

WORKING GROUP
SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES
MINUTES OF THE 4TH SCMT MEETING 12TH SEPTEMBER 2003
SHERATON FOUR POINTS HOTEL
2003/09/12 FROM 10.30 UNTIL 17.30

Attendants:

Livia Tirone, Tirone Nunes (chair)
Alain Sagne, ACE (coordinator)

Simon Goss, DG ENV

Chiel Boonstra, DHV
André Sougné, UEPC
John Goodall, FIEC
Eva Banos de Guisasola, EURO CITIES
Nigel Mortimer, Sheffield Hallam Univ.
Manfred Hegger, HHS Planer+ArchBDA (UIA)
Chris Luebke, Arup
Simon Roberts, Arup
Catherine Bouland, IBGE
Owen Lewis, EnerBuild
Vibeke Grupe Larsen, DAL-AA (ACE)
Vesa Peltonen, E-CORE
Luc Bourdeau, CSTB

Anneleen Lagae, DHV (rapporteur)

Apologies received from:

Mark Bacon, DG ENV
Adèle Lydon, DG RTD
Philip Bennett, CEPMC
Juan Campos Morales, DG ENTR
E. de Oliveira Fernandes, FEUP (who has resigned from the WG)
Sandra Gizdulich, DG REGIO
Janet Hallows, UNEP (Liaison)

Not confirmed:

Jonas Bylund, DG ENV
Randall Bowie, DG TREN
Hirohisa Awano, OECD

1.0 Welcome to all participants;

This meeting is the last meeting within the scope of this working group and therefore the last opportunity for a dialogue. Important concerns should be expressed during this meeting.

2.0 Brief introduction of new participants, if appropriate;

Introduction of Simon Roberts from Arup. He is the author of the draft chapter 4 about targets.

3.0 Approval of the Minutes of the third meeting;

The short version of the minutes of the third meeting held on the 5th of June 2003 has been circulated and is approved.

4.0 The main focus of this meeting will be the review of the content of the Interim Report and the preparation of the draft final report;

Almost all experts have reacted to the Interim Report; this is very positive but does not mean we can be content with the result so far. This working group cannot accept a status quo; neither wants to have a pessimistic message. The report needs to contain an inspiring message.

Before reviewing the Interim Report, a few topics where no consensus was yet achieved are discussed:

– *Sustainable construction: Is it a trend or a goal?*
Sustainable construction is not a short term but a long-term goal. One could call it a durable trend.

– *The success of demonstration projects does not depend on sustainability but on other local actors?*

We need good practice to create culture and continuity. Demonstration projects can create stereotypes and antibodies, but that risk has to be taken.

But, what is this working group actually going to recommend about demonstration projects in the report? There are a few problems:

- Demonstration is about making things visible and a lot of sustainability features are not visible.
- There are also a lot of demonstration projects where performance felled off at the end.
- One can question the actual result from the many demonstration projects that have been carried out last 5 years.
- To disseminate techniques; you need lots of them because local and cultural connection is necessary for good dissemination.
- Maybe there are cheaper ways and we have to suggest something better than demonstration projects.

This means that demonstration projects are important, but we should also be addressing other tools.

– *What are the relevant indicators, where should we be focusing on?*

If we can quantify the sustainability of buildings, then we can measure progress.

One of the key recommendations in this report is the need for good assessment of sustainability with a recognised set of minimum key indicators. A good methodology needs to be developed within a reasonable timeframe. This report has to give direction trying to find the main indicators.

The project CRISP provides an important database of sustainability indicators about buildings, products, city, and processes.

In chapter 4 about targets a proposal has been made for a minimum set of key indicators.

– *What is a holistic approach, integrated approach?*

Alain Sagne will send a good definition.

– *Use of the term construction*

Construction has a double meaning in English. It refers to the process and to the object. Where there is potential for confusion it should be addressed.

The interim report is reviewed chapter-by-chapter. (Only new ideas and recommendations and more general comments are included in these minutes, detailed remarks will be incorporated directly in the text):

- Besides the Executive Summary, it will be necessary to highlight the essence and resume it in 1,5 pages for dissemination purposes.
- Through the report, a distinction has to be made between Construction Industry (physical production) and Construction sector (production, design and engineering, management, etc.).

Chapter 1: Background and Introduction

- All statistics need to be verified and mention a source.
- Suggestion to leave paragraph 1.2 with definitions about sustainable construction out.

Chapter 2: State of the Art

- It is suggested to summarize the paragraph about the key issues; because some sections are repeated literally later in the text.
- In the paragraph about publication, it should be mentioned that each country has different emphasises with respect to sustainable building.
- It is not only about publication, but also about dissemination and awareness raising.
- Is it necessary to mention eco-labelling schemes and green certification? Environmental product declarations systems sound better.
- In the paragraph about demonstration, the efforts of DG TREN, DG RESEARCH and DG ENVIRONMENT should be mentioned.
- It is suggested to add a paragraph about education and about planning and financial instruments.

Chapter 3: Barriers and recommendations

- A reorganisation between sections A en B is suggested.

Annex 1: Barriers and recommendations for more sustainable construction listed by actors

- Some of the statements about the motivation of each actor should be revised.
- Examples should be left out of the main text.

Design team

- Add the recommendations:
 - Create an eco-label for design services, which could maybe also be applied for contractor's services.
 - Post-occupancy evaluation and monitoring should be designed into the project and the feedback should be communicated to the design team.
 - Train the design team on concepts like participation, environment and health.

Municipality

- Add the barrier: Integrated tools are lacking.
- Add the recommendations:
 - Public buildings have to set an example.
 - Building permits should be delivered based on an enlarged set of criteria including environmental and social criteria and aiming towards sustainability.

Waste disposal

- The waste treatment sector can be included with the utilities sector.

Health and Well-being

- Is there material available from the Working Group on Health Strategy? Catherine Bouland participates in both work groups and will try to transmit all relevant information.
- Indoor air's quality is a very difficult issue to assign responsibility on.

Member States

- Add the recommendation: Provide sustainability in building codes and technical regulations, there is a good example in Sweden, the so-called Building and Living project.

Consumer

- Title change Consumer = Occupier

Local Media

- Integrate local media with global media.

Research

- Add the barrier: The sixth framework programme awards only projects where an actual break through will be achieved.

Mortgage institutions and banks

- Add the recommendation: Make them co-responsible for potential building failures
- Good examples exist in the Netherlands and Germany.

Chapter 4: Targets

This chapter is important in order to make the next step.

Simon Roberts and Chris Luebkehan elaborated on this chapter and explain their progress:

It is a very detailed chapter, so it should be an annex. A condensed version of this annex will become part of the report. At this moment only examples of the UK are used, but other examples in Europe are to be included. It is important not to focus on the exact numbers, the concept of ranges is important.

Start point for the exercise was the list with quantifiable targets, produced earlier in this working group. The first question was: What is quantifiable at all? Next, the targets are restructured into different groups: Quantifiable targets, Requirements, Design parameters and Qualitative targets.

Quantifiable targets:

- Reduce CO₂ emissions (energy)
- Reduce waste
- Reduce water demand
- Reduce transport (New target-was not on the list)
- Reduce SO_x emissions (New target-was not on the list)

Separate list (Not fully quantifiable)

- Improve indoor air quality
- Improve comfort (There is discussion whether comfort can be measured or not. Contrary to what ASHRAE methodology suggests, a human being is more adaptable - There is a suggestion to change Comfort into Health and Comfort)

Requirements

- Energy monitoring

Design

- Improve energy efficiency of buildings by implementing appropriate construction methods and techniques (passive solar design) internalising the best of the local climate conditions
- Integrate renewable energy systems (active solar and wind)
- Specify systems to maximise efficiency in operation

Qualitative

- Flexible performance
- Life cycle Assessment (methodology is considered to immature to be used as a quantifiable target)

Next steps suggested:

The methodology should be applicable to new building and existing buildings.

The aspect of materials is not yet covered enough.

Chapter 5: Overlap Urban Design

The report of the Urban Design Working Group is suggested to be too vague and not specific enough, not reaching the appropriate depth.

5.0 Discussion of all contributions not yet included in the interim report aiming at reaching a consensus on the content;

This discussion has taken place under point 4.0.

6.0 Discussion of the examples from the EU MS to be used to illustrating the report and who will supply them, and time table;

Do the buildings need to be monitored before they can be used as an illustration?

Occupier assessment is very important. Because a satisfied user will buy another building and this is the real way to common practice. But this doesn't mean that we can show some projects without having them approved by experts, just as an illustration to create confidence and concreteness in the report.

Everybody is requested to bring 3 examples (domestic, non domestic, refurbishment...), including a text stating why it is a good example. Deadline is 26th September.

7.0 Discussion of necessary activities / tasks to cover the remaining areas of the report to the appropriate depth;

Reference list

- The reference list should include also non-English references. Highlighting the importance of some non-English references can create an incentive to translate them.
- Incomplete references should be avoided.
- The references should be clustered content wise.

8.0 Distribution of tasks – who does what and when – which will result in the further detailed work plan including precise time table and procedure for written comments on the final draft;

- The chair and rapporteur will incorporate the recent contributions from the experts and all comments made during this last meeting.
- All experts are required to send in examples and good references.
- Chapter 4 will be completed and included in the report.
- Then, the final draft will be circulated for final feedback from all experts.

- Finally, the examples and references will be introduced and final layout and editing will be done.
- A 1.5 page summary will be written for dissemination.

9.0 Specific points to raise at the Urban Environment Expert Group meeting, on 17th September (DG ENV);

The concerns of this working group about the report of the Urban Design Working Group will be communicated.

10.0 Perspectives for follow-up activities;

It is important to make sure the report can stand on its own. Then, it cannot only be used as a tool for the Commission, but also as a tool to get in touch with stakeholders and local or national authorities. Therefore, more needs to be done than only circulating the report; the SCMT Working Group will contact the Commission about this.

11.0 Any other business;

No any other business.

12.0 Thank you to everyone for his or her contribution.