

Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction's contribution to the mitigation rountable

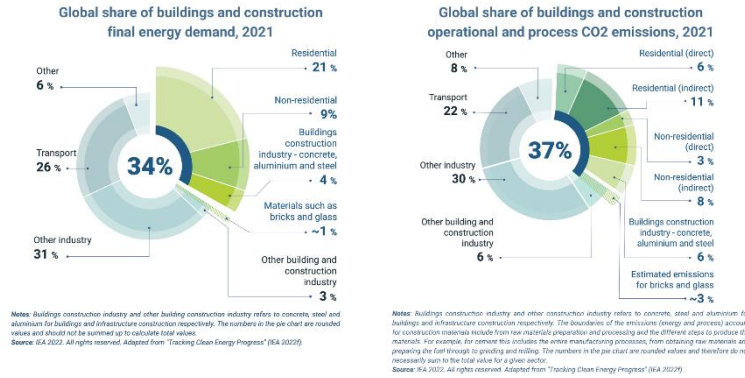
*Represented by Anna Zinecker, Programme for Energy Efficiency in Buildings, on behalf of
the GlobalABC Secretariat*

About the GlobalABC

- With 280 members, including 39 countries, the UNEP-Hosted [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction](#) (GlobalABC) is a network of governments, the private sector, civil society and intergovernmental and international organizations committed to a common vision: A zero-emission, efficient and resilient buildings and construction sector.
- The GlobalABC aims to:
 - **Be a global advocate and a catalyst to action:** GlobalABC advocates for market transformation and focuses on catalysing action by defining a carbon neutrality strategy for the built environment.
 - **Be a trusted platform to set targets and track progress:** GlobalABC tracks progress in its annual [Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#) (Buildings-GSR), and its Building Climate Tracker, a new index to track progress in decarbonization in the sector.
 - **Support countries in setting priorities and measures based on their situation:** GlobalABC develops policy guidance and [global, regional, and national buildings and construction roadmaps](#) outlining aspirational targets, timelines, and key actions for essential policies and technologies, and, offering a model for national and city level buildings and construction roadmaps to support and [raise the ambition of NDCs](#). The GlobalABC is also coordinating the development of a [Buildings Breakthrough Target](#) as part of the [Breakthrough Agenda](#) with France and the Kingdom of Morocco.

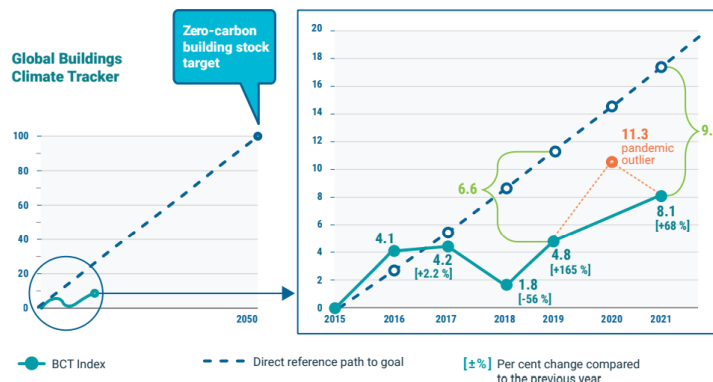
The buildings and construction sector, a heavyweight for climate action

- **Buildings and construction**, a sector that is often overlooked in discussions about climate, as it falls between the cracks of discussions on energy and industry.
- Nevertheless, as the [GlobalABC 2022 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#) tells us, the buildings and construction sector – that is the buildings that we live in - is responsible **for around 37% of energy- and process-related CO2 emissions and over 34% of energy demand globally**. Materials used in the construction of buildings (i.e. concrete, steel, aluminium, glass and bricks) are estimated to represent around 9% of overall energy-related CO2 emissions. ([GlobalABC, 2022](#))



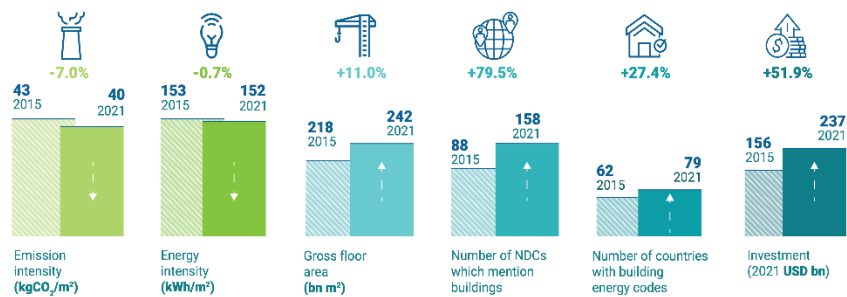
- The sector is also a **crucial sector for adaptation** on a warming planet. The built environment is particularly at risk from climate change, and as such so are the people living and working within buildings. Governments and all actors along the buildings and construction value chain therefore need to take action, as climate risks pose a real threat to the lives and economic activities of people. Buildings as long term assets should be resilient to climate change, and also to other future risks such as pandemics and potential behavior changes. ([GlobalABC, 2022](#)).
- There is a **huge need worldwide to create housing**: Half of the buildings standing in 2050 have not yet been built: The equivalent of Paris is added in floor space every 5 days and that of Japan every year until 2060 ([GlobalABC, 2017](#)). What will our building stock look like in the future, as our buildings will stand for a long time?
- At the same time we need to **address our existing building stock** that is often inefficient, and often overlooked.
- The bad news is that the 2022 Buildings-GSR Global Buildings Climate Tracker finds that the buildings sector remains off track to achieve decarbonization by 2050. While decarbonization efforts have marginally improved since 2019, the observed emissions and energy consumption continued to increase in 2021 even beyond pre-pandemic levels. The decarbonization of the building stock is “not on track” to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. **The gap between the actual decarbonization performance and the desired pathway has been widening since 2018.** ([GlobalABC, 2022](#))

Figure 10. Direct reference path to a zero-carbon building stock target in 2050 (left); zoom into the period between 2015 and 2021, comparing the observed Global Buildings Climate Tracker to the reference path (right)



Source: Adapted by the Buildings Performance Institute Europe 2022.

Global buildings and construction key trends 2015 and 2021



¹ Values included for the baselines have been updated from previous versions of the Buildings-GSR due to both historic input data updates for emissions and floorspace, and also deflation factors for USD. The proportional changes between previous years remains similar.

Source: United Nations Environment Programme (2022). 2022 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction: Towards a Zero-emission, Efficient and Resilient Buildings and Construction Sector. Nairobi.

- Progress on buildings and construction policies remains slow in the face of the pandemic and the lack of action has meant emissions are not being reduced. 158 out of 196 countries (80 per cent) reference buildings as part of their NDC action plans and 79 out of 196 (40 per cent) have building energy codes, though only 26 per cent of countries have mandatory codes for all buildings. ([GlobalABC, 2022](#))
- The building sector is not only the sleeping giant in terms of greenhouse gas emissions. It is also a massive contributor to both GDP and jobs in virtually all countries. This means that it provides massive opportunities for climate action and a Just Transition:
 - The built environment is responsible for about 7% of global employment or 200 million jobs ([ILO, 2019](#)), and accounts for 11-13% of global GDP ([ILO, 2016](#)).
 - An estimated 9-30 jobs are created for every USD 1 million invested in retrofits and efficiency measures in new construction ([GlobalABC, 2020](#)).
 - Efficient buildings are one of the biggest investment opportunities across emerging market cities by 2030 ([IFC, 2019](#)). In 2021, global investment in building energy efficiency increased by an unprecedented 16% from 2020 to a total of approximately USD 237 billion ([GlobalABC, 2022](#)).

Recommendations & radical collaboration

- In terms of what is next, we call for radical collaboration on this topic.
 - Governments need to put in place mandatory building energy codes and set out a pathway for codes to achieve zero carbon across a building's life cycle as quickly as possible. We need more ambitious and more specific buildings-related actions in NDCs, and need to think about the effective implementation of these NDCs.
 - Governments and non-state actors must increase their investment in energy efficiency, starting with public buildings.
 - All buildings'- related regulations need to take a whole building life cycle approach.
 - Construction and real estate industries must develop and implement zero-carbon strategies for new and existing buildings. ALL buildings and construction-related industries need to join the Race to Zero as soon as possible.
 - We need a re-emphasis on developing the local traditional construction techniques that are adapted to local climates and valorise local value chains and cultural heritage.
 - To reduce material-associated emissions, we need an avoid (use less)-shift (to low-carbon materials)-improve (use of current materials)-adapt approach

Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

1 rue Miollis, Bâtiment VII 75015 Paris

Tel: +33 (0)1 44 37 14 50. Fax: +33 1 44 37 14 74

www.globalabc.org

- **We call on all countries and initiatives to join the [Buildings Breakthrough](#)**, co-led by the Governments of France and Morocco as part of the Breakthrough Agenda under the coordination of the GlobalABC. The Buildings Breakthrough statement calls on all countries to make “Near-zero emission and resilient buildings are the new normal by 2030”. To date, 18 countries have joined/are supporting the Buildings Breakthrough: Armenia, Austria, Canada, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, The Netherlands, Norway, Senegal, Sudan, Sweden, Türkiye, and the UK.

We hope that buildings can be addressed more forcefully in climate discussions, both on mitigation and adaptation, to turn our homes from a liability into an asset for a liveable future.