

BARCELONA MANIFESTO

WORLD SB14 BARCELONA

"BUILDING A COMMON HOME"

Barcelona, 30th October 2014

With hundreds of researchers, professionals, representatives of the business world, institutions, society, technical professionals, city representatives and international organisations, meeting in Barcelona for the World Sustainable Building Conference 2014, after three days of an intense and inspiring exchange of ideas and knowledge, we are coming to declare:

The need, the urgent need, for the building sector as a whole to look up and become aware of the authentic dimension of global challenges imposed upon it.

The building sector, the whole value chain, now accounts, approximately, for one third of global greenhouse gas emissions, one third of energy consumption, one third of waste generation and resource consumption, with a tendency to increase, in a very alarming way; only the extraction of materials in the past 10 years has been multiplied by 8. With the population growth and activity predicted for the coming decades, we can expect that in 2050 the building sector alone will generate all assumable emissions to not surpass the 2°C scenario advocated by the IPCC.

-It is our responsibility to change the momentum. It is our responsibility to prevent this from happening

-Our responsibility is to be lucid and courageous in our diagnostics, identify this momentum we need to change, to recognize the great challenges in its global scale and local diversity. Our WSB14 Global Vision Report and our Global Vision plenary sessions have moved forward in that direction. It is important to commit to keep this effort alive, to reinforce it.

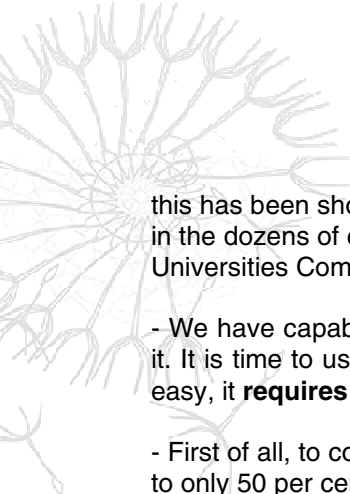
- It is our responsibility to set objectives against this tendency. The report itself proposes an emissions reduction target of 77%, both through efficiency and savings, as well through decarbonisation of the energy used by building. This target of 77% coincides with the amounts being proposed in other areas. Only with a target like this can we guide sustainable building worthy of the name. Sustainability cannot be understood in a banal way just as a small environmental improvement of our current situation.

At this point we recall the question that guides our conference: We, the sustainable building sector, are we moving as quickly as we should? Well, we know that the answer is NO. It is up to us to change the trend. We need a shift in our model, our paradigm.

- This new paradigm must take into account the basic concept of habitability. In developing countries, basic habitability must be provided through many new urban developments, but also through improving the living conditions in thousands of existing informal settlements; in both cases from a sense of immediate resilience. In the developed world, basic habitability will be provided largely by building renovation of the existing urban environment. In any case, in this new paradigm (that addresses the liveability needs of the coming decades in a way that respects our planet's and regions' biocapacity limits) all knowledge, all innovative contributions will be necessary. Coming both from the scientific world, business and political experience, and from popular, vernacular knowledge of communities.

- But moreover this Conference has shown all the possibilities that lie in our hands, the capacity to change that unwanted momentum.

- In the professional world there is a capacity to do so. A lot of work has been done in our sector, and very good indeed, we must admit it. But we have shown that we have the ability to do much more in the future;



this has been shown in the 144 sessions of this Conference, in hundreds of papers from all around the world, in the dozens of exciting proposals that we have received from the architects of the future, participating in the Universities Competition ("*Powering Transformation*")

- We have capabilities, and resources, and will. We have listened to our local and national politicians assert it. It is time to use all these skills, integrating knowledge, ability to work together, and learn fast. And it's not easy, it **requires giving important leaps**.

- First of all, to count more on people. We have heard how political regulations and market proposals amount to only 50 per cent of the solution. This is why we are not moving faster. The other 50 per cent is made up by adding information and communication - effective, credible, practical- to citizens. The renovation programs of the developed world, from which much has been said (and who have so many resources) will only be viable if people get involved in them. Housing projects in emerging countries will only be viable if people take ownership. We have seen how thousands of new homes in emerging countries are abandoned by their dwellers, who return to their slums. Dialogue with citizens on the local level is crucial. Communities worthy of the name are essential. Only on them can we build a market and a building policy that live up to the challenges ahead. They are the ones who will mostly bring the sensitivity and the local character needed for building, both related to the practical needs and priorities, and in relation to cultural identity and connection to the anthropological foundations on which new developments should be built. We need this dialogue at the local level.

We need, where possible and practical, concerted national strategies, for a long enough period to ensure its vision and continuity.

- And meanwhile we need a dialogue on a global scale. The one we are having at this conference, to be transferred to other global forums tackling the big issues that affect us (the new agenda for the further development of the Millennium Development Goals, the new urban agenda, the post-Kyoto global energy roadmap, the biodiversity preserving agenda, the agenda to control demographic explosion)

This global dialogue requires active involvement of this Conference's actors, working together. One of the main messages emerging from this Conference is that we need and want to work together. We will need to develop our annual Global Vision Report much further; we will need to update it constantly. We have to make it a mechanism that helps us work together.

To be honest, we will not know if this Conference has been a success until in a year or two or three, when we will be able to ascertain if the momentum of three days in Barcelona (preceded by many months' work) results in mechanisms to do so, to work together in the global dialogue, so that we can provide the global sector roadmap, which we are promoting.

We are summoning these local dialogues, the global dialogue. We are inviting you all to join this Barcelona Manifesto and work according to its spirit.