



COPENHAGEN DECLARATION SUSTAINABLE BY DESIGN

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF ARCHITECTS (UIA)

The International Union of Architects is committed to making our world **Sustainable by Design**.

The Declaration of Interdependence for a Sustainable Future established at the UIA World Congress in June 1993, and the Declaration on Sustainability and Cultural Diversity approved by the UIA World Congress in June 2008, underline the following facts:

The building and construction industries, and the processes that create, modify and remove built structures, and, the whole-of-life operation of those facilities represent half of our opportunity to resolve today's climate challenge. In addition, the environmental impact of our food, water and waste handling systems is determined by the form and operating characteristics of our built environment.

In the 1980's the environmental focus was on energy and technical solutions. Now we know that technology alone cannot solve our problems; we must engage holistically to attain both sustainability and a high quality of life for all.

UIA Objectives

The UIA is committed to reducing, or reversing, the negative impact of the built environment on the global climate. Here at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen the UIA is initiating its Sustainable by Design strategy, which will lead to the adoption of practical programmes at the UIA World Congress and General Assembly in Tokyo in 2011.

The UIA will work to:

- **Foster** awareness and practical knowledge among architects, engineers, clients, investors, contractors, statutory authorities and the wider community on how building design, urban design and regional planning affect society's environmental impact and can contribute to sustainable development and redevelopment.
- **Serve** the Millennium Development Goals and acknowledge wisdom from the past to improve the quality of life for all communities through sustainable development, whilst remaining open to new ideas.
- **Formulate**, in cooperation with other stakeholders, global guidelines with clear objectives, criteria and methods for sustainable architecture and built environments
- **Establish** Sustainable by Design as a universal architectural concept, by improving knowledge, strategies and methods across different climatic, political, social and cultural contexts.
- **Require** more and better education and training on Sustainability by Design within existing academic and professional development programmes, in accordance with the UNESCO-UIA Charter for Architectural Education.

SUSTAINABLE BY DESIGN

Architecture must utilise holistic, integrative methods from the smallest scale up through that of city and regional planning, never forgetting that buildings, landscapes, the natural environment and infrastructures are all essential elements in creating a sustainable future. A careful and considerate design of forms, geometry and spatial strategies, married with the appropriate materials, equipment and functional distribution can reduce the use of resources, greenhouse gas emissions and overall environmental impact by 50% to 80%.



Sustainable by Design: Strategy

- **Sustainable by Design** begins with the earliest stages of a project and requires commitments between all the stakeholders: clients, designers, engineers, authorities, contractors, owners, users and the community.
- **Sustainable by Design** incorporates all aspects of construction AND future use based on full Life Cycle Analysis and Management.
- **Sustainable by Design** optimises efficiency through design. Renewable energies, high performance and environmentally benign technologies are integrated to the greatest practical extent in the project conception.
- **Sustainable by Design** recognises that all architecture and planning projects are part of a complex interactive system, linked to their wider natural surroundings, and reflect the heritage, culture, and social values of the daily life of the community.
- **Sustainable by Design** seeks healthy materials for healthy buildings, ecologically and socially respectful land-use, and an aesthetic sensitivity that inspires, affirms and ennobles.
- **Sustainable by Design** aims to significantly reduce carbon imprints, hazardous materials and technologies and all other adverse human effects of the built environment on the natural environment.
- **Sustainable by Design** endeavours to improve the quality of life, promote equity both locally and globally, advance economic well-being and provide opportunities for community engagement and empowerment.
- **Sustainable by Design** recognises the local and planetary interdependence of all people. It acknowledges that urban populations depend on an integrated, interdependent, and sustainable rural-urban system for their life support systems (clean water and air, food, shelter, work, education, health, cultural opportunity, and the like).
- **Sustainable by Design** endorses UNESCO's statement that cultural diversity, as a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.

Sustainable by Design: Implementation

The UIA Council has extended the *Architecture for a Sustainable Future Work Programme*'s terms of reference, by establishing an international project team to develop practical methods for implementing the **Sustainable by Design Strategy**. The UIA will work directly with all of its 124 member countries to develop specific, national plans for implementing the **Sustainable by Design Strategy** over the coming year. **The Sustainable by Design Mission** will then be launched at the UIA World Congress in Tokyo in 2011, and submitted for formal adoption at the 2011 UIA General Assembly.

Two handwritten signatures are shown side-by-side. The signature on the left is a cursive "Louise Cox AM". The signature on the right is a stylized "UIA President".

Louise Cox AM
UIA President on behalf of UIA

Presentation to the COP15 Meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark
International Union of Architects
December 2009