

(For immediate release)

GlobalABC to lead ambitious country action for buildings decarbonization and resilience ahead of critical COP27

Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction Annual Assembly approves work plan and elects new Steering Committee

Paris, 22 March 2022.- Buildings and construction are responsible for almost 40% of global energy-related CO2 emissions - the equivalent of 14 gigatons of CO2 per year. Bringing together all actors in the large and fragmented buildings sector and accelerating emissions reductions and resilience is the goal of the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction, a global platform of governments, experts, private sector, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations that met from 7 to 9 March in Nice, France.

The Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction ([GlobalABC](#)) held its 2022 Annual Assembly on 7-9 March and its members approved the organization's results framework, annual work plan and budget, and elected the new Steering Committee. The decisions taken are critical to strengthen deep collaboration among all stakeholders and build momentum towards the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt to realize the potential for building decarbonization outlined at COP26.

For the first time, the Assembly was conducted in an innovative and fully hybrid format that allowed large participation of over 150 member organizations. Dozens of experts and representatives from all regions connected and participated on-line, while around 50 members and high-level speakers participated in-person.

GlobalABC members analyzed how to create a platform for countries to engage in setting an ambitious action agenda towards a fully decarbonized and resilient buildings sector, in the run up to COP27. National governments play a critical role to forge a common vision and rally all stakeholders to achieve it.

In the presence of the High-Level Climate Action Champion of Egypt for COP27, Dr. Mahmoud Mohieldin, several countries, including Denmark, France and Morocco, showed the way forward and shared best practice examples. Delegates in Nice and on-line agreed to offer the GlobalABC platform to showcase and promote country commitments and action towards COP27 and beyond.

The Assembly, hosted by the [French Ministry of Ecological Transition](#), in collaboration with [ADEME](#), was an official event of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union

and coincided with the EU Ministerial Conference on Housing and Construction. The event underlined that beyond the EU leadership, a global engagement of countries for building decarbonization and climate change adaptation is needed.

France's Minister-Delegate for Housing, Emmanuelle Wargon, participated in the opening session and reiterated the support of France to the work of the GlobalABC:

"France shares the imperative to act at the international level within the UN Environment Programme and this is ultimately what gave birth to the GlobalABC at COP21 and that is ultimately why you are here, to work together and to foster the transition to a resilient, energy-efficient and material-efficient sector by prioritizing energy efficiency without forgetting the need for affordable housing and buildings, showing that environmentally responsible, low-carbon buildings are essential and that investments in this sense are economically profitable in all countries".

Mechthild Wösförfer, Deputy Director General of DG Energy, European Commission participated in the opening of the Annual Assembly, outlining the EU key axes of action on buildings: "The next two years are crucial for decarbonization and for achieving climate neutrality by 2050. We want to increase the potential for GHG emissions reduction and also to increase the wellbeing of citizens. That is why we are launching the European Bauhaus initiative that focuses on the sustainability of the built environment and the transformation of urban areas with a societal approach fostering more sustainable behaviors and ways of life", she said.

At the High-level segment, the Director of Housing and Urbanism of the French Ministry of Ecological Transition, François Adam, and the General Director of Denmark's Housing Authority, Sigmund Lubanski, explained their countries' new buildings decarbonization policies including compulsory GHG emission thresholds based on a Life Cycle Assessments (LCA) approach, taking into account emission related to energy consumption as well as the carbon footprint of buildings materials and equipments.

France implemented this compulsory threshold for all new residential buildings in January 2022, and will extend it the next months to all types of buildings. Regarding Denmark, this obligation will start in January 2023 for buildings above 1000 m² and will be extended to all buildings in 2025. In both countries, these new regulations set a stepwise reinforcement of the emissions threshold for the next 10 years, to enable the building sector to adjust. France's representative invited all countries to engage in this pathway towards decarbonization.

Majida El Ouardirhi, Secretary General of Housing and City Policy Department, Ministry of National Territory Planning, Urban Planning, Housing and City Policy of the Kingdom of Morocco, emphasized, on behalf of the Minister Fatima Ezzahra El Mansouri, the importance of radical collaboration between all stakeholders in the value chain to achieve our climate goals, explaining "The low-carbon transition of buildings can only succeed through a

permanent collaboration between all actors and a common vision carried by all parties. It is essential to establish structured and sustainable partnership frameworks for convergence. In this respect, national alliances [...] make it possible to develop a common vision but also to accelerate awareness, boost commitments and exploit the opportunities that climate action and its multiple co-benefits represent. The Kingdom of Morocco was among the first to set up a national alliance, the National Alliance of Buildings for Climate, which was formalized on the sidelines of COP22 in Marrakech.”

Representing the business and finance sectors, Diane Holdorf, Executive Vice President of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), Ibrahim Al Zu'bi, Chair of SDG 13 (Climate Change), Global Councils on SDGs, Chief Sustainability Officer at Majid Al Futtaim Holding and Manelle Ait-Sahlia, Deputy Head of AFD's Energy Department also stressed the importance of such radical collaboration and highlighted the role of major corporations and development agencies, with government support, in accelerating market transformation.

Roland Hunziker, Co-Chair of the GlobalABC and Director, Built Environment at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) said: “The GlobalABC Assembly provided an excellent opportunity to create a platform for strong and ambitious country action towards building decarbonization and resilience, through deep collaboration with all stakeholders to transform the market. WBCSD calls for a strong involvement of the private sector to support countries' roadmaps and action plans.”

Martina Otto, Head of the GlobalABC secretariat and Head of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, underlined that “it is no longer about the ‘if’ but about the ‘how’ when it comes to low carbon and resilient buildings. The numbers are clear: the buildings and construction sector is a critical area for climate action.”

“The task is huge, but so is the opportunity: for innovation, for jobs, for economic development and for improved well being. Five years ago at COP21, when the GlobalABC was created, we came together because we saw this opportunity, but we also saw the need to elevate the attention to the sector and to overcome the sector's fragmentation. We talked about ‘waking the sleeping giant’, and the giant has woken up”.

“We had an amazing and rich Assembly, hearing from partners about actions, exchanging on solutions, advancing the work in the GlobalABC Work Areas but also celebrating some of our successes that provide a fantastic basis for the ‘phase two’ of the GlobalABC”, she concluded.

More information about the work and decisions taken at the GlobalABC 2022 Annual Assembly will be available on the [website](#).

Photos of the Annual Assembly are available [here](#).

About the Global Alliance for Building and Construction (GlobalABC)

Founded at COP21, hosted by the UN Environment Programme, and with over 200 members including 34 countries, the GlobalABC is the leading global platform for all stakeholders, including countries, cities, private sector, research, and NGOs to jointly work towards a zero-emission, efficient, and resilient buildings and construction sector. [GlobalABC](#) aims to be a global advocate and a catalyst to action, a trusted platform to set targets and track progress through the [Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#) and to support countries in setting priorities and measures based on their situation, including through [regional and national roadmaps](#).

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