the LPAA action track - with the participation of 20 countries has been launched. The partners of the new alliance have committed to work towards the 2°C target and communicate solutions as well as to cooperate with each other and exchange experiences. In order to scale up the implementation of the ambitious commitment, the worldwide Alliance will engage with cities, organisations, networks and private actors of the building sector value chain. Furthermore, the Global Building Alliance will establish high-level meetings at the coming climate conferences (COP) from now until 2020 and will work on targeted solutions in-between.

The Active House Alliance will - where possible – contribute to the efforts and will bring forward its experience and knowledge on development of sustainable buildings. For more details see [here](#).

Alliance Working for You

Renewed Workgroups from 2016 to work towards solutions for sustainable



construction

The Active House Board of Directors (BOD) held their last meeting of the year on 28th October in Brussels. Among other issues, participants agreed to relaunch their three Workgroups - Communication Workgroup, Demonstration and Specification Workgroup, and Knowledge sharing Workgroup - and assign a fresh work plan to them that best reflects the current challenges of the buildings sector. The work will kick-off beginning of next year with member companies and organisations of the Association. Besides, to accelerate the work on the new Active House Label and make it available for the public in spring, two additional Workgroups on this dedicated issue have been put in place at the end of this year with the participation of board members of the Association.

Active House presented its vision at Murator Building Conference in Warsaw

Active House participated in the Building Conference organised by Murator, the Polish leading building magazine. The event took place on 4th November in Warsaw, and brought together professionals of the construction industry to discuss the design of sustainable and energy efficient buildings. Active House's Secretary General Kurt Emil Eriksen explained at the Building Conference that "*Active House philosophy is to have the human being at the centre*" of the design. It builds on the knowledge of Passive House but takes a step further in order to encompass comfort and energy efficiency aspects in a holistic way. In line with this, Active House's ultimate ambition is to showcase to the public that nearly zero energy buildings (nZEB) can be built at an optimal cost and with a good and healthy indoor climate. For more details see the interview with the Secretary General [here](#).



Active House gave input to decision makers on the revision of the Buildings Performance law

The Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), adopted in 2010, is the main legislative instrument at EU level when it comes to reducing the energy consumption of buildings. In February 2015, the European Commission published an overarching initiative to coordinate the transformation of European energy supply entitled the "Energy Union Strategy". In the framework strategy document decision makers promised to review all the European energy efficiency legislation in 2016, which indeed includes the EPBD.

In view of this upcoming revision, the European Commission launched an online public consultation from June till October 2015 to gather stakeholders' input on the subject. Active House Alliance responded to the consultation, and called for a more holistic legislative approach to buildings' energy performance that includes health, safety and comfort issues, and makes these aspects just as important as energy

efficiency and environmental impact. It also suggests that over time, the EPBD becomes a “sustainability” directive giving more attention also to other elements than energy efficiency. In addition, it seeks for more visibility and awareness rising on the issue among housebuilders and house owners.

The European Commission will now analyse the inputs and assess how it will include them in its new legislative proposal expected to be published by the end of 2016.

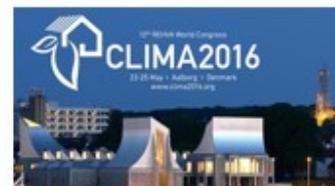
Active House to present its vision at CLIMA 2016

CLIMA 2016 is a truly multidisciplinary congress that plays an important role in integrating efforts and uniting different building professionals in order to achieve high living and indoor environmental qualities in nearly zero energy buildings (nZEBs). The Active House Alliance with its members is convinced that this is the right approach towards bringing more sustainability in the buildings sector. Therefore on this occasion Active House is planning to present its results and quality values on how to combine the essential three elements – energy, environment and comfort – that buildings need to respect.

Furthermore, it will showcase its tools that help to build and evaluate homes where human beings are placed at the centre of the design. Last but not least, challenges such as affordability and replicability will also be discussed at the session in Aalborg, Denmark. (For more information about the conference, see the “Events” section below.)

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Who is behind the Active House success? - Interview with the Secretariat

2015 has been an intense and successful year for the Active House Alliance! We have released new Guidelines on sustainable building design and we are only one stop away from being able to launch our new Active House Label. The latter will demonstrate the premium market value of buildings designed respecting our vision, combining comfort, energy efficiency and good environmental footprint in one holistic approach.

Besides these key achievements, the Secretariat of the Alliance has been very active on many other fronts in order to raise awareness and improve visibility to our sustainable building concept and supporting technical tools. But who are behind the scenes that deal with the daily management and define the strategy towards the success?

Q: Who are the people behind the successes of Active House?

Secretariat: The Active House Secretariat is composed by experts and professionals with a common vision: energy efficiency and sustainability first. Indeed the Secretariat is powered by cabinet DN, a Brussels-based consultancy, which has an extensive expertise in the green energy sector. The team comes with a great knowledge of the policies related to environment and energy together with an experienced communication team.

The activities are coordinated by the Secretary General, Kurt Emil Eriksen (Velux), who is the



spokesperson and the heart of the Association representing the Active House vision at conferences and workshops worldwide. From 2014 onwards, the duties of the Secretariat have been taken over by the cabinet DN team. Among others, the strategy is conducted by Timme Bertolt Døssing, whereas the implementation phase and everyday actions are managed and carried out by Petra Pálfi. They both have long years of expertise on sustainability issues gained in the heart of Europe, where technology meets policy. The technical work is supported on the financial and accounting side by Mark Cunningham. Given the growing number of tasks especially in terms of promotion of the Alliance, the Secretariat has recently welcomed its latest addition, Silvia Paleari. She will strengthen the team through her solid background on communication issues and will bring a fresh look into the awareness and emerging endeavors of the Alliance as of January 2016.

Q: What have you learnt in your previous experience which will help you in this new endeavor?

Secretariat: We have been working on corporate communication in the past and we are aware of the importance of visibility and showcasing for a company to be able to spread its message across the board. This is why innovation and creativity are crucial as this is a sector which constantly looks for groundbreaking ways of

expressing concepts to attract people's the interest. **SP:** I hope my skills will help Active House in spreading its message and getting its vision more present in the everyday discussions when it comes to building new houses and renovating existing buildings.

Q: From your perspective, can you explain what Active House has been doing well and what needs to be improved?

Secretariat: The communication of Active House has been effective at the moment. Social media and other communication tools have been used smartly. However, the question is what the Alliance wants to achieve in 2016. After the Alliance has done a great job over the past years in reaching out the professional audience, we think the targets will now have to move more to hand users. In this case social media will need to be developed even further, like the use of Twitter, Instagram and blogs, as this is the most straightforward way of reaching them out.

Q: What are the secrets of communication nowadays?

Secretariat: There is no real secret. To us it is important to *keep it simple*. We witness nowadays the wide use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter which shape the way people and companies communicate. They impose brevity and this has seen the rise of the use of key words, like hashtags for example, or the use of images. This is the case for infographics, in order to explain a concept, making it straightforward and easy to understand it. This is why it is important to simplify at maximum a message in order to be able to communicate just the most essential part of it. The question is whether this attention to conciseness is to the detriment of content development. The #Challenge precisely lies there: being able to deliver a meaningful message which has an added value using the less possible wording. #BeSimple #BeClear #BeValuable.

Q: How does Active House fulfill this criteria and what are the concrete plans for next year?

Secretariat: The Association - in close collaboration with its Board members - is currently working on an Active House Label. The new label will send a clear sign to consumers and building occupants about the premium market value of the properties that have been built in line with the Active House requirements. Association members have been defining simple criteria in term of selected indicators on comfort, energy efficiency, and environmental footprint, and the label will provide a clear response to concerns within these aspects when it comes to buying a new home or renovating the existing one. The new Active House Label is expected to be finalised and made available for consumers as of spring next year.

Developments towards more sustainability in buildings

Horizon 2020 funding for sustainable buildings

New EU funding opportunities for energy efficient buildings will be available for the period 2016-2017 under Horizon2020, the biggest EU research and innovation funding programme. Specifically, the H2020 Work Programme entitled “Secure, Clean and Efficient Energy” foresees the provision of funding to research and demonstration projects of more energy-efficient technologies and systems in buildings. In particular, projects aiming to achieve a ‘Deep renovation of buildings’ or a ‘Cost reduction of new Nearly Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB)’ will be eligible for funding. The calls will be open from March to September 2016. More information will be available [here](#).



Besides, other calls for proposals related to energy and resource efficiency in buildings are now open. For the period 2016-2017 under the H2020 Work Programme, relevant calls on “Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials” have been launched given the important role of the construction and demolition sector in the transition to a circular economy model. For more information see [here](#).



Marketplace for standardized energy efficiency projects under development

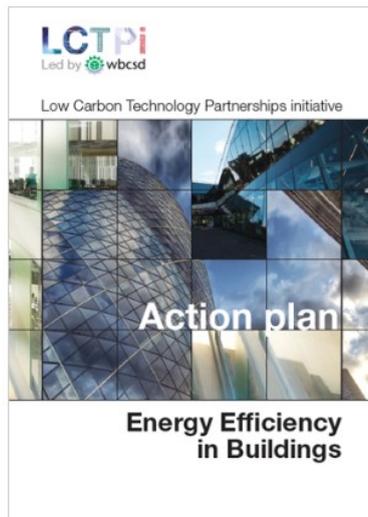
By streamlining transactions and increasing the reliability of projected energy savings, Investor Confidence Project (ICP) Europe intends to build a marketplace for standardized energy efficiency projects. The marketplace would connect project developers with a wide range of project investors including both equity and debt finance companies, building owners and managers, energy service providers, insurers, engineers, utilities, and a range of NGO and public sector organizations. As part of this endeavour, ICP Europe is currently developing a set of Energy Performance Protocols specific to the European sector. They will define a clear road map from retrofit opportunity to an investor-ready energy efficiency project. This will also ensure that building owners achieve the many benefits of improved energy efficiency including reduced operating costs, enhanced productivity, and a lower carbon footprint. For more information and your possible involvement in the process see [here](#).

New EU Strategy on resource efficiency picks construction and demolition as priority areas

On 2nd December the European Commission revealed its new resource efficiency strategy entitled “Circular Economy Package”. The strategy considers the construction and demolition sector as one of the priority areas where concrete actions in the coming years have to be taken. In particular, decision makers will aim at identifying and increasing the



recovery opportunities of valuable materials from buildings. On the ground it means readjusted waste management rules for the sector as well as facilitated access to environmental performance of buildings. As next steps, in close cooperation with interested stakeholders, experts will develop pre-demolition guidelines to boost high-value recycling, as well as will launch work on voluntary recycling protocols aimed at improving quality and build confidence. For more details on the new strategy see [here](#).



Construction industry takes joint initiative at COP 21 to reduce CO2

Within the framework of the COP21 (United Nation's Climate Conference in Paris) a thematic session dedicated to buildings took place on 3 December. At the event eleven leading construction companies from the building sector launched a joint action plan to reduce by 50% the projected energy use in buildings by 2030. Given that the building sector represents one third of final energy use worldwide and over 20% of global man-made Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, actions for the sector are inevitable. The programme is built on the Energy Efficiency in Buildings project (EEB2.0) launched by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, which on the same day released a corporate guide for investing in an organization's building portfolio, entitled "Energy Efficiency Toolkit for Buildings".

For more details see [here](#).

Events to discuss sustainable buildings



Transition towards post-carbon cities to be discussed in Italy

As part of the Sustainable Built Environment Series, on 18-19th February 2016 a conference on the transition towards "post-carbon city" will be organized in Torino, Italy. Among other topics, it will cover sustainable districts and sustainable built environment. Participants together with decision makers will work together at diverse sessions to identify how to establish new types of cities that are low-carbon as well as environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

For more information see [here](#).

focus in Austria

World Sustainable Energy Days 2016 will take place on 24 – 26th February 2016 in Wels, Austria. As one of the largest annual conferences in this field in Europe, it offers a combination of events on sustainable energy including: (1) The European Nearly Zero Energy Buildings Conference; (2) The Young Researchers Conference: Energy Efficiency in Buildings; (3) The Smart Facade Materials Conference; and (4) Technical Site Visits to Nearly Zero Energy Buildings. For more information see [here](#).

World
Sustainable
Energy Days | 2016



EcoBuild with housing issues on the main stage in London

Ecobuild is the leading exhibition and conference for the UK construction and energy market, attracting thousands of industry professionals from across the entire supply chain.

In 2016 it will be held on 8-10th March and set to be bigger than ever before. It will provide a vision of the future and will offer the insights needed to future-proof businesses across the construction sector. Given that housing is currently top of the UK construction agenda, Ecobuild will put housing on the main stage and dedicate the first day of its renowned conference to this key growth area.

For more information see [here](#).

Debate on Strategies – Stakeholders – Success factors in Germany

Under the theme of “strategies, stakeholders, success factors” the Sustainable Built Environment conference in Hamburg, Germany on 8-11th March will cover a range of topics relevant for the future of a more sustainable built environment, both on a global and on a regional level but also on building and product level. The main issue will be to show new innovative concepts of sustainability in the building sector, and the sustainable development of (new as well as existing) neighbourhoods. Further focal points will be the implementation of principles towards a sustainable development of the real estate sector and the crucial role of the public sector.

For more information see [here](#).



CLIMA 2016 on heating and cooling in Denmark

The 12th REHVA World Congress CLIMA 2016 is a leading



International scientific congress in the field of HVAC (Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning). It will take place in Aalborg, Denmark on 22-25th May 2016. The congress deals with the whole life cycle of buildings and their HVAC systems from design specification to demolition and reuse. This year event will especially focus on energy efficient building and HVAC system performance in practice both in relation to fulfilment of the intended design, in relation to their ability to fulfil the needs of the occupants and interact with the users' daily practice as well as in relation to their role in the future smart energy system. Abstracts for the conference are accepted until 20th December 2015. For more information see [here](#).

For more upcoming events in 2016 consult the Active House Events Calendar [here](#).

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Interesting Case

Do you have an Active House case you would like to share with other website viewers? Please feel free to upload your case to our website. It's free and easy. Follow these simple [instructions](#).

Members

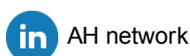


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