CENTRE FOR RESEARCH INTO
ENERGY DEMAND SOLUTIONS

From Paris to policies:
tackling embodied carbon in construction

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29/01/2019

EPSRC
Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

slides available from **www.jannikgiesekam.co.uk**

Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS)

New multi-disciplinary centre, funded by EPSRC and ESRC - £19m over 5 years.

Publications from CIE-MAP

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CIE-MAP

Centre for Industrial Energy, Materials and Products

Reducing carbon in construction: a whole life approach

The UK construction sector is failing to meet its carbon reduction targets and needs to explore additional mitigation options. The carbon emissions from heating and lighting our buildings (*operational emissions*) have been falling but these are not the only emissions arising from the built environment. Sizeable carbon emissions are incurred in constructing, maintaining and demolishing an asset and producing the materials and components used throughout its life cycle (*embodied emissions*). Considering both the anticipated operational and embodied emissions of a built asset is considered a *whole life approach*. To date the construction industry has mainly focussed on reducing operational emissions, driven by changes in the building regulations and planning requirements. Extending the focus of project carbon assessments and targets from operational to whole life emissions presents designers, clients and contractors with a broader range of mitigation options. The faster proliferation of a whole life approach should be supported by national and local policies for which there are a number of international precedents. Targeted intervention from national and local government could drive innovation in design teams and supply chains, improve sector productivity, reduce the costs of UK buildings and infrastructure, create employment opportunities, boost export markets and deliver immediate reductions in carbon emissions.

Recommendations

1. The Government should establish a well resourced independent body to develop and accelerate the construction sector's decarbonisation agenda.
2. Local authorities should require assessment of whole life carbon emissions on significant schemes as part of the planning process.
3. All publicly funded building projects should include a whole life carbon assessment and whole life carbon targets where project benchmarks can be established.
4. The greenhouse gas emission reporting requirements for quoted companies should be extended to include scope 3 emissions associated with developing new facilities.
5. Product manufacturers should require Environmental Product Declarations to support environmental claims.

Challenges facing UK construction

The National Infrastructure Commission has highlighted three key challenges facing the construction sector: congestion, capacity and carbon[1]. By 2050 there are expected to be an extra 14 million people living in the UK and the construction sector must deliver the housing and infrastructure that will underpin their future prosperity. That requires dramatically increasing housebuilding, retrofitting one existing home every minute, and delivering an infrastructure pipeline worth in excess of £600bn. UK firms are also expected to capture an increasing share of the global market for sustainable construction and be at the forefront of delivering the Government's Clean Growth ambitions[2]. Meanwhile by 2025 the industry is expected to halve delivery time, cut costs by a third, halve the trade gap between exports and imports of construction products, and halve carbon emissions from the built environment[3]. All of this must be achieved by a highly fragmented sector with low financial margins and declining labour availability[4]. None of these targets will be met under business as usual conditions[4,5]. Therefore the construction sector must undergo a radical transformation over the next decade.

The Government has already set out some measures to transform infrastructure performance[2], and modernise the industry through the Construction Sector Deal as part of the Industrial Strategy[6]. This transformation must focus on reducing carbon whilst improving sector productivity through the adoption of more resource efficient designs, novel materials and delivery models. The successful transformation of this industry will be critical to achieving the Government's target of doubling resource productivity over the next 25 years[7] and meeting carbon targets.

Giesekam et al. (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018a, 2018b); GCB (2015); Roelich & Giesekam (2018)

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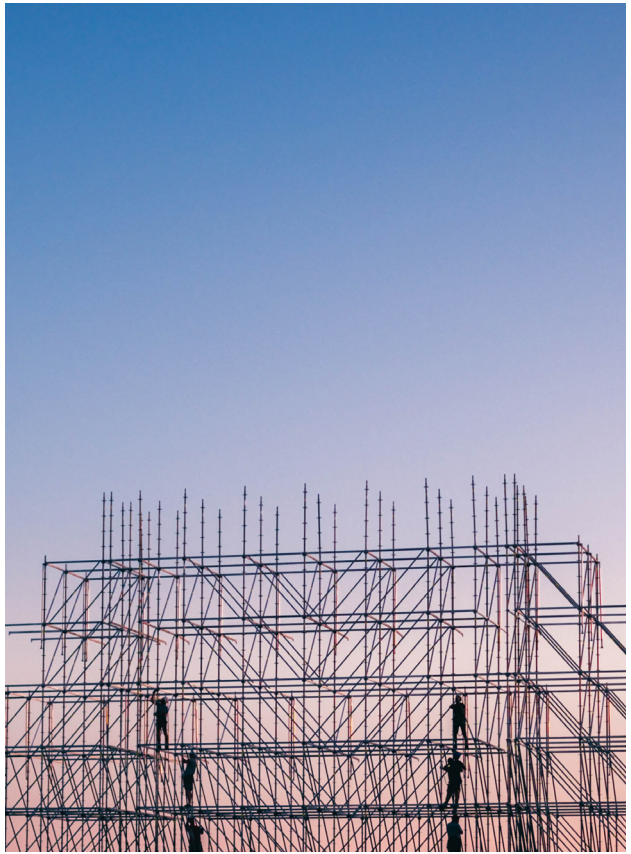

The Paris Agreement

United Nations
Framework Convention on Climate Change

FCCC/CP/2015/L.9/Rev.1

Distr.: Limited
12 December 2015

Original: English

Conference of the Parties
Twenty-first session
Paris, 30 November to 11 December 2015

Agenda item 4(b)
Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (decision 1/CP.17)
Adoption of a protocol, another legal instrument, or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties

ADOPTION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT

Proposal by the President

Draft decision -/CP.21

The *Conference of the Parties*,

Recalling decision 1/CP.17 on the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action,

Also recalling Articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention,

Further recalling relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties, including decisions 1/CP.16, 2/CP.18, 1/CP.19 and 1/CP.20,

Welcoming the adoption of United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/1, "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in particular its goal 13, and the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,

Recognizing that climate change represents an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to human societies and the planet and thus requires the widest possible cooperation by all countries, and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions,

Also recognizing that deep reductions in global emissions will be required in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention and emphasizing the need for urgency in addressing climate change,

Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind, Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples,

GE.15-21932(E)

Please recycle

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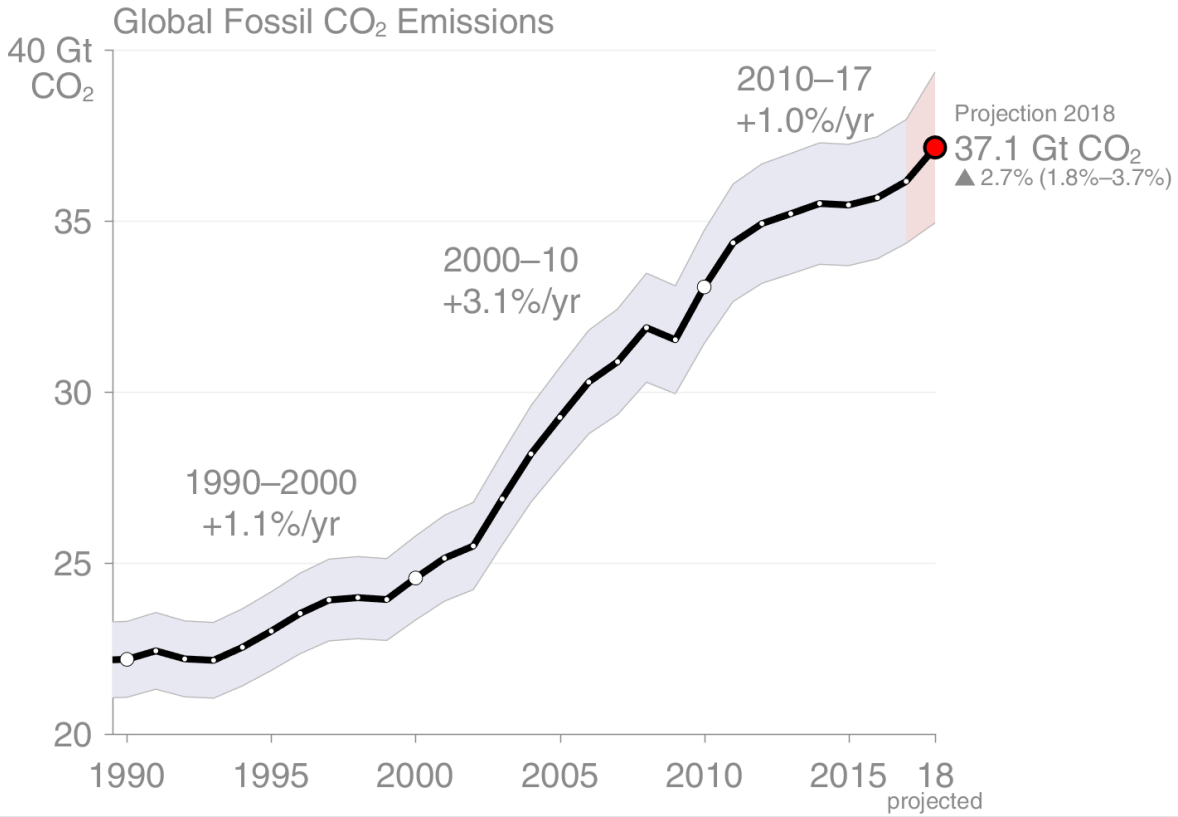
IPCC Special Report

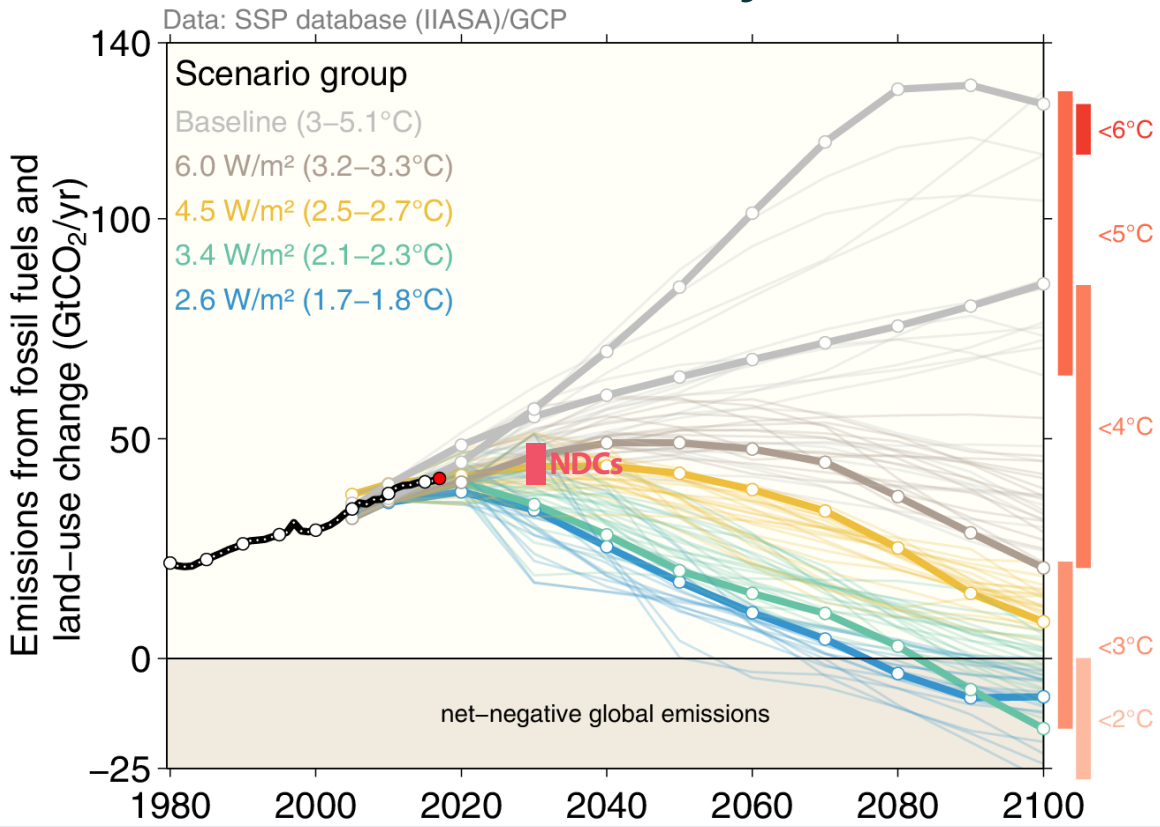
"Limiting warming to 1.5°C is possible within the laws of chemistry and physics but doing so would require unprecedented changes"

Jim Skea, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group III

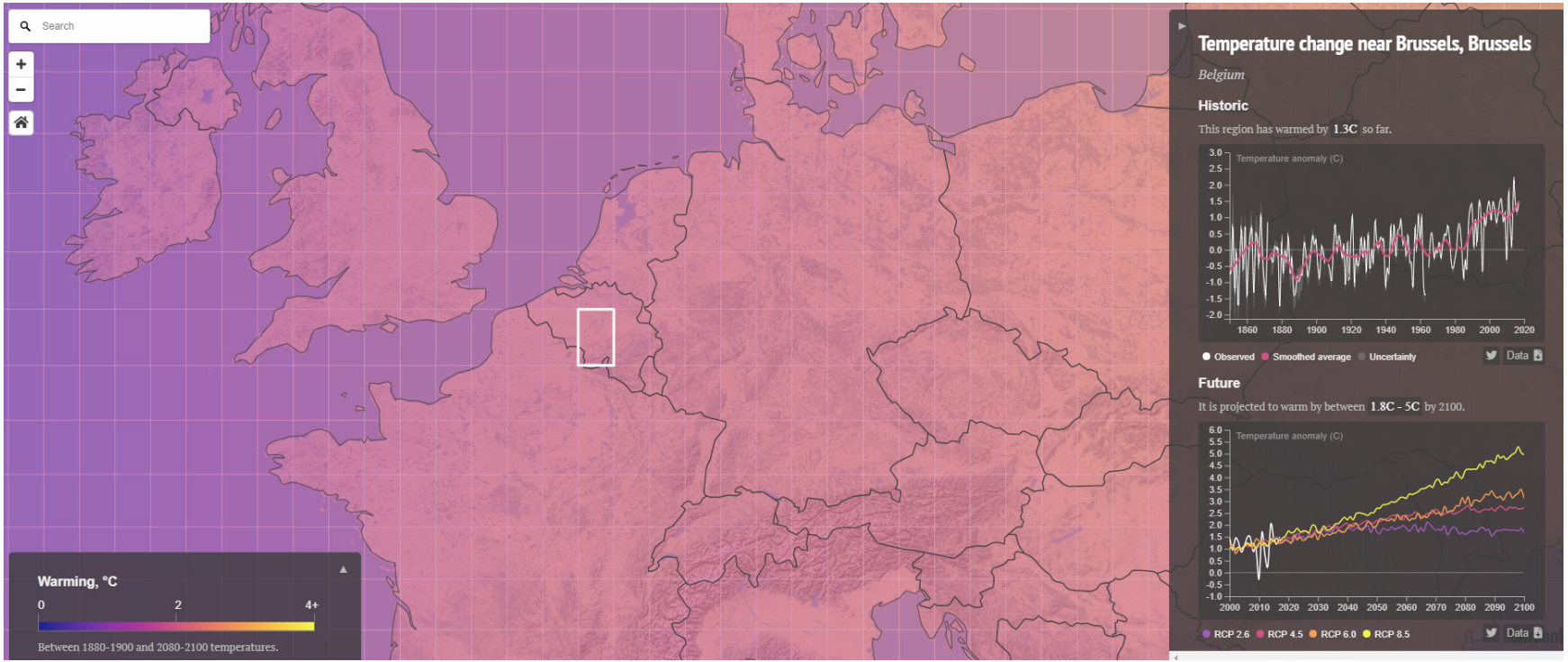
Global carbon emissions continue to rise



Global emissions scenarios - currently on track for ~3°C



Already ~1.3˚C warmer where we are today



In comparison to 1951-1980

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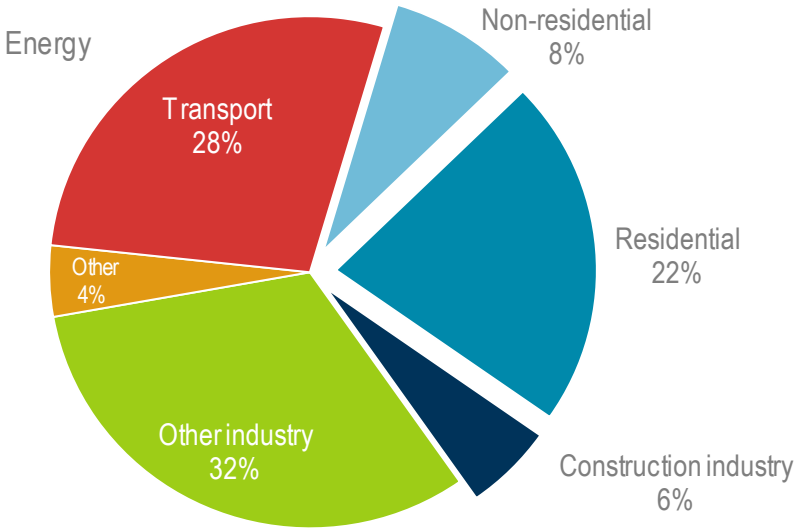
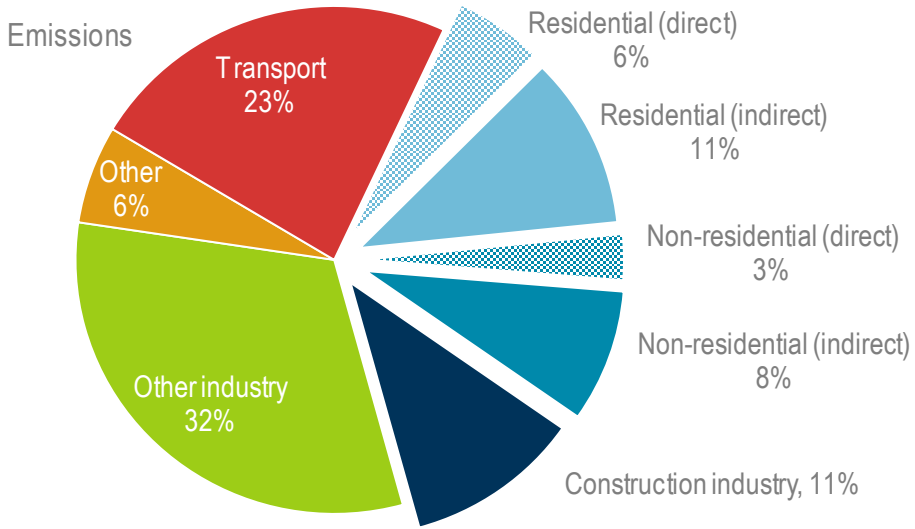
screenshot from interactive developed by Carbon Brief (2018) www.carbonbrief.org/mapped-how-every-part-of-the-world-has-warmed-and-could-continue-to-warm

Global shares of final energy & emissions

IEA estimates for 2017:





Academic estimates (including transport) put construction supply chains at **~20% of emissions**

Figure from Global Alliance for Buildings & Construction 2018 Global Status Report

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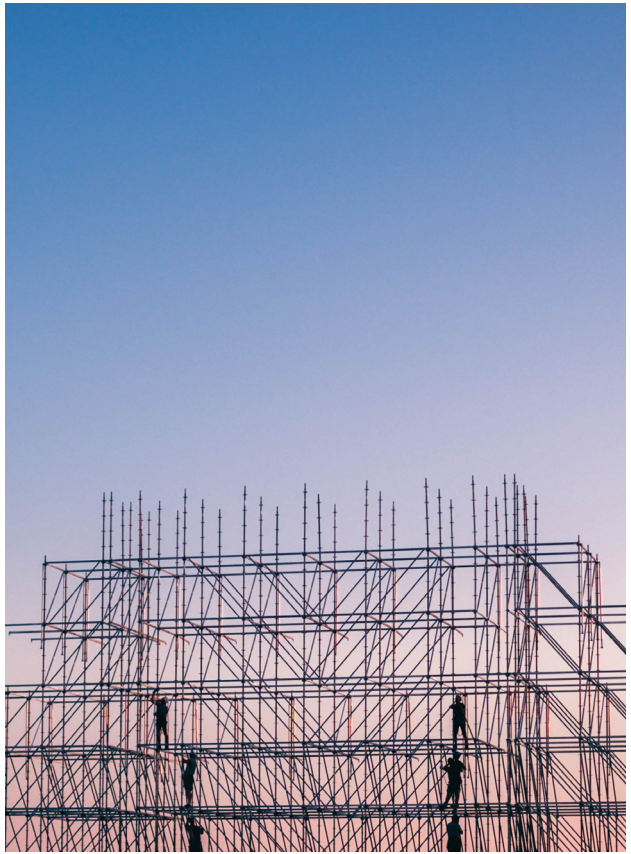


Recent international policy reviews

THE EMBODIED CARBON REVIEW

EMBODIED CARBON REDUCTION IN 100+ REGULATIONS & RATING SYSTEMS GLOBALLY

The Embodied Carbon Review is updated at
www.embodiedcarbonreview.com

#embodiedcarbonreview

References: The Embodied Carbon Review, 2018, Bionova Ltd, www.embodiedcarbonreview.com

Made possible with generous support from

EMBODIED CARBON OF BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

INTERNATIONAL POLICY REVIEW

September 2017

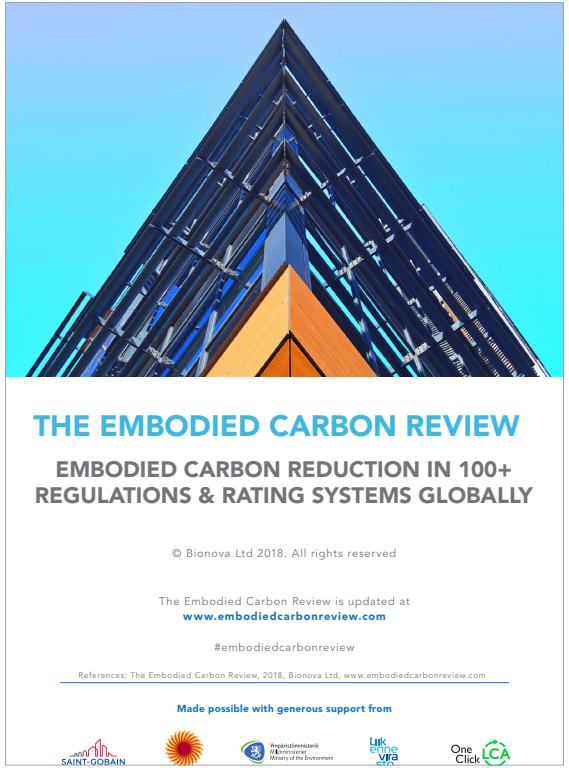
Bionova (2018) The Embodied Carbon Review &
Zizzo et al. (2017) Embodied Carbon of Buildings and Infrastructure International Policy Review

Findings

105 systems with direct measures for embodied carbon (69% are voluntary certification systems, 14% regulations, 12% standards and 7% guidelines)

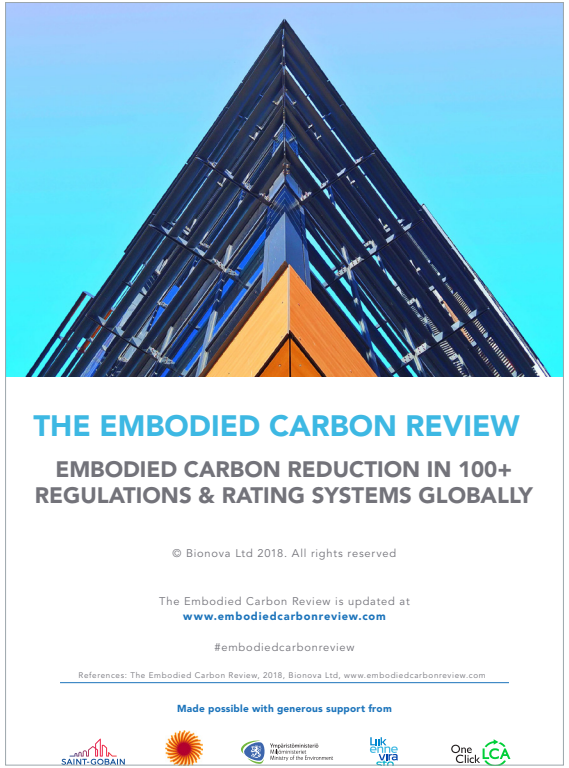
Local systems in 26 countries + 19 international systems available for adoption globally

Number of systems has more than doubled in last 5 years



Approaches to reducing embodied carbon

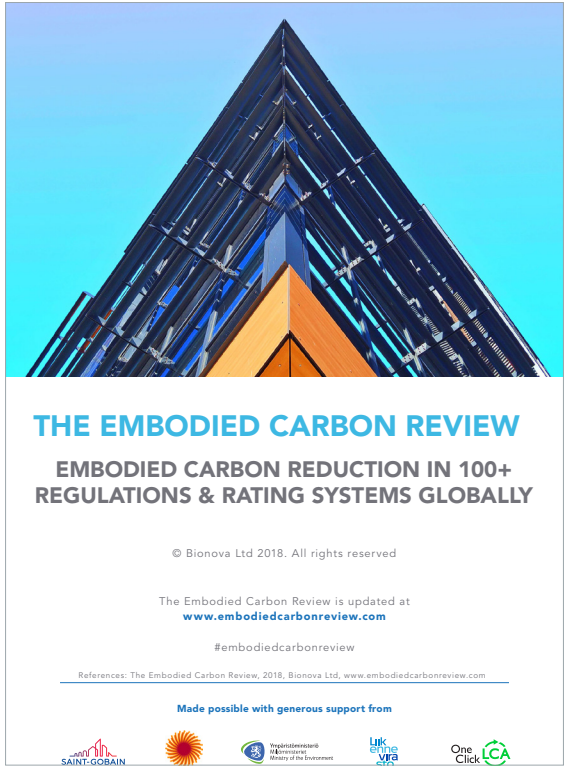
METHOD	HOW DOES IT WORK?	EXAMPLES
1. Carbon reporting	Calculate the construction project's embodied carbon and report it	EN 15978, BREEAM Int'l
2. Carbon comparison	Compare design options for carbon; for example, design baseline and proposed designs and show improvements against a self-declared baseline value	LEED v4, Green Star, BREEAM UK
3. Carbon rating	Evaluation of carbon performance. Variable scale from best to worst on which a project's carbon is rated, but no effective maximum value applied. Fixed scale or clear methodology	DGNB, BREEAM NL
4. Carbon cap	Calculate the project's embodied carbon and prove it is not exceeding the CO2e limit	Énergie Carbone, MPG
5. Decarbonization	Reduce carbon to a minimum, then compensate all residual emissions by own energy export or buying offsets	Living Building Challenge, NollCO2



Incentives for achieving carbon reductions

INCENTIVE	DESCRIPTION	USED IN
1. Rating points	Systems that award rating points for the application of LCA, or achieving savings quantifiable with LCA.	LEED v4, DGNB 2018, BREEAM International 2016
2. Funding condition	Public funding program or state procurement setting it a funding condition to achieve carbon target.	State policy in Minnesota and California, United States
3. Density bonus	Meeting a carbon performance level may make a project eligible for additional gross floor area rights.	French E+C- scheme's good performance level (when enacted by city-level plan)
4. Cash impact	Either carbon offsetting funded by the constructor, thus ensuring carbon emissions lead to real cash cost for project; or a carbon performance payment.	Decarbonization e.g. Living Building Challenge, and carbon performance payment Rijkswaterstaat
5. Mandatory	Carbon criterion is a simple requirement. The criterion itself can be set up differently in different systems where it's mandatory.	Dutch MPG regulation and allowed level of the French E+C- scheme (when the law enters in vigor)

Incentives with direct financial value linked to carbon reduction are rare

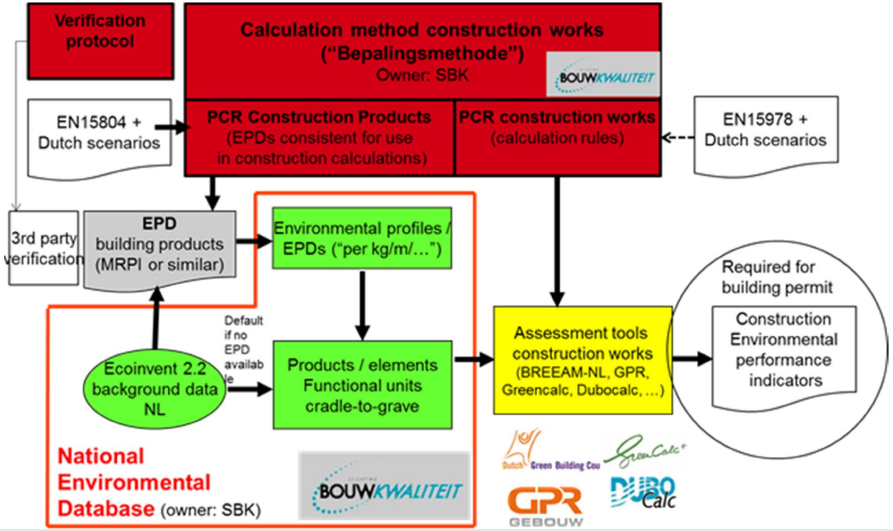


Example: The Netherlands

Since 2012 **building code requires assessment** of environmental impact of materials using a national method & database with approved tools

Impacts are monetised using a shadow price

January 2018 revision set a mandatory environmental impact **cap of 1€/m²/yr**



For English language summary of the regulations consult the brochure at: https://www.milieudatabase.nl/index.php?q=english-documents

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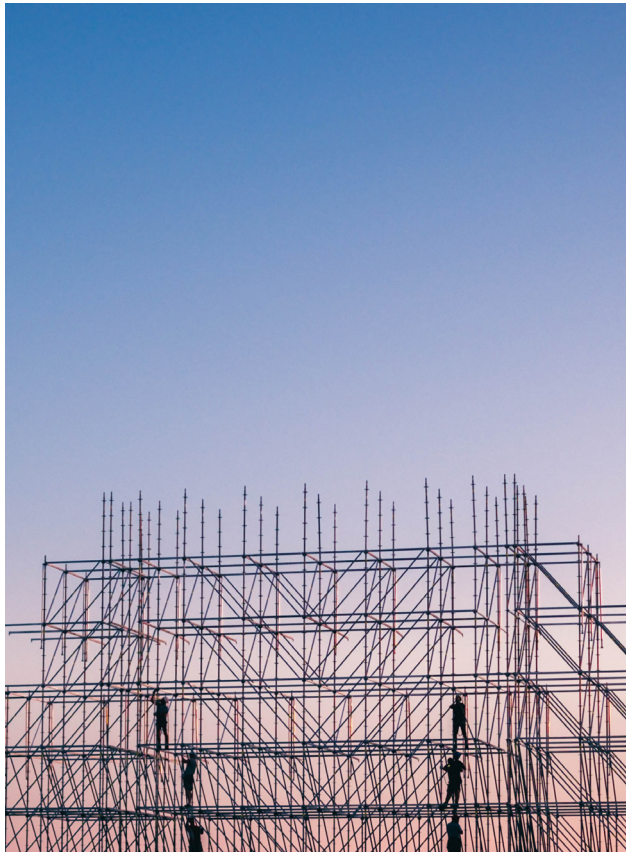
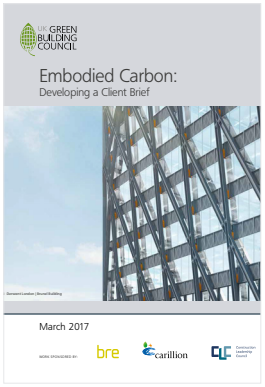
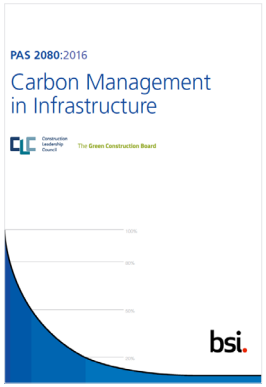
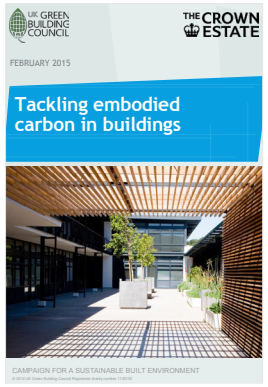
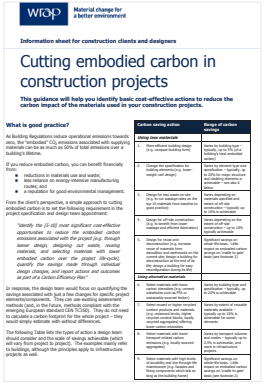


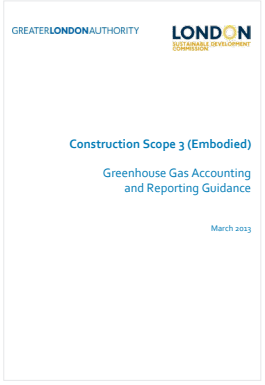
UK guidance on embodied/whole life carbon

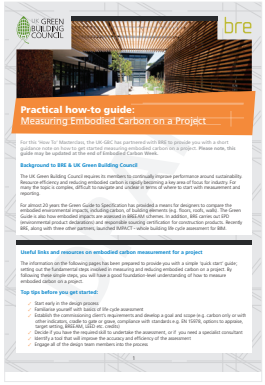


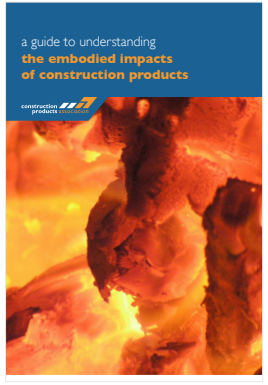












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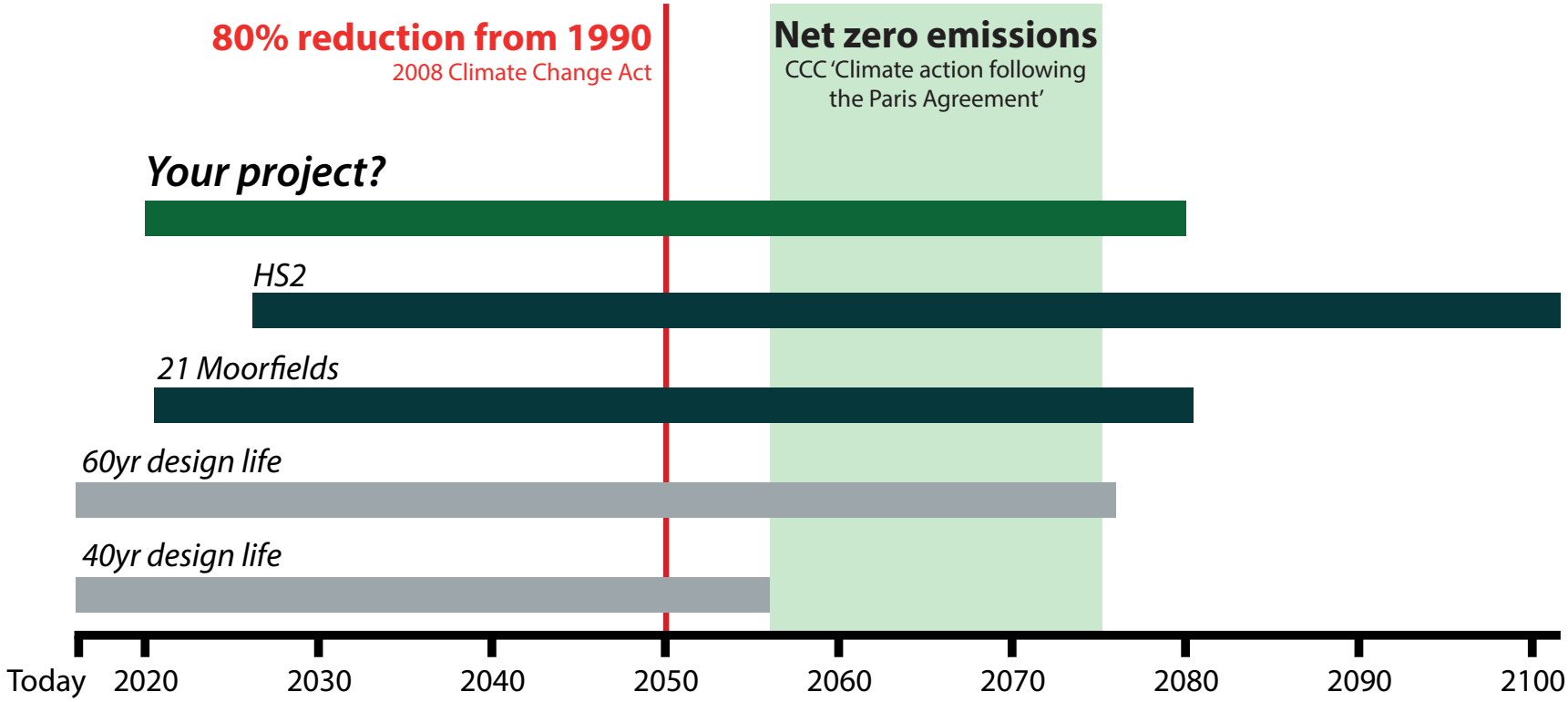
RIBA (2018); RICS (2017); UKGBC (2015,2016,2017); GCB & CLC (2016); WRAP (2014); GLA(2013); CPA (2012)

Timeline for UK built environment decarbonisation



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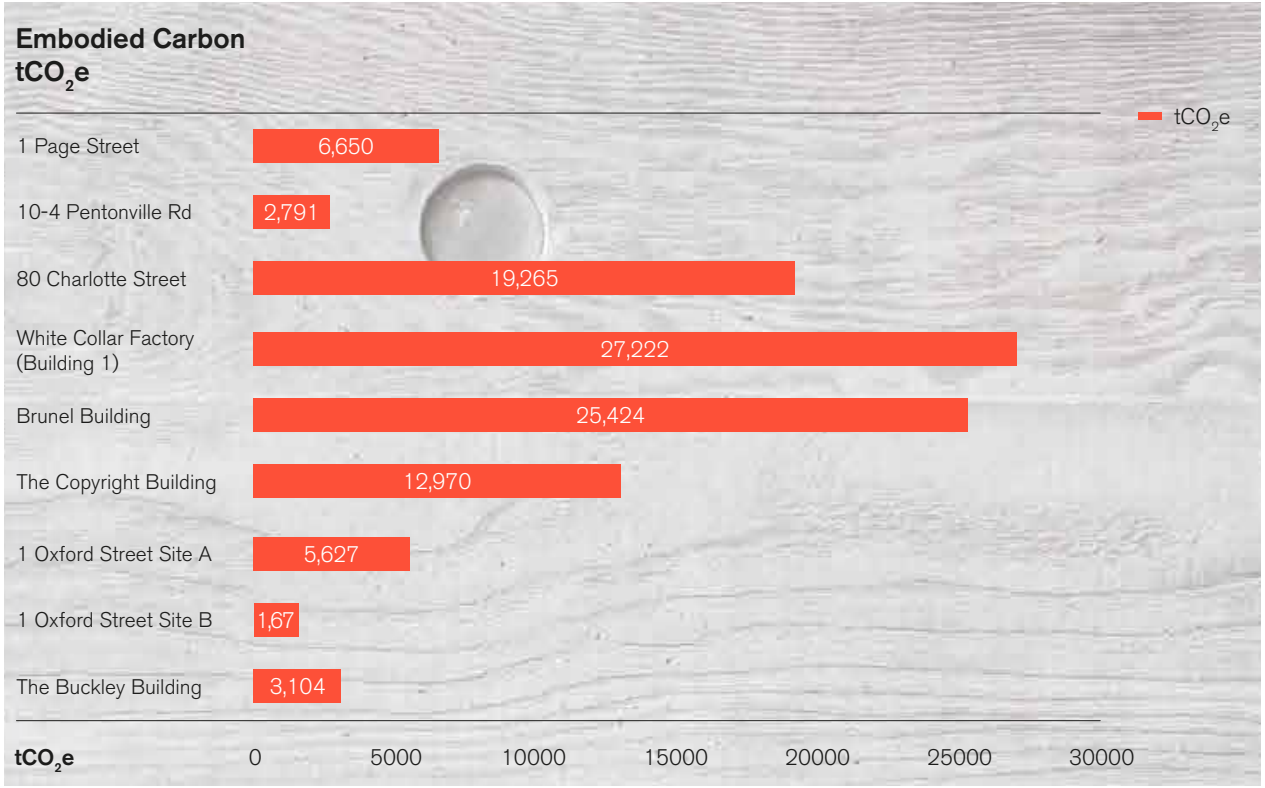
See Giesekam et al. (2018) Aligning carbon targets for construction with (inter)national climate change mitigation commitments *doi:10.1016/j.enbuild.2018.01.023* for detailed discussion

Developers assessing embodied carbon *e.g. Derwent London*



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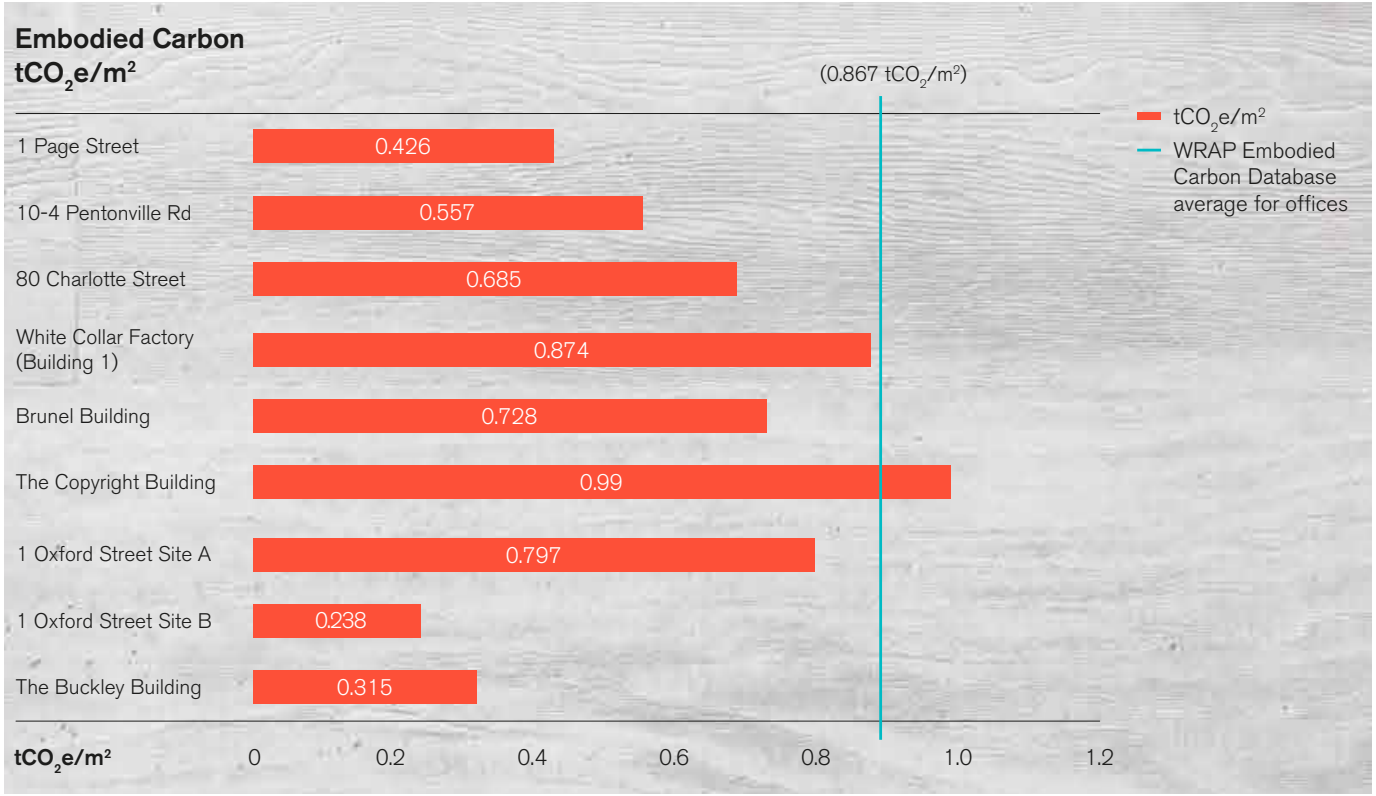
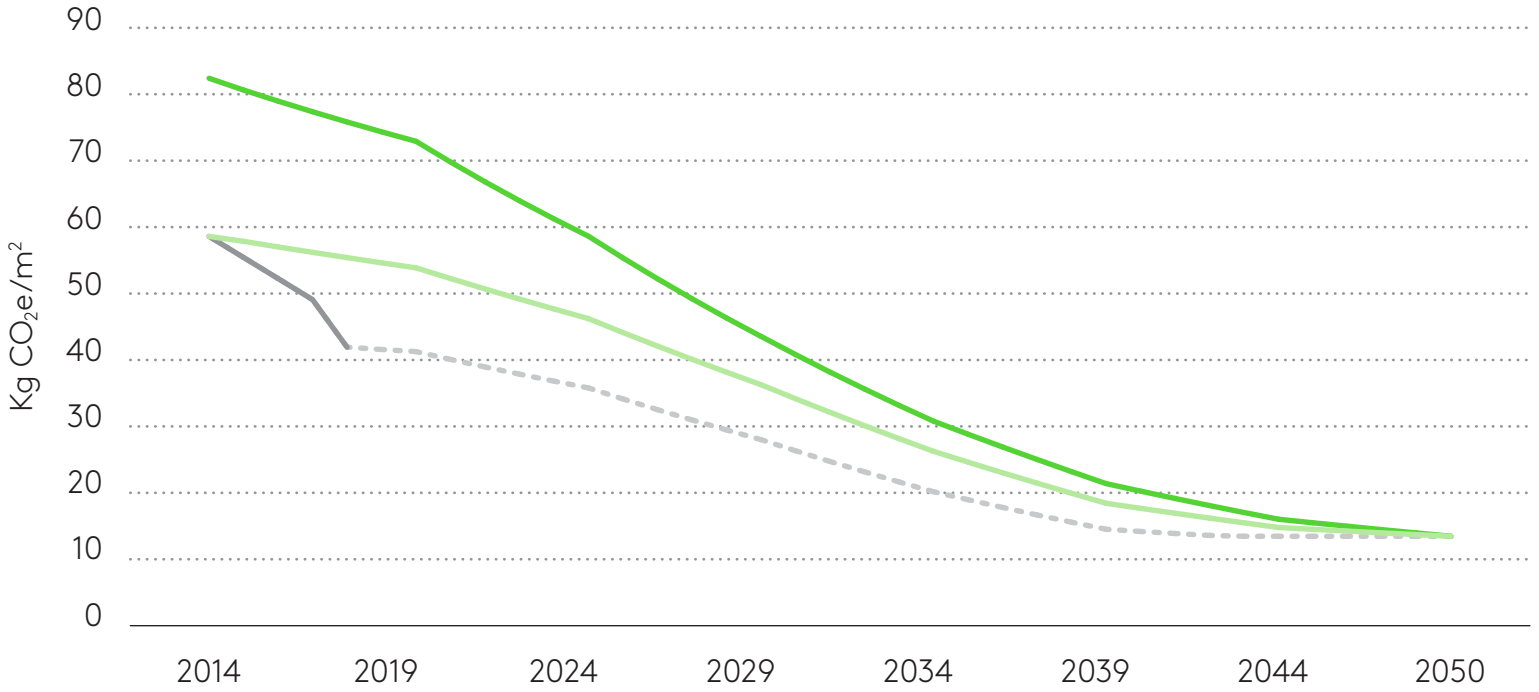
See Derwent London resources at:
www.derwentlondon.com/sustainability/performance/carbon-footprint

Benchmarking embodied carbon



Reducing carbon in line with Science Based Targets

Landsec carbon emissions intensity pathway



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See Landsec performance at: landsec.com/sustainability

Science Based Targets

SCIENCE BASED TARGETS

515
companies taking action

164
with approved targets

66
in construction, real estate and supply chain

22 based in UK

Including requirements in development briefs

Such as:

Assessment boundaries & metrics
e.g. Cradle-to-completion, tCO_2e

Reporting requirements
e.g. use of RICS 2017 PS

Preferred design options
e.g. rapidly renewable materials like timber

Emission intensity targets
e.g. 900 $kgCO_2/m^2$

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landsec.com/sites/default/files/2018-02/SGP_Landsec_Sustainability_Brief.pdf &
www.derwentlondon.com/sustainability/performance/carbon-footprint

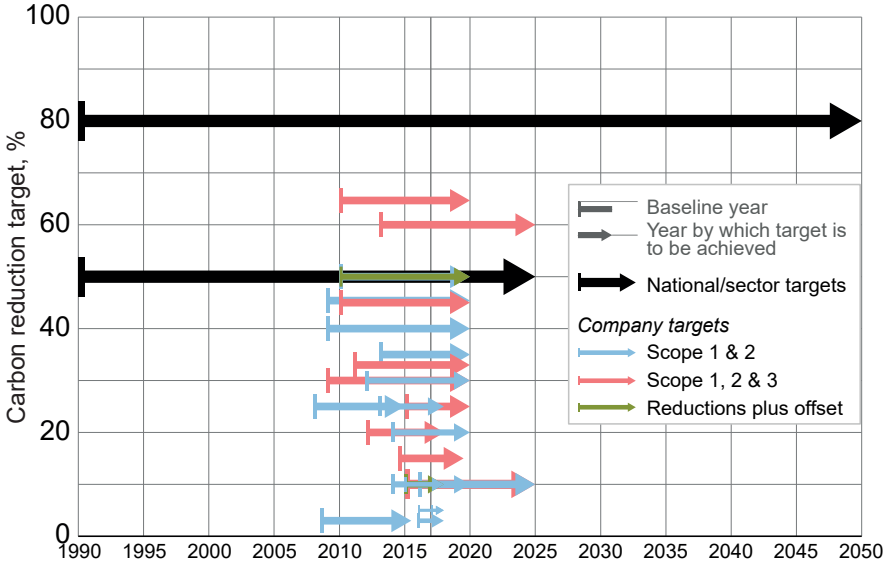
Project carbon targets

Client set ambitious targets which drove exploration of novel material options
e.g. development of thatch cassette cladding

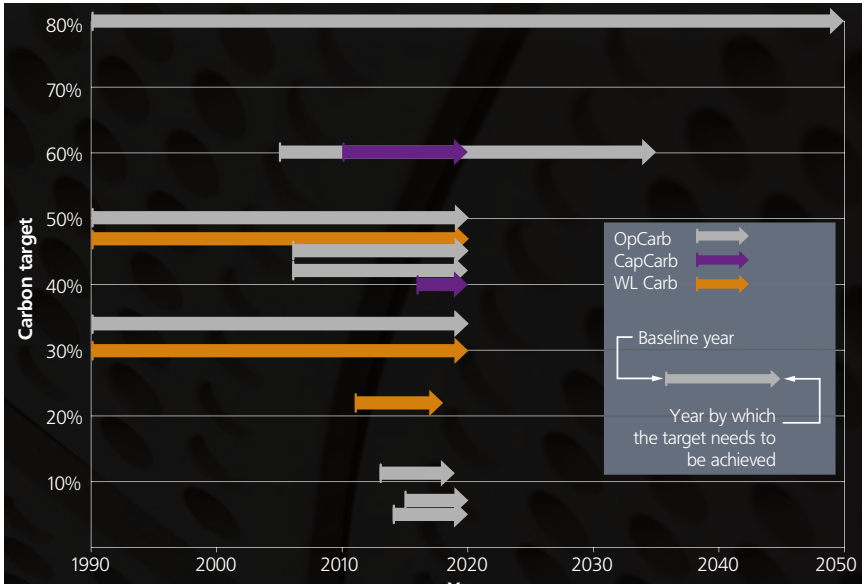
Ultimately delivered embodied carbon of 193 $kgCO_2/m^2$ compared with benchmark of 845$kgCO_2/m^2$

More typical UK construction company carbon targets

Carbon reduction targets of selected UK housebuilders & construction firms (representing turnover of £88.4bn in 2016) - based on July 2017 review



Carbon reduction targets of selected infrastructure clients



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Figures from Giesekam et al. (2018) Aligning carbon targets for construction with (inter)national climate change mitigation commitments & UKGBC (2017) Delivering low carbon infrastructure

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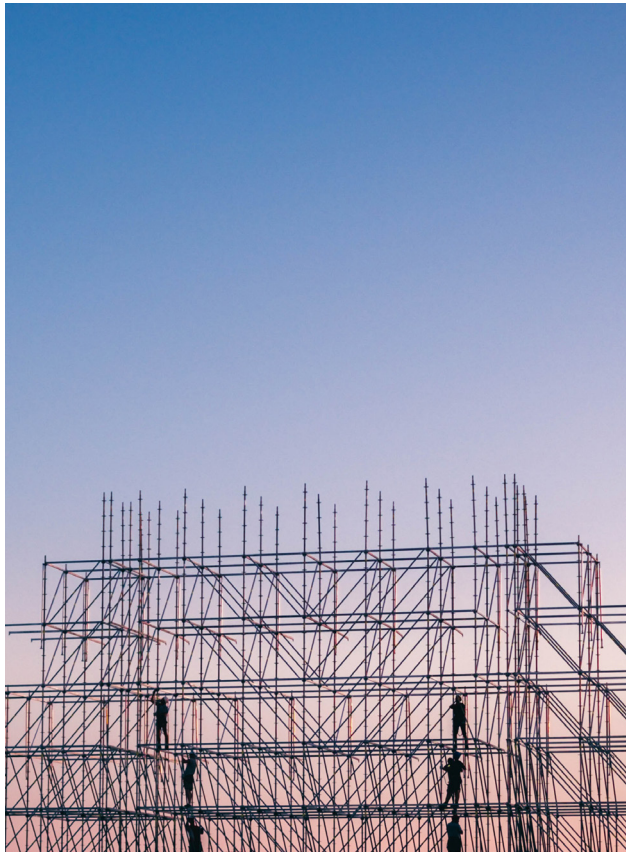

CCC recommendations for UK policy

*"Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government should develop **new policies to support** a substantial increase in the use of **wood in construction**"*

*"**A new mechanism** is needed to incentivise and drive **whole-life carbon savings** for new buildings. This should cover embodied emissions and carbon sequestration."*

Draft London Plan

August 2018 revisions include:

New Policy SI2 DB: *"Development proposals referable to the Mayor should* ***calculate whole life-cycle carbon emissions*** *through a nationally recognised Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment and demonstrate actions taken to reduce life-cycle carbon emissions."*

This is expanded upon in new 9.2.9A section and included in the energy strategy requirements.

New Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

GMSF 2019 draft includes:

Policy GM-S 2: "*An expectation that new development will be* ***net zero carbon from 2028****"* & all developments will *"****include a carbon assessment*** *to demonstrate how the design and layout of the development sought to* ***maximize reductions in whole life CO2*** *equivalent carbon emissions*"

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GMCA (2019) Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Revised Draft - January 2019
Image from Sue Langford: https://www.flickr.com/photos/sue_langford

Bristol One City Plan

Includes ambitions that:

By 2025: "*standard practice for major developments in Bristol to be **carbon neutral**"*

By 2030: "*standard practice that major developments in Bristol are **net carbon negative**"*

Bristol City Council (2019) Bristol One City Plan
Image from FLH: https://www.flickr.com/photos/french_landscape_hunter/

Leeds Embodied Carbon Living Lab

2 year programme co-created with local stakeholders addressing embodied and whole life carbon emissions on a series of live projects in Yorkshire

Trialling new approaches, conducting a city scale assessment of impacts and proposing amendments to participants' construction standards and the local sustainable construction SPD

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email **J.Giesekam@leeds.ac.uk** if you would like to collaborate

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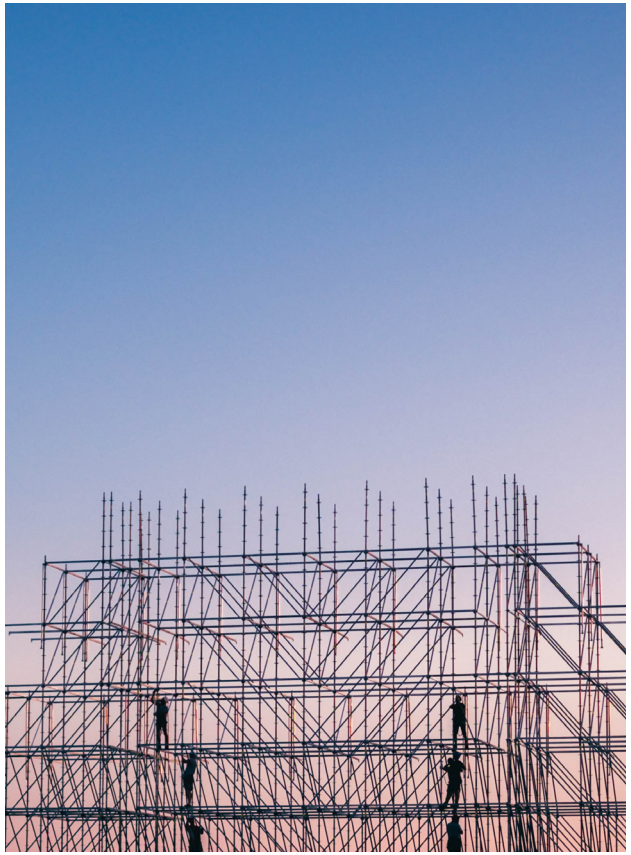


Coming up...

Several important CCC reports including 'UK housing & climate change' & advice on the UK's long-term climate change targets

New WorldGBC campaign

WorldGBC responds to IPCC: The entire building and construction supply chain must decarbonise by 2050 to reach 1.5 degrees

–

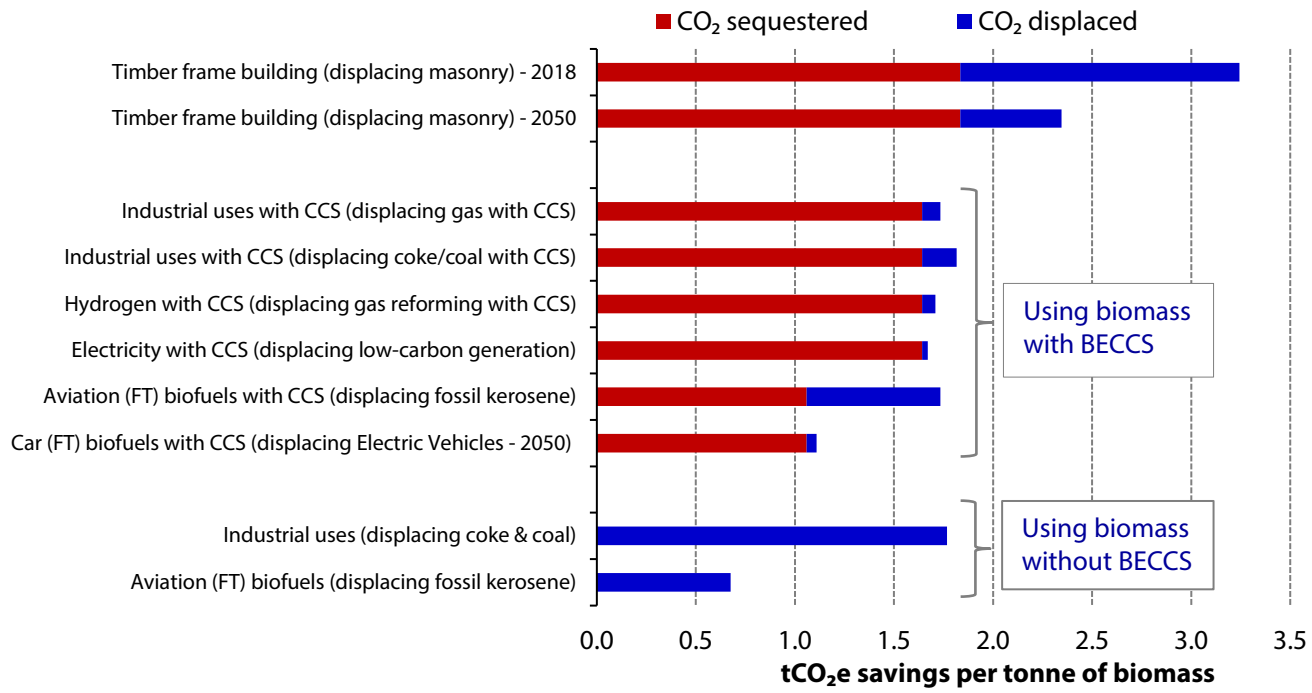
Monday 08th October 2018

WorldGBC will begin work to assess how the increasing emissions from building and construction can reach net zero by 2050

For more information see: www.theccc.org.uk/coming-up & www.worldgbc.org/news-media/worldgbc-responds-ipcc-entire-building-and-construction-supply-chain-must-decarbonise

Bio-based building materials will be the lowest carbon option

Figure 5.2. Estimated GHG abatement across different biomass applications



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Thank you

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