FORUM MONDIAL
BÂTIMENTS ET CLIMAT

BUILDINGS AND CLIMATE
GLOBAL FORUM

Ministerial Declaration

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Buildings and Climate Global Forum

General overview - Not part of the Declaration

On 7 and 8 March 2024, the French government and UNEP are organising the first Buildings and Climate Global Forum dedicated to the decarbonisation and climate resilience of buildings.

1,000 representatives of state and non-state organisations involved in the buildings sector (engineering, construction, real estate) and 80 ministerial delegations from various governments are invited. A Ministerial Plenary and round tables are scheduled for 8 March 2024.

The ministerial declaration aims to create momentum for buildings decarbonisation and climate resilience by reinforcing international collaboration and making calls for commitments, both from governments and state and non-state actors in the building and construction sectors.

The ministerial declaration is divided into 7 parts:

*1- **A review of international texts** and declarations contributing to the sector's transition objective(s)*

*2- **A review of the issues** identified in various reports by international organisations*

*3- **A recognition of the specific context of each country and the role of buildings and construction** in climate policies*

*4- **An expression of concerns** at the widening gap between the desired trajectory and the current situation and the risks involved*

*5- **An acknowledgement of the principles to be pursued** in urban planning and construction to align this sector with the goals of the Paris Agreement*

*6- **A commitment to strategies, policies and measures** to pursue these principles*

*7- **A decision on international collaboration and calls for action***

BUILDINGS AND CLIMATE GLOBAL DECLARATION

We, Ministers gathered in Paris, France - on 7 and 8 March, 2024 - for the first "Buildings and Climate Global Forum", and calling for further endorsements

[Multilaterally endorsed texts and declarations]

1. Recall

1.1. "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" - UN General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

1.2. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), agreed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

1.3. The Paris Agreement adopted at COP21 in Paris, France, on 12 December 2015.

1.4. The New Urban Agenda - adopted at the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016, and endorsed by the UN General Assembly resolution 71/256 of 23 December 2016.

1.5. UN General Assembly resolution 76/300 - adopted by the UN General Assembly on 28 July 2022 - "The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment".

1.6. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular its Article 25 recognising adequate housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living.

1.7. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 - adopted at the third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, on 18 March 2015.

1.8. The Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer - adopted at the 28th Meeting of the Montreal Protocol Parties in Kigali, Rwanda, on 15 October 2016. Decision XXVIII/1.

1.9. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework - Decision 15/4 adopted at COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal, Canada, on 19 December 2022.

1.10. The First Global Stocktake – Decision 1/CMA.5 adopted at the COP28 UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on 13 December 2023.

1.11. The Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge and, more specifically, the commitment to work together to collectively double the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements from around 2% to over 4% every year until 2030.

1.12. The Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action Pathway for Human Settlements - launched on 29 July 2021 with the Climate Champions to help Parties and non-Party stakeholders identify the actions needed to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

1.13. The work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and particularly its recent sixth assessment report (IPCC-AR6).

1.14. The work of the Forest & Climate Leaders' Partnership (FCLP) and particularly its statement endorsed by the Initiative for Greening Construction with Sustainable Wood on 6 December 2023 during the 28th UN Climate Change Conference.

[Facts published by International Organisations]

2. Acknowledge

2.1. The building and construction sector is responsible for over 34% of energy demand and around 37% of energy-related CO_2 emissions (or 21% of total greenhouse gas emissions, i.e. around 12GtCO_2) globally. These emissions result from both energy consumption, with 9% linked to combustion and 19% to electricity or network heat consumption, and use of building materials, which represents another 9%.

2.2. Over the past decades, buildings have increasingly faced exposure to climate-related hazards. International forecasts predict an intensification of these phenomena: **heatwaves**, exacerbated in cities due to the urban heat island effect, will impact around 1.6 billion people, subjecting them to extremely high temperatures; **rising sea levels** will expose 800 million people across more than 570 cities to coastal flooding by 2050; **stronger winds and heavy rains**, leading to flooding and responsible for 47% of weather-related disasters, can result in contamination, structural failure and building collapse. These climate-related hazards will affect, to a greater extent, countries and cities in developing countries and, therefore, deepen inequalities among regions.

Given the long lifespan of buildings, existing buildings and new construction must be adapted to local climate conditions expected until 2100, consistent with the reports developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

2.3. According to current global economic trends, **the world's raw material demand is projected to nearly double by 2060**, with construction materials set to dominate. The extraction of most minerals in construction materials relies on energy-intensive methods that have detrimental consequences for the environment and local communities. These practices contribute to biodiversity loss and water scarcity. Processing, production and transportation for buildings materials, also accounts for a significant amount of emissions and polluting chemicals negatively affect biodiversity and human health. Concurrently, 100 billion tons of waste are annually generated from construction, demolition and renovation processes; most of the materials are wasted at the end-of-use phase of these processes, with around 35% sent to landfills.

2.4. 55% of the world's population currently live in urban areas. **This figure is projected to rise to 68% by 2050**. The combination of rural migration and overall population growth may result in an additional 2.5 billion people inhabiting urban areas by 2050. These developments will particularly affect developing countries, where cities often do not have the necessary capacities and resources to accommodate the expected growth sustainably and climate-neutrally.

2.5. By 2060, the floor area covered by the buildings sector will globally double, **adding more than 230 billion m^2** in new buildings construction. It could triple on the African continent and even likely quadruple in rapidly urbanizing countries.

2.6. According to UN-Habitat, different forms of housing inadequacy are estimated to be affect more than 1.6 billion people worldwide, of which close to 1.1 billion reside in slums and informal settlements. With the world population growing, demand for housing and buildings will continue

increasing. This demand combined with the climate impacts are aggravating the multiple challenges faced by the housing sector globally: housing shortages, homelessness, access to adequate sustainable and affordable housing, energy poverty and lack of access to basic services, growing informal settlements and exposure to risks and vulnerability.

2.7. The scarcity of natural resources and the impact of climate-related hazards will also lead to considerable population movements, increasing buildings demand and adaptation needs, risking the exacerbation of social inequalities and precariousness.

2.8. 158 countries reference the buildings and construction sector policies in their 2021 nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. In 2021, 79 out of 196 (40%) of countries had building energy codes that were either mandatory for at least part of the building stock or had a voluntary component. Despite this, **only 26% of countries had mandatory codes for the entire buildings sector**, a portion of them with compliance uncertainties.

[National circumstances and the building sector]

3. Recognize

3.1. That the buildings sector is challenging to decarbonise given the complexity of its value chain and interdependency of its stakeholders. This sector needs to dramatically improve action and allow for a shared vision, coordination, cooperation and mutual trust.

3.2. The different situations of countries both in terms of existing building stock and of the necessity for new housing and buildings, of financial, technical and workforce capacities, of material availability, and the urgent need for energy-efficient and climate-adapted and resilient housing and buildings.

3.3. The central role of the buildings sector in GHG emissions reduction, and the importance of adaptation for human settlements.

3.4. The need to implement sound policies and actions to avoid lock-in effects:

- to drastically and systematically decrease GHG emissions from existing and new buildings;
- to enhance carbon uptake and storage in the urban environment;
- to adapt existing and new buildings to current and future climate change.

[Gaps & risks]

4. Are concerned by

4.1. The current growing gap between the actual energy and climate performance of the buildings sector and the necessary pathway to achieve its decarbonisation and resilience, leading to the sector remaining off track as improvements are outpaced by rapidly expanding floor area;

4.2. The insufficient volume of building renovation and sustainable building construction;

4.3. Investments into new carbon-intensive heating and cooling systems today, which lock-in unsustainable solutions for their expected life cycle and result in increased GHG emissions, despite the existence of carbon-free and economically beneficial alternatives;

4.4. Over-exploitation of natural resources for building materials which can be a major driver for considerable biodiversity loss and wider environmental degradation;

4.5. Continued investment and construction in climate risk-exposed areas and carbon-intensive new buildings that jeopardize the well-being and health of inhabitants, the resilience of cities, and the economic long-term stability of the real estate sector;

4.6. The need for enhanced financial flows, both private and public, to meet the needs and requirements of sustainable construction, renovations and adaptation of buildings, especially in developing countries.

[Objectives]

5. Acknowledge

The importance of accelerating the transition towards a buildings sector consistent with the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement in 2015, the Glasgow Climate Pact in 2021, the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan in 2022 and the outcome of the first global stocktake in 2023, and keeping the 1.5 °C goal within reach;

This transition should be implemented, or encouraged as appropriate and applicable in consideration of countries' national division of jurisdictions through the following operational objectives:

5.1. Planning: develop integrated urban planning policies aiming at greater resilience, efficiency, and sufficiency for all buildings, urban spaces, neighbourhoods and inhabitants at all levels (national, regional and local), notably through:

[Resilience]
(5.1.1.) Building only in appropriate areas, or with proper adaptation measures, to reduce exposure to climate and nature related hazards such as extreme temperature levels and variations, while avoiding contributing to urban heat islands, flash flooding and flooding;

[Existing assets]
(5.1.2.) Minimizing soil sealing and urban sprawl, loss of natural land, and surface area prioritising urban regeneration and the reuse of brownfields;

[Nature]
(5.1.3.) Safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity and soil health, as well as enhancing resilience, adaptation and human health and well-being through integrated approach based on green-blue infrastructure and nature-based solutions;

[City/urban planning]
(5.1.4.) Promoting dense, socially and functionally mixed-use spaces, inclusive and qualitative well-integrated neighbourhoods, notably to improve sustainable mobility;

[Urban integration]
(5.1.5.) Taking into consideration the interactions between buildings, neighbourhoods, urban spaces, and their context during the planning, construction and management phases.

5.2. **Construction/Retrofitting:** Plan, design, build, operate and manage all-round sustainable, culturally, functionally, socially and economically climate adapted, resource efficient, zero-emission, healthy, safe, flexible and resilient buildings through a whole life cycle approach, notably by:

[Resilience]
(5.2.1.) Anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to changing climate conditions, natural hazards and extreme weather events;

[Existing assets]
(5.2.2.) Prioritising the reuse, re-purposing and renovation of existing buildings and infrastructures to minimize the use of non-renewable resources, maximize and energy efficiency and achieving climate neutrality sustainability and safety with particular focus on the lowest performing buildings;

[Passive performance]
(5.2.3.) Prioritising integrated comprehensive design, retrofitting building structures and envelopes, and consistency between conception, construction and operation to ensure energy efficiency and a healthy indoor environment through passive means and, when needed, installing only highly energy-efficient systems, equipment and appliances;

[Materials]
(5.2.4.) Prioritising on-site assets, recycled and end-of-life use, local, sustainable, bio/geo-sourced, low carbon, energy efficient materials, products and components ensuring easy maintenance and repair for life extension, aligned with circular economy, eco-design and sufficiency and waste prevention principles, enhancing carbon balance through storage and absorption in building materials;

[Electrification]
(5.2.5.) Accelerating building electrification in order to reduce direct emissions and conventional pollutants;

[Construction site]
(5.2.6.) Minimizing water and energy use, waste and generated pollution as well as biodiversity loss on construction sites;

[Energy and refrigerant gas]

(5.2.7.) Using zero/low-emission energy sources for building services (i.e. heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting, etc.), inter-alia on-site renewable energy production, limiting offsetting and reducing gas and HFCs leakage in use and discharge to the air at disposal from equipment;

(5.2.8.) Enhancing energy demand flexibility, developing local grids at different levels to optimize renewable resources, and promoting energy saving behaviour and planning, including sufficiency, where appropriate.

[National pathways, policies and measures]

6. Commit to

Establishing and implementing, consistently with the Paris Agreement, and its goals, inclusive decarbonisation and resilience pathways for buildings at all levels, taking into account the operational objectives stated above (point 5) and implementing national policies and measures, as

appropriate and applicable in consideration of countries' national division of jurisdictions, necessary to attain the latter, such as:

6.1. Implementing long-term regulatory roadmaps and frameworks, mandatory building and energy codes for all buildings, or supporting the adoption of these at the subnational level; requiring integrated comprehensive design;

6.2. Implementing an appropriate financial framework, including financial and fiscal incentives and regulatory tools such as taxonomies, to dramatically increase affordable near zero emission and climate resilient buildings and to phase out the financing of emissive and non-resilient ones;

6.3. Advancing and promoting the adoption of standards, labels and certifications in the buildings and construction sector or supporting the adoption of these at the subnational level;

6.4. Leading by example through ambitious procurement policies with particular attention to public building procurements;

6.5. Promoting the production, development and use of low-carbon and sustainably sourced construction material at affordable costs;

6.6. Promoting collaborative value chains, as well as research and development for innovative, sustainable, affordable, cost-effective and healthy solutions, particularly for conventional and hard-to-abate industries, enhancing local sourcing of traditional appropriate low-tech solutions;

6.7. Enhancing skill capacity and capacity building at all levels, notably by strengthening local know-how and ensuring working conditions are protected and enhanced by mitigation and adaptation strategies;

6.8. Developing multi-level governance, multi-stakeholder coordination, and a participative approach to ensure appropriate implementation, coordination and compliance;

6.9. Developing tools and regulatory frameworks to collect and share best practices and the geographical, energy and environmental data necessary for effective decision-making;

6.10. Sharing best practices to enhance awareness and advocate for sustainable choices.

[International collaboration]

7. Taking into account the interconnectedness and interdependence of all countries with regard to climate change, which demands urgent and collaborative action to reduce emissions and mitigate the consequences and the need for global, regional and bilateral cooperation, and recognizing the need for global action to align the financial system and flows to the Paris Agreement goal, commit to:

7.1. Pursuing efforts to involve all stakeholders of the buildings' value chain to strengthen cooperation at and across all levels, including through technical assistance, technology transfer, enhanced financial flows and frameworks for ambition raising and market transformation, and to promote support for developing countries. Therefore we:

(7.1.1.) Encourage international fora such as G7, G20, G77 and UNFCCC COPs, multilateral bodies and IFIs to specifically address using dedicated working groups and to better take into account the

sustainable construction needs, mitigation potential and adaptation needs of the real estate, housing and building sector;

(7.1.2.) Encourage all stakeholders of the buildings' value chain to immediately engage and improve their action to enable the needed changes at all levels and to collaborate through initiatives such as the Buildings Breakthrough;

(7.1.3.) Acknowledge the important role of the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction, under the Secretariat hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme, as a preeminent platform for governments to collaborate in the pursuit of buildings decarbonisation and resilience.

7.2. Establish an "Intergovernmental Council for Buildings and Climate" gathering governments and facilitated by the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction, to exchange insights, share achievements, address obstacles, formulate recommendations, discuss follow-ups and assess the implementation of this Declaration and, for the concerned, other intergovernmental initiatives, recommendations and action plans. This intergovernmental council will convene:

- twice a year online, at senior administration level, to inform on the latest news and developments in each country and to exchange information and share experiences on policies and practices;
- Yearly, at ministerial level, in conjunction with an international event (World Urban Forum, UNFCCC-COP, UNEA, etc.);
- If possible, every 3 years with stakeholders, in a "Buildings and Climate Global Forum".

[Expression of thanks]

8. Extend our sincere appreciation to the Government of France for making possible the Buildings and Climate Global Forum, for kindly hosting and facilitating it, as well as for its gracious engagement and leadership to ensure the success of this event.

As of 25 September 2024, this declaration is endorsed by:

1. Armenia
2. Australia
3. Austria
4. Azerbaijan
5. Bangladesh
6. Brazil
7. Bulgaria
8. Cambodia
9. Canada
10. Costa-Rica
11. Croatia
12. Czech Republic
13. Denmark
14. Djibouti
15. Egypt
16. Estonia
17. France
18. Gabon
19. Georgia
20. Germany
21. Ghana
22. Greece
23. Guinea-Bissau
24. Hungary
25. Ireland
26. Italy
27. Ivory Coast
28. Japan
29. Jordan
30. Kenya
31. Kosovo
32. Latvia
33. Lebanon
34. Liberia
35. Lithuania
36. Luxembourg
37. Malta
38. Mauritania
39. Mexico
40. Mongolia
41. Montenegro
42. Morocco
43. Netherlands
44. New Zealand
45. Peru
46. Philippines
47. Poland
48. Portugal
49. Rwanda
50. Samoa
51. Senegal
52. Somalia
53. South Korea
54. Spain
55. Sri lanka
56. Tunisia
57. Turkiye
58. Uganda
59. Uruguay
60. United Arab Emirates
61. United Kingdom
62. United States
63. Uzbekistan
64. Zambia