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Level(s) in the spotlight

Level(s) cited in EU legislation for the first time

Legislation featuring performance criteria to help the built environment sector reduce the whole-life carbon impact of new buildings has been approved by the European Commission. The criteria for new buildings also cite Level(s) as a tool to support companies and other stakeholders to track performance in this area. The technical screening criteria for new buildings are part of the EU Taxonomy Climate Delegated Act, which guides sustainable investments by highlighting economic activities that support the EU's environmental objectives. As part of the provisions, developers of properties larger than 5 000 square metres will need to calculate the building's lifecycle global warming potential (whole-life carbon) and disclose their findings to investors and clients.

The Act is part of an ambitious Sustainable Finance and EU Taxonomy package, covering many sectors. It supports the European Green Deal's goal to make the EU climate-neutral by 2050. Read the full [press release](#) on the Sustainable Finance and EU Taxonomy package.

Level(s) and New European Bauhaus showcased at EU Green Week

Thanks to those who joined the session on the 'Search for sustainable buildings' at EU Green Week on 3 June, which showed how the New European Bauhaus (NEB) and Level(s) can drive a circular and inclusive built-environment transformation.

EU Commissioner, Virginijus Sinkevičius, and Deputy Director General of the European Commission Joint Research Centre, Bernard Magenhann, framed discussions by highlighting how the NEB and Level(s) address core challenges in the construction sector. Specifically, the NEB drives new dialogue on inclusive buildings and aesthetics, while Level(s) provides a common language for applying sustainability-focused performance assessment and circularity principles to the built-environment.

Practical examples of such principles in action included talks by Christophe Hutin, Commissioner of the French Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2021; Alexandra Mitsotaki, World Human Forum; Matti Kuittinen, Ministry of Environment of Finland; and Simon Davies, AIA Environment.

During the closing remarks, European Commission Director for Circular Economy and Green Growth Kestutis Sadauskas emphasised that the NEB and Level(s) support a recovery that puts people and planet first, following a full life cycle approach.

[For those unable to attend, a complete recording is now available. Watch the video.](#)

Noticeboard

New on the Level(s) website

We have added a new 'Let's meet Level(s)' section to our [website](#). This new learning hub helps you identify how Level(s) works, what's in it for you, and how to get started. An [e-learning package and calculator tool](#) will also be added to the website towards the end of 2021 to help you learn how to apply Level(s) in practice. To be notified when these resources are released, simply join the [LinkedIn group](#).

Have you joined the Level(s) LinkedIn group yet?

The group is the perfect place to share experiences of Level(s) with the sustainable building community. You'll also be among the first to learn about Level(s) tools, e-learning materials, events and publications. Since the group launched in March it has grown to more than 400 members from all over Europe. [Join the LinkedIn group](#).

New from the helpdesk: Level(s) FAQs

Thank you to community members who have been emailing queries to the Level(s) helpdesk. We have developed answers to three frequently asked questions (FAQs).

They may be useful if you would like to:

- understand the difference between Level(s) and sustainability certification systems,
- learn how to get started with Level(s), or

- find out what kind of support is/will be available to help you to use Level(s) successfully.

We will continue to create additional FAQ answers based on your questions. In the meantime, if you need advice on how to get started with Level(s) please [email](#) your question to the helpdesk.



document

[Download the FAQs](#) (69.2 KB)

Essential viewing: Learn how Level(s) complements building certification systems

If you are interested in understanding how Level(s) complements building certification systems across the EU, be sure to watch the recently recorded LIFE Level(s) workshop video. The session highlights, through practical examples, how national certification schemes are adopting the Level(s) common language to stay aligned with European priorities and address climate change.

During her presentation, Josefina Lindblom of the European Commission thanked the Green Building Councils (GBCs) for raising awareness among built-environment sector professionals about these benefits, explaining that Level(s) 'will always need front runners such as the GBCs to push policy and the rest of the market'.

The session was hosted by the German Sustainable Building Council (DGNB) and the Croatia Green Building Council on 6 May. The [webinar recording and event report](#) are now available on the Croatia Green Building Council website.

Highlights from the RICS World Built Environment Forum

The RICS World Built Environment Forum hosted a fascinating webinar on 'Building Circularity into the European Economies through Sustainable Procurement' as part of its series exploring important challenges.

Panellists Josefina Lindblom, Policy Officer for DG Environment, Kevin O'Grady, Associate Director at ARUP, Tina Paillet, FRICS, RICS Europe Board Chair, and Yvette Watson, Co-founder of PHI Factory, discussed the future of the built environment and how to better integrate sustainability into the industry.

Josefina Lindblom introduced Level(s) and outlined how the framework plans to help embed a whole-life carbon approach and circularity principles in the sector. 'Level(s) is the language to get these things into policy,' she explained. Yvette also spoke about Level(s), saying 'Level(s) is a transparent and harmonised reporting platform, which brings in the full life cycle'.

Further emphasising the need to move towards greater sustainability, Tina stated 'public procurement should lead the way in including life cycle thinking and whole-life carbon. The private market will follow'.

Watch the [video recording](#).

How to put circularity into practice with Level(s)

Embracing the circular economy can help you to save raw materials, identify opportunities for reuse or recycling and to ensure buildings are sufficiently adaptable, should occupants' needs change.

We recently published a factsheet to inspire you to put circular economy principles into practice with help from Level(s). It includes interviews with eight experts, including built-environment professionals and policymakers, to understand how they plan to use Level(s) indicators in a variety of settings.

[Download Level\(s\): Putting Circularity into Practice.](#)

The Lindblom Interview

The Lindblom Interview

Interview with Professor Marzia Traverso, INaB Institute and Circular.srl



Please tell our readers about your role and your professional interest in Level(s)

I am a professor and Head of the Institute of Sustainability in Civil Engineering (INaB) at RWTH Aachen University in Germany. I am also a founding member of a consultancy called Circular.srl in Italy. I was part of the first working group to develop Level(s) with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, as INaB was involved in road-testing the framework. Today I promote Level(s) on my courses and among professionals.

How does Level(s) feature in your university teaching?

Most of my courses focus on life cycle assessments and sustainability assessments. For example, the Sustainability Assessment in Buildings lecture focuses on civil engineering in the building sector. Here we cover the Environmental Product Declaration according to the EN 15804 theory and practices in building certification schemes such as DGNB and we have a segment on Level(s). Next year we plan to go further by dedicating half of this lecture to Level(s) and by adding some practical exercises.

What's your experience of using Level(s) so far?

My students are quite satisfied with the methodology and I hope they will be the professionals leading this topic in future. Level(s) is very important for driving construction professionals and construction in general towards better sustainability performance, and it can be useful for defining benchmarks for buildings in terms of environmental, comfort and life cycle costs. Of course, there is a need for data and training at a professional level. As adoption of Level(s) increases we will start to have practical examples that we can share, to show how Level(s) can be integrated into building projects with the help of databases and tools. This would be particularly valuable for experts and students focused on the building design phase.

Do you have plans to use Level(s) in future?

I would like to use Level(s) on a project to build a new church or for retrofitting a hotel in Italy, where I come from. I will keep you informed if one of the two projects is approved! I would be happy to organise events in Germany and Italy to further present the framework.

Events

Save the date! Level(s) virtual conference

The European Commission is delighted to announce plans for the Level(s) virtual conference on the EU framework for sustainable buildings. Don't miss this opportunity to learn what Level(s) means for you and the built-environment sector.



Why attend?

- Learn how Level(s) works
- See the benefits for built-environment professionals
- Access new tools and e-learning materials
- Get your questions answered

Who should attend?

- Professionals involved in the design, planning, financing, execution of building projects
- Representatives of associations, agencies and public authorities responsible for the built-environment (building/construction, real estate etc.)

When is it?

24 November 2021, 9:30-12:00 CET

(Note: the event time may change. It will be confirmed at the opening of registrations)

How do I register?

Save the date in your calendar and join our [LinkedIn group](#) to be notified as soon as online registration opens.



date

24/11/2021



Organiser

European Commission



Registration

[Join our LinkedIn group to be notified](#)

What's your level?

Quiz – how much do you really know about Level(s)?

This time we will be testing your overall understanding of Level(s). Be careful! There are a few trick questions, based on some popular myths. Prepare yourself for a top score by watching the brief [video introduction to Level\(s\)](#), recorded by AHK Debelux (the German-Belgian-Luxembourgish Chamber of Commerce). [Take the quiz.](#)

About this newsletter

This newsletter is issued at least four times a year as part of the Level(s) initiative, and managed by Ecorys Europe on behalf of DG ENV.

Visit the [Level\(s\) page](#)

Contact us at: levels@ecorys.com

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