

What role for Social Change in the built environment ?

Towards Sufficiency and frugality

COP27 Conference - Concept note

Wednesday, November 16th - Buildings Pavilion

Agenda:

- 1. What role for sufficiency and frugality as leverage for decarbonization of the building sector globally? - IFPEB¹ and French Energy Ministry**
- 2. Sufficiency and frugality, a tool for resilience?**
- 3. Sufficiency and frugality in the built environment: by whom? How?**
 - **The need for a social change, Yamina Saheb, IPCC Leading Author,**
 - **The role of market players in this change: an example from Cambodian sufficiency in use project (TBC)**
 - **The role of public policies in this change: an example from the Indian LIFE initiative (TBC)**
 - **How to inspire and mobilize professionals, citizen and NGOs? Experience from a the happy frugality movement, Dominique Gauzin-Mueller**
- 4. Closing:**
 - **The need for global work on how to foster sufficiency and frugality in the buildings sector**
 - **Collecting interests to further cooperate on sufficiency projects and measures in the building sector**

Over the last century, the abundance of low-cost energy has reshaped the way we live and work across all sectors of the developed economies. In the building sector, this has translated into energy intensive organizational systems at the expense of ecosystems : materials originated from far and often not adapted to local climate and more space consumed. Uses are also increasingly dependent on machines and appliances. If it has made it possible to satisfy many needs, those appear to be unequally met and at the cost of ecological pressure beyond planetary limits.

Yet, the scientific findings are clear on the transition (energy and environmental) and the paths that need to be followed to avoid future crises. To decarbonize the world economy by 2050, it is now clear that energy efficiency and cleaner energy sources alone will not be sufficient to decrease global emissions by 5% every year (i.e. the effect of the COVID pandemic each year) - since the latter have not proven efficient to decouple growth and energy consumption.

Success facing this challenge will require a real turn to less carbon-intensive or sufficient / frugal lifestyles. A turn that requires a real societal transition to different behaviors and imaginaries around energy consumption. For the building sector, this means acting on demand and targeting buildings designers and owners, policy makers and buildings users and managers.

¹ French Institute for Buildings Performance

Few initiatives are already experimenting with this social change by supporting “sufficiency” or search for moderation in the design, production and use of buildings and building services reducing energy, material resources, or space consumption. These initiatives concern “use sufficiency” (making the best use of the building and equipment to reduce consumption), “dimensional sufficiency” (sizing equipment to the conditions of use), or “structural sufficiency” (organizing space or activities to promote moderation). In developing countries sufficiency pathway could also valorize original way to construct and satisfy needs with an energy, materials and land use more adapted to local resources.

In the current climate and energy context, it is becoming even more acute to work at the global level on sharing sufficiency policies, initiatives, practices, experiences and how this could help accelerate the building sector transition.

Change in use, decision-making, new business models, innovation ... every way leading to sufficiency requires a change in behavior and perspective, deeply rooted in the local culture. Sufficiency-oriented policies and projects rely on a deep understanding of the psychological and sociological barriers and levers at play. Sharing best practices in factoring this knowledge could help foster sufficiency measures success.

The Workshop organized during the 2022 Global ABC General Assembly in Nice, attracted interest of several GABC members. **This conference aims to put the spotlight on the topics of sufficiency and frugality as a key levers to decarbonize the building sector, share experiences from successful initiatives and discuss the need to further cooperate on these topics at the international level.**

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About IFPEB

The [French Institute for Building Performance](#) (IFPEB) is an alliance of economic actors who are committed to implementing, through operational knowledge, the means of an ambitious and effective energy and environmental transition for real estate and construction compatible with the market. IFPEB has a strong history of working on building uses and management from a behavioral and sociological perspective with both the public and private sectors (in France and abroad) and has recently launched a comprehensive study on the desirability of sufficiency, along with the consultancy A4MT.