

## The International Initiative for a Sustainable Built Environment

iiSBE is an international non-profit organization whose overall aim is to *actively facilitate and promote the adoption of policies, methods and tools to accelerate the movement towards a global sustainable built environment*. iiSBE has an international Board of Directors from almost every continent and has a small Secretariat located in Ottawa, Canada. Our specific objectives include the following:

- Map current activities and establish a forum for information exchange on SBE initiatives for participating organizations, so that gaps and overlaps may be reduced and common standards established; and
- Increase awareness of existing SBE initiatives and issues amongst non-participating organizations and in the international user community;
- Take action on fields not covered by existing organisations and networks.

Specific action includes the establishment of a website and R&D database accessible to researchers, policymakers and professionals around the world. Consistent with our third objective, we are providing management for the international Green Building Challenge process, and launching a four-year program to characterize policy initiatives in the area of sustainable built environment in all major countries. We are in the midst of the start-up process, so many things are happening all at once. Some key activities include:

- A Secretariat has been established in Ottawa, with Nils Larsson as Executive Director. Natural Resources Canada will be providing administrative support for the first two-year period, after which the Secretariat's location will be re-considered.
- A series of introductions to iiSBE will be made at several major conferences during 2001, including events in Italy, France, China, Argentina and Brazil. A major display of iiSBE services will be presented at SB2002 in September 2002.
- Work is proceeding on core functions, including the development of a major portal website, a database of international R&D materials relating to sustainable building, and mapping of current R&D initiatives being undertaken by existing organizations. Collectively, this work is referred to as the *R&D Knowledge* project.
- iiSBE has taken over management responsibility for the Green Building Challenge (GBC) process, an international project to develop and test a new environmental performance assessment system for buildings. GBC now has more than 20 countries participating.
- The first three issues of *Sustainable Building*, a partnership venture, have been published and the fourth issue is being distributed to key people and organizations around the world.
- iiSBE has launched a *Policy Knowledge* project, a four-year effort to understand policies and programs that are related to sustainable building practices. The work is being led by Ronald Rovers of the Netherlands, and will result in the establishment of a database, an annual comparison of state of the art SB policies in member countries, and preparation of Input document for international ministerial meetings (in bilateral and IEA, EU, OECD and UN connections). The *Policy Knowledge* project will supplement the useful work already being undertaken in this area by OECD. The first meeting of this project was held in Paris in June 2001, and attracted representatives from eleven countries.
- Finally, organizational work is proceeding on the major conference planned for Oslo in September 2002. This will be the third in a series of sustainable building conference, paralleling the development of the Green Building Challenge (GBC) project. The conference is being organized by Økobygg, a non-profit Norwegian organization. SB 2002 will be a major event, with some 700 delegates in attendance and a conference opening by the King of Norway and other luminaries. iiSBE and CIB are major co-sponsors of this conference, and the work of GBC countries will form a major parallel stream within the conference.

<http://iisbe.org>

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