

PRESS RELEASE

WorldGBC launches [#BuildingLife](#) project to deliver EU Green Deal

European Green Building Councils will develop 10 national roadmaps and an EU policy roadmap to decarbonise the built environment across the whole lifecycle

7 December 2020, London – In the runup to COP26 and on the five-year anniversary of the adoption of the UN’s Paris Agreement, the World Green Building Council (WorldGBC) launches [#BuildingLife](#), a project convening ten European Green Building Councils (GBCs). [#BuildingLife](#) will drive a step change in climate action in the built environment. The ten GBCs will produce a suite of science-based and industry-backed national decarbonisation roadmaps. And WorldGBC will bring together representatives from across the sector in a European Leader’s forum to develop an EU policy roadmap for sector decarbonisation.

The GBCs spearheading the project are **Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain** and the **UK**. The project launches with the support of three prominent Members of the European Parliament: **Sirpa Pietikäinen** (EPP), **Maria Spyraki** (EPP) and **Ciarán Cuffe** (Greens).

MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen, EPP.

“By adopting a whole lifecycle approach, we can tackle the climate crisis, unlock the benefits of the circular economy and deliver the EU Green Deal. But we cannot embrace a whole life cycle approach unless the European Commission and national governments commit to ambitious policies to tackle the total carbon and resource impact of our sector. This is why I am supporting [#BuildingLife](#).”

Cristina Gamboa, CEO, World Building Council:

“We are in a climate emergency and COP26 is just around the corner. We cannot achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and deliver a climate neutral Europe unless we tackle the environmental impacts — both carbon and resource- related — across the entire lifecycle of a building.

With [#BuildingLife](#) we will work with industry leaders and European and national policymakers to fully decarbonise our sector by moving towards a whole lifecycle approach. The first step is to tackle the ‘whole life carbon’ — both operational and embodied carbon emissions — of our sector.”

What is [#BuildingLife](#)?

[#BuildingLife](#) is supported by a coalition of funders focused on driving a more sustainable built environment. Today WorldGBC announced that two new grants from the IKEA Foundation and Laudes Foundation, totalling over €3 million, have been secured.

The project aims to achieve the **mix of private sector action and public policy** necessary to tackle the whole-life impact of buildings.

Currently EU and member state buildings policy only addresses energy use while buildings are operational. #BuildingLife focusses not only on the operational emissions of buildings, but also on the environmental impact of the manufacturing, transportation, construction, and end-of-life phases of built assets – often called **embodied emissions** – which account for around 11% of all global greenhouse gases.

Tackling these emissions is essential to addressing the **total impact** of the building sector and progressing towards the [European Green Deal's aim of a climate neutral Europe by 2050](#).

Edgar van de Brug, Programme Manager Climate Action, the IKEA Foundation.

"The IKEA Foundation is supporting the World Green Building Council's #BuildingLife project to tackle whole life carbon emissions in Europe's built environment. We believe it offers a tangible way to protect the planet by aiming for net zero emissions in the construction industry, while developing green housing solutions that will benefit many people."

James Drinkwater, Head of Built Environment, Laudes Foundation

"Accelerating industry, regulators and investors towards a net-zero carbon built environment is critical — and we must tackle emissions across the whole building life cycle if we're serious about it. Laudes Foundation is proud to support the World Green Building Council's pioneering work: developing clear roadmaps with industry, shifting policies to tackle embodied carbon, and accelerating investor action on this agenda."

What will #BuildingLife achieve?

#BuildingLife will accelerate the ambitions of the European Green Deal in the building sector, and create the first region-wide response to the vision of a net-zero embodied carbon built environment set out in [WorldGBC's 2019 report](#). The project will create a pathway for other world regions to follow.

WorldGBC will do this by:

- **Creating** a roadmap demonstrating how EU buildings policy can adopt whole life carbon targets.
- **Launching** a new Whole Life Carbon Commitment within WorldGBC's global [Advancing Net Zero](#) project.
- **Establishing** leadership groups on a European and national scale to contribute to the creation of national whole life carbon roadmaps towards net zero.
- **Supporting** the development of a building product database on the full environmental impact of different building materials.
- **Kickstarting** a communications campaign recruiting MEPs, policymakers and industry leaders to publicly advocate for a whole life cycle approach.

Get Involved with #BuildingLife

Get involved with #BuildingLife or find out more about the project, [by getting in touch with your local Green Building Council](#).

Notes to Editors

About the [World Green Building Council](#)

The World Green Building Council (WorldGBC) catalyses the uptake of sustainable buildings for everyone, everywhere. Transforming the building and construction sector across three strategic areas — climate action, health & wellbeing, and resources & circularity — we are a global action network comprised of around 70 Green Building Councils around the globe.

As members of the UN Global Compact, we work with businesses, organisations and governments to drive the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Through a systems change approach, our network is leading the industry towards a net zero carbon, healthy, equitable and resilient built environment.

Find out more www.worldgbc.org

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