


# Sustainable Buildings & Construction Summit



## Sustainable Buildings and Construction Summit 2026

 **Dates:** April 20–22, 2026

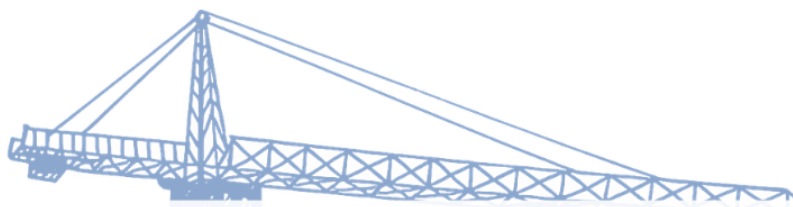
 **Location:** Lausanne, Switzerland

The [Sustainable Buildings and Construction Summit 2026](#) convenes government officials alongside academics, private sector leaders, financiers, and civil society—converging policymakers, researchers, and practitioners. Co-organised by **EPFL and the UNEP-hosted Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC)** secretariat, the Summit builds on the success of the first [Global Forum on Buildings and Climate](#) held in Paris in 2024.

Focusing on emerging markets and developing economies where built environment growth is most significant, the Summit will translate global sustainability commitments into practical solutions. The programme includes an **Intergovernmental Council for Buildings and Climate (ICBC) technical meeting**, cross-disciplinary workshops, academic showcases, and solution-focused roundtables for more than 800 practitioners expected.

The Summit's key deliverables are an outcome paper and a compendium of solutions. To encourage candid dialogue, sessions will not be recorded or livestreamed.

For further information, please contact [contact@sustainable-construction.org](mailto:contact@sustainable-construction.org) and [global.abc@un.org](mailto:global.abc@un.org).



SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS & CONSTRUCTION SUMMIT 2026 SPONSORS



ARUP

AUTODESK



CNBM

DAIKIN



HOLCIM

RICS

SAINT-GOBAIN

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC

| Time (CET)  | Session Title   | Description  |
|-------------|---|--|
| 9:00-10:00  | <b>High Level Opening</b>   |  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Amb. Christian Frutiger</b>, Vice Director General, SDC, Switzerland</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Frank Wolke</b>, Head of Division, BMUKN, Germany</li> <li>- <b>Prof. Anna Fontcuberta i Morral</b>, President of University, EPFL</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Hongpeng Lei</b>, Chief of the Mitigation Branch, Climate Change Division, UNEP</li> </ul> <p><i>More speakers to be announced soon</i></p> | Nearly half of global emissions come from the built environment, split evenly between operational emissions and those embedded in construction materials and infrastructure. As urbanization accelerates and resources become more constrained, the sector is a critical climate battle ground. With 80% of upcoming construction set to take place in emerging and developing economies, decisions made now will have major long-term impacts. Transforming the built environment is therefore essential not only for cutting emissions, but for advancing sustainable development and improving billions of lives. |
| 10:00-10:30 | <b>Coffee Break</b>   |  |
| 10:30-11:20 | <b>Setting the scene: Planetary Boundaries and the Built Environment</b>  |  |
|             | <p><b>Living within planetary boundaries</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Prof. Dr. Joyeeta Gupta</b>, Professor of Climate Justice, Sustainability and Global Justice, University of Amsterdam</li> </ul>   | This plenary will introduce planetary boundaries and their relevance to the built environment; examine the realities of population growth and the ethical dimensions of North-South expectations; explore opportunities for inclusive, sustainable development; highlight adaptation and resilience as key priorities; and discuss strategies for acting effectively amid political pushbacks.   |
|             | <p><b>Building healthy cities in emerging economies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ashok Lall</b>, Internationally Acclaimed Architect and Founder, Ashok B Lall Architects, New Delhi, India</li> </ul>   |  |
|             | <p><b>Key considerations for sustainable built environments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mariam Issoufou</b>, 2025 UNEP Champion of the Earth for Entrepreneurial Vision Founder &amp; Principal, Mariam Issoufou Architects</li> </ul>  |  |
| 11:20-12:20 | <b>Panel discussion: Exploring local realities</b>  |  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Prof. Dr. Joyeeta Gupta</b>, Professor of Climate Justice, Sustainability and Global Justice, University of Amsterdam</li> </ul>  | Climate action takes place at the subnational level. This plenary will showcase practical, on-the-ground approaches and solutions that enable effective, multi-scale mitigation and adaptation strategies for sustainable development.   |

|             |   |  |
|-------------|---|--|
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ashok Lall</b>, Internationally Acclaimed Architect and Founder, Ashok B Lall Architects, New Delhi, India</li> <li>- <b>Mariam Issoufou</b>, 2025 UNEP Champion of the Earth for Entrepreneurial Vision Founder &amp; Principal, Mariam Issoufou Architects</li> <li>- <b>Ms. Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr</b>, Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leon</li> </ul> <p><i>More speakers to be announced soon</i></p> |  |
| 12:20-12:30 | <b>Overview of Day 1 Workshop Topics and their ambitions</b>  |  |
| 12:30-13:30 | <b>Lunch Time</b>   |  |
| 13:30-15:30 | <b>Cross disciplinary workshops</b>   |  |
|             | <b>Scaling Resilience Across the Global South: Self-Built Housing as a Pathway to Safer, Climate-Ready Communities</b>  | This session will present evidence-based research and practice demonstrating how supporting self-built housing and basic services can expand access to climate-adaptive homes, particularly in informal and hard-to-reach communities.   |
|             | <b>From Risks to Results: Construction for Disaster Resilience</b>  | This workshop explores how to advance resilient development of the built environment in a changing climate while examine passive and active building and urban design strategies that strengthen resilience to heat, floodings, storms, fires (urban & wild), and other disasters. |
|             | <b>Procurement to accelerate sustainable buildings and construction</b>   | This session highlight how sustainable procurement in buildings and construction can accelerate climate action and drive market transformation.  |
|             | <b>Minimum Viable Carbon Accounting Principles That Work for All</b>  | This workshop explores how whole-life carbon (WLC) accounting can be made globally coherent yet locally actionable.  |
|             | <b>Designing Resilient and Sustainable Cities: Multi-Scale Solutions for Future-Fit Urban Growth</b>  | This session will showcase solutions that are leading the way in regenerative and sustainable urban planning.  |
|             | <b>Designing Resilient and Sustainable Cities: Multi-Scale Solutions for Future-Fit Urban Growth</b>  | This session will showcase solutions that are leading the way in regenerative and sustainable urban planning.  |
|             | <b>Nurturing the virtuous loop between Nationally Determined Contributions and Sustainable Development Goals</b>  | The workshop moves beyond high level frameworks to concentrate on the regulatory, financial, institutional, and coordination mechanisms that enable real world impact.   |

Programme as of 2026-03-23. Subject to change | Page 3

|             |   |   |
|-------------|---|---|
| 15:30-16:00 | <b>Coffee Break</b>   |   |
| 16:00-17:00 | <b>Panel and Flash Presentations</b>  |   |
|             | <b>Workshops takeaways – Panel discussion</b>   | Workshop leads and co-leads present three actions that have come out of each workshop   |
| 16:30-18:00 | <b>Financing and Capacity-building for locally led climate action in the building sector</b>  | This session, co-led by UNEP, the <b>GlobalABC Subnational Action Group</b> (ICLEI, UNEP and UN-Habitat) and Working Group 2 of <b>Local2030 Coalition</b> , explores how global commitments to scale up climate and adaptation finance - particularly the USD 300 billion annual pledge and commitments of the <b>Sevilla Platform for Actions</b> - can effectively reach cities and regions through the buildings sector.  |
| 17:00-17:30 | <b>Flash presentations</b>  | Presented by projects, start-ups and students   |
| 17:15-18:15 | <b>Intergovernmental Council of Buildings and Climate Breakout Session</b>  |   |
|             | <b>ICBC: World Championship for Energy Savings – Platform Launch &amp; Championship kick-off meeting</b><br><br><i>By invite only</i> | Launched at COP30, the <b>World Championship for Energy Savings (WCES)</b> is a global initiative under the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (UNEP) designed to identify the world's most energy-efficient buildings and demonstrate the potential of performance-driven decarbonisation in the built environment. We will be sharing the progression of the initiative with our key endorsing countries (France, UK, Brazil, Türkiye, Kenya) and will be presenting the WCES Platform which will have launched just in time for Lausanne to collect, verify and publish building performance data from participating countries |
| 17:15-18:45 | <b>GlobalABC Technical Coordination group</b>   |   |
| 17:15-18:15 | <b>Chemicals and Construction through the lens of Circularity</b>   | This 60-minute session introduces the links between chemicals, construction, and circularity, highlighting why chemical safety is essential for enabling reuse, recycling, and material recovery.   |
| 18:00-19:30 | <b>Networking Cocktail Reception</b>  |   |

| Time (CET)  | Session Title  | Description  |
|-------------|--|--|
| 8:45-9:30   | <b>Day 2 Opening: State of the art of Sustainable Construction</b>   |  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Sustainable Built Environment Continuing Education"</li> <li>- "Saint Gobain Barometer"</li> </ul>   | This session will feature the announcements of the launch of the Sustainable Built Environment Continuing Education and the Saint Gobain Barometer                                   |
| 9:30-9:40   | <b>The topic of the day</b>  |  |
| 9:40-11:00  | <b>The Growth Reality: Upfront embodied emissions and urban planning</b>   |  |
|             | <b>Best-in class technologies to enable development and decarbonize construction</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prof. Karen Scrivener, EPFL</li> </ul>  | <b>Design for decarbonization.</b> Focus on material and construction choices that can fulfil growing demand while decarbonizing.  |
|             | <b>Principles and potential of scaling bio-based construction</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Michael Ramage, Director, Center for Natural Material Innovation, University of Cambridge</li> </ul>   |  |
|             | <b>Resilience through the built environment</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms. Kotchakorn Voraakhom, Landscape Architect, CEO of Porous City Network</li> </ul>   | <b>Design for resilience.</b> smarter and green urban planning and design options for resilient urban communities and cities. Examples from Southeast Asia.                          |
|             | <b>Mapping Built Up Growth<br/>Densification Patterns in African Cities Using Satellite Data</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr. Magnus Andersson, Associate Professor Urban Studies, Malmö University</li> </ul> <p><i>More speakers to be announced soon</i></p> | Present analysis of spatial growth, densification, material use, and CO2 emissions in African cities based on satellite mapping and scenario modelling.                              |
|             |  |  |
| 11:00-11:30 | <b>Coffee Break</b>  |  |
| 11:30-12:30 | <b>Panel discussion: Growth Reality: Upfront embodied emissions and urban planning</b>   |  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Hakan Gordal, Member of the managing board of Heidelberg Material</li> </ul>  | This dialogue on subnational action will highlights on how those actors are making the best design, construction, material choices and decisions according to their local realities. |

- **Prof. Karen Scrivener**, EPFL
- **Mr. Kennedy Matheka**, Deputy Director, Buildings Safety & Climate Resilience, Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing & Urban Development, Kenya
- **Ms. Kotchakorn Voraakhom**, Landscape Architect, CEO of Porous City Network

*More speakers to be announced soon*

12:30-13:30 **Lunch Time**

13:30-15:30 **Cross disciplinary workshops**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Delivering Sustainable and Affordable Housing That Lasts</b><br><br><i>By invite only</i>            | This workshop organized as part of the Lausanne Buildings and Construction Summit, is aimed at how this could be done and it takes a granular approach - through the lens of the "Housing Continuum", or a <i>range of housing tenures and housing options</i> (UNECE 2017). |
| <b>Culture, heritage, and social sustainability: foundations for a sustainable and resilient future</b> | This co-creating workshop-led by experts in cultural heritage, social sustainability, and community-led design-encourage radical new conversations around sustainability.  |
| <b>From Buildings to Infrastructure: Designing Sustainable, Connected Systems</b>                       | This workshop explores how to better align buildings and infrastructure systems to deliver inclusive, low-carbon climate-resilient outcomes.   |
| <b>Sustainable Built Environment through Data infrastructure, Digital Systems, and AI</b>               | This workshop examines how data, digital systems and artificial intelligence can be applied in practical and responsible ways to advance sustainability outcomes across the built environment.   |
| <b>Circularity: Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, Repurpose &amp; Replace</b><br><br><i>By invite only</i>       | This interactive workshop will explore why the principles of Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, Repurpose, and Replace are essential to lowering the environmental impact of construction materials.   |
| <b>Scaling Demand-Side Flexibility for Climate Impact</b>   | The workshop will explore how EMDEs and early markets can unlock, monetise and scale demand-side flexibility from buildings.   |
| <b>Building Better for All: Advancing Gender Equity in the Built Environment</b>                        | This workshop aims to serve as a stepping stone toward implementable action to strengthen gender equality in the building and construction sector.   |

15:30-16:00 **Coffee Break**

|             |   |   |
|-------------|---|---|
| 16:00-17:00 | <b>Panel and Flash Presentations</b>  |   |
|             | <b>Workshops takeaways – Panel discussion</b>   | Workshop leads and co-leads present three actions that have come out of each workshop   |
| 17:00-17:30 | <b>Flash presentations</b>  | Presented by start-ups, projects, students  |
| 17:15-18:00 | <b>Intergovernmental Council of Buildings and Climate Breakout Session</b>  |   |
|             | <b>Unlocking retrofit finance at scale: How Property Linked Finance can mobilise investments for sustainable buildings</b><br><i>By invite only</i> | Drawing on real-world experience from countries already deploying PLF, participants will examine how these mechanisms address core finance barriers such as high cost of capital, short loan tenors, investor risk perception and difficulties aggregating projects |
| 17:15-18:15 | <b>Showcasing BeCool India and Somalia projects</b>   | To bring national government officials from these and other countries with project funds.   |
| 18:00-19:30 | <b>Networking Cocktail Reception</b>  |   |

| Time (CET)  | Session title  | Description  |
|-------------|--|--|
| 9:00-9:40   | <b>Rethinking the Blueprint: Sustainable Design Meets Circularity</b>  |  |
|             | <b>Designing for Disruption: Resilient Buildings and Infrastructure in a Climate-Stressed World</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mr. Will Arnold</b>, Head of Climate Action, Institute of Structural Engineers</li> </ul>  | By analyzing these challenges through the lens of resilience, the session will highlight pathways to integrate sustainable, adaptive, and inclusive design into solutions that safeguard people while delivering long-term quality of life.  |
|             | <b>Rethinking the Blueprint: Sustainable Design Meets Circularity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ms. Pamela Wackett</b>, Director, KPF</li> </ul>   | The speakers in this session will share from their broad experiences to illustrate what is possible with a sustainable and circular design mindset, but also challenges they have faced in moving beyond the norm to reshape how we value, design, regenerate, and strengthen the resilience of the places we inhabit.   |
| 9:40-10:30  | <b>Low carbon construction and zero emission ambitions and practices – the case of China</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Dr. Andre Ullal</b>, Project Manager ZEB China</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Wei Rushan</b>, CNBM Director</li> <li>- <b>Energy Foundation Beijing Office</b></li> </ul> <i>More speakers to be announced soon</i>                                  | This session will bring together perspectives from policy, private sector, and academia to learn more about the low carbon construction and zero emission ambitions and practices of China.  |
| 10:30-11:00 | <b>Coffee Break</b>  |  |
| 11:00-11:45 | <b>From Concept to Construction – how collaboration drives market transformation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ms. Jo da Silva</b>, Global Sustainable Development Director, Arup</li> <li>- <b>Ms. Carmen Diaz</b>, CSO, Holcim</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Joe Speicher</b>, Chief Sustainability Officer, Autodesk</li> </ul>   | A critical discussion to understand that leading businesses can bring visibility to real-world progress and evidence of market readiness and innovation, and therefore inspire policy action; and vice-versa ambitious and science-based policy can provide the enabling environment for businesses to go further  |
| 11:45-12:45 | <b>The Affordability Solution</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mr. Kinya Seto</b>, CEO, Lixil</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Cédric Borel</b>, A4MT CEO, Global ABC Sustainability Hub Co-Chair, Sufficiency Action Hub leader</li> <li>- <b>Ms. Judy Zakreski</b>, International Code Council SVP, Adaptation Hub leader</li> </ul> <i>More speakers to be announced soon</i> | This final session of the conference will set the tone for the period post-event by promoting sufficiency. A Sufficiency-First approach leads to optimizing demand while ensuring equitable, better living conditions across diverse cultural contexts. It does so through actionable levers to cut material consumption, energy needs, and pressure on natural resources. |

|             |   |  |
|-------------|---|--|
| 13:00-14:00 | <b>Official Closing of the Summit</b>   |  |
| 13:00-14:00 | <b>Lunch Time</b>   |  |
| 13:30-15:30 | <b>Toward a Common Language &amp; Infrastructure for Product Carbon Data: EPDs, PCFs, DPPs, and the Road to Harmonization</b> | Building Transparency and UNIDO/IDDI invite key stakeholders in <b>product-level carbon accounting and reporting</b> to a focused working session at the Sustainable Buildings and Construction Summit.  |
| 14:00-15:30 | <b>Intergovernmental Council of Buildings and Climate technical meeting</b>   |  |
|             | <b>ICBC technical meeting</b>   | This ICBC in-person technical meeting will bring together the country-wise designated Senior Representatives for the very first time. It will provide a dedicated platform to exchange experiences and best practices between the ICBC members and observer. |
| 14:00-15:30 | <b>Re-imagining the Materials Transition: Carbon as a Resource for Building Materials</b>                                     |  |
| (tbc)       | <b>ZIB Construction Road reconditioning and highway projects for the Government PWD</b>                                       |  |
| (tbc)       | <b>Architecture 2030 and RMI event</b>  |  |
| (tbc)       | <b>Global Buildings Performance Network event</b>   |  |
| (tbc)       | <b>GlobalABC Bio Materials Hub session</b>  |  |
| 14:00-16:30 | <b>Side events: Annual Meetings (by invitation) and lab visits</b>  |  |
| 16:00-17:00 | <b>Low-Carbon cement &amp; SCM Pledge</b>   |  |
|             | <i>By invite only</i>   |  |
| 15:00-16:30 | <b>Advancing on a Global Implementation Programme on Chemicals in Buildings and Construction</b>                              | This 90-minute workshop will advance the development of the Construction Sector Implementation Programme under the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC).  |