COMMUNICATION ASSETS
ABOUT THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION (GLOBALABC)

The Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) is the leading global platform for governments, the private sector, civil society and intergovernmental and international organizations to increase action towards a zero-emission, efficient and resilient buildings and construction sector. The GlobalABC was a key outcome of the 2015 UN climate conference.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL STATUS REPORT FOR BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

The Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction (Buildings-GSR) provides an annual snapshot of the progress of the buildings and construction sector on a global scale and reviewing the status of policies, finance, technologies, and solutions to monitor whether the sector is aligned with the Paris Agreement goals. The Buildings-GSR has become a reference document and this year’s fifth edition will be launched in December. It is a collaborative document featuring GlobalABC member input and examples from different regions. This year’s report also features chapters on COVID-19 impacts and opportunities, and on materials, health, nature-based solutions, and cooling for resilience.
PRESS RELEASE

Under embargo until 16 December 2020 - 3pm CET

Building sector emissions hit record high, but pandemic recovery can help transform sector - UN report

- CO2 emissions increased to 9.95 GtCO2e in 2019. The sector accounts for 38% of all CO2 emissions when adding building construction industry emissions
- Direct building CO2 emissions need to halve by 2030 to get on track for net zero carbon building stock by 2050
- Governments must prioritize low-carbon buildings in pandemic stimulus packages and updated climate pledges

Nairobi, 16 December 2020 – Emissions from the operation of buildings hit their highest ever level in 2019, moving the sector further away from fulfilling its huge potential to slow climate change and contribute significantly to the goals of the Paris Agreement, according to a new report released today.

However, pandemic recovery packages provide an opportunity to push deep building renovation and performance standards for newly constructed buildings, and rapidly cut emissions. The forthcoming updating of climate pledges under the Paris Agreement – known as nationally determined contributions or NDCs – also offer an opportunity to sharpen existing measures and include new commitments on the buildings and construction sector.

The 2020 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction, from the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC), found that while global building total final energy consumption remained steady year-on-year, CO2 emissions increased to 9.95 GtCO2e in 2019. This increase was due to a shift away from the direct use of coal, oil and traditional biomass towards electricity, which had a higher carbon content due to the high proportion of fossil fuels used in generation.

When adding emissions from the building construction industry on top of operational emissions, the sector accounted for 38 per cent of total global CO2 emissions.

“The rising emissions of the buildings and construction sector emphasizes the urgent need for a triple strategy to aggressively reduce energy demand in the built environment, decarbonize the power sector and implement materials strategies that reduce lifecycle-carbon emissions,” said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

“Green recovery packages can provide the spark that will get us moving rapidly in the right direction,” she said. “Moving the buildings and construction sector onto a low-carbon pathway will slow climate change and deliver strong economic recovery benefits, so it should be a clear priority for all governments.”

To get on track to net-zero carbon building stock by 2050, the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that direct building CO2 emissions need, by 2030, to fall by 50 per cent and indirect building sector emissions by 60 per cent. This would reduce building sector emissions by around 6 per cent per year until 2030, close to the 7 per cent decrease in 2020 global energy sector CO2 emissions due to the pandemic.

Worryingly, the GlobalABC’s new Buildings Climate Tracker – which considers measures such as incremental energy efficiency investment in buildings and the share of renewable energy in global buildings – finds that the rate of annual improvement is decreasing. It has, in fact, fallen between
KEY MESSAGE 1
CO₂ emissions from the building sector are the highest ever recorded.

→ Despite stable energy demand, CO₂ emissions from building operations and construction reached their highest level ever recorded in 2019 at around 10 GtCO₂, or 38% of global energy-related CO₂ emissions.
→ CO₂ emission increased because of a high proportion of fossil fuels used for power generation, combined with higher activity levels in regions where electricity remains carbon-intensive.
→ This underlines the need to aggressively reduce energy demand, while decarbonising the power sector and implementing materials strategies that reduce lifecycle carbon emissions.

KEY MESSAGE 2
The sector’s decarbonisation progress is slowing down: it needs to increase by a factor of 5 to achieve net-zero by 2050.

→ The rate of annual improvement is decreasing and moving the sector away from achieving decarbonisation.
→ Annual decarbonisation progress in the buildings and construction sector is slowing down, and has halved from 2016 to 2019.
→ To get the buildings sector on track to achieving net-zero carbon by 2050, all actors across the value chain need to contribute to the effort to reverse this trend and increase decarbonization actions and their impact by a factor of 5.

KEY MESSAGE 3
In 2019, spending for energy efficient buildings increased for the first time in the past three years, but remains outpaced by investment in conventional buildings and construction.

→ Building energy efficiency across global markets increased to USD $152 billion in 2019, an increase of 3% from 2018.
→ Spending for energy efficient buildings remains a small proportion of the USD $5.8 trillion spent in the building and construction sector: for every $1 spent on energy efficiency, $37 is spent on conventional construction approaches.
→ More investment effort is needed to decarbonize buildings.
Finance institutions and property companies are realizing the strong growth potential and investment opportunities of sustainable buildings’ investment.

- Green buildings represent one of the biggest global investment opportunities of the next decade, estimated by the IFC to be $24.7 trillion by 2030.
- Most of this investment potential – $17.8 trillion – lies in emerging market cities in East Asia, the Pacific, and South Asia, where more than half of the world’s urban population will live in 2030.
- Key ingredient to unlocking investment flows is green building certification, which helps serve as a verification instrument for facilitating the issuance of green bonds and other forms of sustainable finance.

The pandemic recovery can help transform sector, it offers a chance to reset and re-align commitments to higher levels of sustainability going forward.

- The impact of COVID-19 on the global construction industry has been severe and construction activities have dropped by 10-25% compared to 2019.
- Governments must prioritize low-carbon buildings in pandemic stimulus packages and updated climate pledges. Sustainable construction creates jobs, boosts economic activity, and activates local value chains while pushing for decarbonization, higher circularity and efficiency.
- The IEA estimates that up to 30 jobs in manufacturing and construction would be created for every million dollars invested in retrofits or efficiency measures in new builds.

The time to act is now and everyone needs to get on the road to zero.

- COVID-19 recovery packages and the resubmission of National Determined Contributions provide unique opportunities to build back greener.
- National governments must step up commitments in NDCs, longer-term climate strategies and support for regulation to spur uptake of net-zero emissions buildings.
- It is time for radical collaboration between public and private actors, across the entire value chain and across mitigation, adaptation and health agendas towards a zero-emission, efficient, and resilient buildings and construction sector.
Global share of buildings and construction final energy and emissions, 2019

Notes: Construction industry is the portion (estimated) of overall industry devoted to manufacturing building construction materials such as steel, cement, and glass. Indirect emissions are emissions from power generation for electricity and commercial heat.


Change in global drivers of trends in buildings energy and emissions 2010-2019

Source: IEA, Energy Technology Pathways, 2020
This Buildings Climate Tracker (BCT) is comprised of the following seven indicators: Incremental energy efficiency investment in buildings (global, $bn); Building Energy Codes (number of countries); Green Building Certifications (cumulative growth); NDCs with building sector action (Number of Countries); Renewable Energy Share in Final Energy in Global Buildings (%); Building Sector Energy unit Intensity (kWh/m²); CO₂ emissions.

Source: IEA Sustainable Recovery [IEA Sustainable Recovery, 2020]
#KeyFact1: Building sector emissions hit a record high in 2019 🌞🌆🏗

Buildings constitute 35% of global energy demand & 38% of CO₂ emissions ⚡💨

Read more about drivers and solutions in the new #BuildingsGSR by @Join_GlobalABC @UNEP 🌿📊

#KeyFact2: Global floor area is growing faster than population, energy demand & emissions 🌞🌆

But in 2020 due to COVID19 construction dropped by 10-25% compared to 2019 🏗📉

Read more about drivers & solutions in the new #BuildingsGSR by @Join_GlobalABC @UNEP 🌿📊

#KeyFact3: Interventions for building efficiency and retrofits have the highest job creation potential 🏗🧑‍⚕️👨‍🏭👷

Read more about the role of the building sector in a Green Recovery 🌿 in the new #BuildingsGSR by @Join_GlobalABC @UNEP 🌿📊

#KeyFact4: We are not on track to a net zero carbon building stock by 2050 🌞🏗️

The decarbonisation index halved between 2016 and 2019 🌿🌡💨

Read more about drivers & solutions in the new #BuildingsGSR by @Join_GlobalABC @UNEP 🌿📊
#KeyFact1: Building sector #emissions hit a record high in 2019 🌈🌆_construct

Buildings constitute 35% of global #energydemand and 38% of #CO₂emissions 🌴💨

CO₂ emission increased because of a high proportion of #fossilfuels used for #powergeneration, combined with higher activity levels in regions where electricity remains carbon-intensive.

This underlines the need to aggressively reduce energy demand, while decarbonising the #powersector and implementing #materials strategies that reduce #lifecyclecarbonemissions.

Read more about drivers and solutions in the new #BuildingsGSR by Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) and UN Environment Programme 🌱📉

#KeyFact2: Global floor area is growing faster than population, #energydemand & #emissions 🌈🌆

But in 2020 due to #COVID19 construction dropped by 10-25% compared to 2019 🏗️📉. Now is the time to change course and start investing in #BetterBuildings!

#Greenbuildings represent one of the biggest global investment opportunities of the next decade, estimated by the IFC - International Finance Corporation to be $24.7 trillion by 2030, most of which lies in cities of #emergingmarkets.

Key ingredient to unlocking investment flows is #greenbuildingcertification, which helps serve as a verification instrument for facilitating the issuance of #greenbonds and other forms of #sustainablefinance.

Read more about drivers and solutions in the new #BuildingsGSR by Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) and UN Environment Programme 🌱📜
**#KeyFact3**: Interventions for #buildingefficiency and #retrofits have the highest job creation potential 🏗️👨‍⚕️👨‍🏭👷

Governments must prioritize #lowcarbon buildings in #pandemicstimulus packages and updated #climatepledges.

#Sustainableconstruction creates #jobs, boosts #economicactivity, and activates local value chains while pushing for decarbonization, higher #circularity and #efficiency.

Read more about the role of the #buildingsector in a #GreenRecovery 🌱🌲 in the new #BuildingsGSR by Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) and UN Environment Programme 🗺️📄

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**#KeyFact4**: We are not on track to a #netzerocarbon #buildingstock by 2050 🌘строен. The #decarbonisation index halved between 2016 and 2019 😰📈💨 The time to act is now!

#Recoverypackages provide unique opportunities to #buildbackgreener.

#Governments must step up commitments in #NDCs, longer-term #climatestrategies and support for #regulation to spur uptake of #netzeroemissions #buildings.

It is time for radical #collaboration between #public and #private actors, across the entire #valuechain and across mitigation, adaptation and #health agendas towards a #zeroemission, #efficient, and #resilient buildings and #construction sector.

Read more about drivers and solutions in the new #BuildingsGSR by Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) and UN Environment Programme 🗺️📄.
USEFUL ACCOUNTS AND HASHTAGS

USEFUL ACCOUNTS:

- Twitter: @UNEP @Join_GlobalABC
- LinkedIn: UN Environment Programme, Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC)
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USEFUL HASHTAGS:

- #BuildingsGSR #2020BuildingsGSR #BuildingsAndConstruction
- #GlobalABC #ParisAgreement #ClimateAction #BuildBackBetter #GreenRecovery
SAVE THE DATE 16 DECEMBER 2020
2020 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction

Download the Social Media Cards | Pre Launch
SAVE THE DATE 📅 for the launch of the new #GlobalStatusReport for #BuildingsAndConstruction!

Stay tuned to get updates on #emissiondrivers and #energydemand trends in the sector since 2018 and some exciting new features 🏗️🌆🌍

📅 16 December 2020

@UNEP & @Join_GlobalABC

SAVE THE DATE 📅 for the launch of the new #GlobalStatusReport for #BuildingsAndConstruction!

This year’s report will provide an annual snapshot of the progress of the buildings and construction sector on a global scale. 🏗️🌆🌍

It will zoom in on emerging issues and trends in the sector, including #COVID19 impacts and opportunities, and some new focus topics including #materials, #health, #naturebasedsolutions, and #cooling.

The #BuildingsGSR provides an overview of the status of #policies, #finance, #technologies, and solutions to monitor whether the sector is aligned with the #ParisAgreement goals.

📅 16 December 2020

UN Environment Programme & Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC)
Did you know? Building sector #emissions hit a record high in 2019 📈🌆🏗️

But we already have solutions: together, we can still transform the sector! 📈🌿

➡️ Share your solutions to decarbonize the #buildings & #construction sector with the hashtags #GreeningBuildings #BuildingsGSR 🌍🏘️

➡️ Read this year’s #BuildingsGSR by UN Environment Programme & Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) to learn about the latest #emissionsdrivers and #energydemand trends in the sector 📈🌿
The sector far from being on track for decarbonisation, notwithstanding the effects of COVID-19

- **CO₂ emissions** from the building sector are the highest ever recorded at almost 10 GtCO₂
- 38% of global energy-related CO₂ emissions
- 35% of global energy use
- Nearly 55% of total global electricity
- Annual decarbonization progress almost halved from 2016 to 2019

It is possible to achieve net-zero by 2050 using existing technologies with bold action, policy and investments.