



Vision

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1. Mission

The alliance is a network for partners throughout the value chain of the construction sector in Belgium. It was founded with the following mission:

- ⇒ Integrate and stimulate sustainable development at micro and macro level in the Belgian construction sector between the various chain partners in a concrete and pragmatic way. This with a common agenda at federal level and in the three regions to make the transition to high-quality, sustainable, future-oriented and climate-proof construction and renovation.
- ⇒ Increasing the positive impact and image of the sector based on a common and holistic vision of innovation, sustainability and quality, while also guaranteeing the affordability of new construction and high-quality renovation.
- ⇒ Accelerating the sector's transition towards the European Green Deal agenda, its elaboration in the New European Bauhaus and the global Sustainable Development Goals.

The **unique added value** of the Belgian Alliance for Sustainable Construction is that it offers an independent moderated platform for knowledge sharing and cooperation with a common agenda for all chain partners in the three regions and at federal level.

Preference should therefore be given to initiatives and actions where it is precisely this unique added value that pays off the most. These are initiatives and actions that require a holistic approach, complex stakeholder management and integration of different perspectives.

The alliance wishes to develop activities around the following topics, all of which we consider important for our ambition.

1. Limit the entire environmental impact of buildings, structures and infrastructure over their entire lifetime while paying attention to environmental aspects

1.A. Holistic approach from genesis with attention to the quality of living, working and living environments; the neighbourhood – New European Bauhaus

Building is more than just the process. Upstream there is a multitude of stakeholders (architects, landscape architects, engineers, urban planners, ...) who can provide valuable input. The need for this holistic approach is reflected in the New European Bauhaus initiative. In the implementation of a specific construction project, or more generally of an urban development, there is the principle of the way forward, with the prior establishment of a total concept, a master plan, which defines and quantifies the qualitative and sustainable framework of the built and undeveloped: "Space becomes place". The attention to the impact should therefore go much wider than just to the construction. The choice for 'healthy' materials, a good indoor climate, a mix of functions that offer social added value, etc. are therefore equally relevant.

1.B. Reduce CO₂ in the chain

CO₂ reduction is one of the absolute priorities due to the Green Deal. One should look beyond scope 1 and scope 2. Chain cooperation is necessary to be able to report on scope 3. However, this also means looking at *embodied* carbon and the footprint of a building/structure during and after the life phase (LCA approach). Methods such as the performance ladder still fall short of this today.

1.C. Environment, biodiversity and water management

The environment, biodiversity and water management (including well drainage) are important and are often put in the shade by the focus on circularity and CO2. The environmental impact of buildings and infrastructure works and the impact on the environment must be considered in its entirety. Here, too, a life-cycle approach is appropriate. One should also take into account the intermediate space.

1.D. Circular methods and materials

Circularity is a holistic concept that assumes some of the other topics as a condition or precondition. We should beware of one-sided or partial approaches to circularity. Sometimes considerations have to be made. The total life cycle cost and material efficiency are good indicators. With recovery material, there must be certainty about inspection quickly.

1.E. Increase climate resilience of buildings and infrastructure

Applying spatial strategies to increase resilience to climate impacts. At building level, the techniques must be involved. The enormous need for energy renovation offers an opportunity for the sector. (Green Deal) Further points of attention: softening, afforestation, ventilation, space for water and shielding.

1.F EU-Taxonomy as reference framework

We use the EU Taxonomy as a reference framework. It contains a classification system that allows investors and companies to indicate which investments are and are not sustainable, and on which environmental goals these have an impact.

- It must make a substantial contribution to at least one of the six environmental goals:
 1. Limitation of climate change (mitigation).
 2. Adaption to climate change and its consequences (adaptation).
 3. Sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources.
 4. Transition to a circular economy.
 5. Prevention and control of pollution.
 6. Protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems.
- It must not cause significant damage to the other environmental objectives. It must meet the minimum requirements for social norms (e.g. human and labour rights).

2. Construction industrialization and standardization

Construction industrialization and standardization are a prerequisite for making progress on several topics, on the understanding that the accumulation of standards should not be an obstacle to the achievement of quality objectives. This is also an important point in terms of affordability and feasibility. Moreover, this leads to less failure costs. Standard specifications, performance, posts are needed.

3. Digitization, new methodologies and techniques

Digitization, new methods and techniques sometimes find too little acceptance because several parties in a project have insufficient knowledge of them. Existing knowledge centres and the chain partners could share more accessible information and, above all, best practices on a central platform in order to at least try to make all this information more accessible.

4. Site logistics

Site logistics and mobility are very important in urban centres, but also in the context of CO2 reduction. Better collaboration and more standardization can be a way to increase the success of construction hubs. This requires good coordination between chain partners. The disruptions of the materials chain cause a lot of problems. Furthermore, optimizing logistics and site organization ensures increased productivity and a better working environment.

5. Chain cooperation

Intensive chain cooperation is a prerequisite for achieving progress on almost all topics. The guidance of small and medium-sized enterprises is of great importance in this respect. With regard to the alliance, it is important that all members are well aware of each other's views, studies, views, etc. In addition to chain cooperation between partners in the construction chain, co-creation between different actors (including citizens) will also be important.

2. Objectives

2.1 Striving for standardization and integration of the fragmented landscape of sustainability standards, certificates and measurement systems, in which quality goals are also paramount.

- ⇒ Bringing order to standardisation and revision of certain standards is a priority, as some of them run counter to what is expected of the entire sector and against the political will to drastically reduce their impact. It is particularly important to ensure that the accumulation of standards is ultimately not counterproductive in terms of results.
- ⇒ A global and flexible cross-disciplinary vision is therefore essential, which undoubtedly raises the question of whether or not actors other than those directly involved in the design, construction and reuse of buildings and infrastructure should be present/consulted in the alliance.
- ⇒ For an objective assessment of the overall environmental impact of a building, including its surroundings; Reference systems and benchmarks exist throughout its life cycle, but there is no consensus on how to use them.
- ⇒ By adapting the current TOTEM software to the specific characteristics of infrastructure projects ('Infra-TOTEM'), this can become an essential tool to calculate and optimise the environmental impact of an infrastructure project in an objective and neutral manner.
- ⇒ General cross-disciplinary and the same tool/measurement method for sustainability for the three regions and at federal level has been designated.
- ⇒ We will closely monitor the New European Bauhaus and use it as a reference because it provides a holistic translation of Green Deal to the sector.

2.2 Constructive dialogue with public administrations

- ⇒ The aim is to speak constructively with and advise public authorities in the three regions and at federal level (in the broadest sense of the word) to see what obstacles there are to give sustainability more space in tenders in a uniform manner in the three regions and at federal level.
- ⇒ A selection of impactful public administrations, government organisations and (semi)-government institutions that can be involved in a separate working group without being part of the Alliance.
- ⇒ Ensure that sustainability criteria are given a greater role in tenders (systematic?) and work on an ambitious minimum quality standard in design (choice of materials) and implementation (environmental management and CO2 methodologies). Particular attention should be paid to accessibility for small and medium-sized enterprises.
- ⇒ Creating the framework conditions within which sustainable innovations for public administrations and companies in the construction sector entail fewer risks.

- ⇒ Influence the systematic evolution of the regulatory framework in an equal way in the three regions and at federal level where necessary to speed up the transition.

2.3 Evaluation of the impact of the EU Taxonomy and other European frameworks and active commitment to meet the requirements from the entire chain.

The framework of the EU taxonomy will become guiding in the coming years. It is therefore important to map out the possible implications for the entire chain very well today. We can then analyse how we can best prepare ourselves as a sector and how the Alliance can offer added value here.

The EU taxonomy will be the reference framework for all key financial and political stakeholders. It is in all our interests to connect this framework with our vision of climate-proof and future-oriented construction within the Belgian market and to provide clarity for all involved.

2.4 Communicating the Alliance's activities in realizing its mission and goals.*

- ⇒ For the alliance, there is great added value in making initiatives, actions and projects known directly or indirectly related to its activities in order to accelerate to sustainable, future-oriented and climate-proof. However, given the limited resources and capacity, this is not realistic at the moment.
- ⇒ Gather each member's visions and best practices to understand what they are looking for and to align, focus on knowledge sharing – strength of the alliance and the partnerships. This with respect for everyone's individuality.
- ⇒ The dissemination of the development of new actions in such a way as to optimise human and financial resources.
- ⇒ All this with the aim of enabling the partners to communicate better as a sector around what is expected and what we can do together.