

# » 2020 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction



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## » ABOUT THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION (GLOBALABC)

The Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC) is the leading global platform for governments, the private sector, civil society and intergovernmental and international organizations to increase action towards a zero-emission, efficient and resilient buildings and construction sector. The GlobalABC was a key outcome of the 2015 UN climate conference.

## » ABOUT THE GLOBAL STATUS REPORT FOR BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

The Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction (Buildings-GSR) provides an annual snapshot of the progress of the buildings and construction sector on a global scale and reviewing the status of policies, finance, technologies, and solutions to monitor whether the sector is aligned with the Paris Agreement goals. The Buildings-GSR has become a reference document and this year's fifth edition will be launched in December. It is a collaborative document featuring GlobalABC member input and examples from different regions. This year's report also features chapters on COVID-19 impacts and opportunities, and on materials, health, nature-based solutions, and cooling for resilience.

[Download the Thumbnail of the Buildings GSR <<](#)



Under embargo until 16 December 2020 - 3pm CET



## Building sector emissions hit record high, but pandemic recovery can help transform sector – UN report

- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased to 9.95 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019. The sector accounts for 38% of all CO<sub>2</sub> emissions when adding building construction industry emissions
- Direct building CO<sub>2</sub> emissions need to halve by 2030 to get on track for net zero carbon building stock by 2050
- Governments must prioritize low-carbon buildings in pandemic stimulus packages and updated climate pledges

**Nairobi, 16 December 2020** – Emissions from the operation of buildings hit their highest-ever level in 2019, moving the sector further away from fulfilling its huge potential to slow climate change and contribute significantly to the goals of the Paris Agreement, according to a new report released today.

However, pandemic recovery packages provide an opportunity to push deep building renovation and performance standards for newly constructed buildings, and rapidly cut emissions. The forthcoming updating of climate pledges under the Paris Agreement – known as nationally determined contributions or NDCs – also offer an opportunity to sharpen existing measures and include new commitments on the buildings and construction sector.

The 2020 *Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction*, from the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC), found that while global building total final energy consumption remained steady year-on-year, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased to 9.95 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019. This increase was due to a shift away from the direct use of coal, oil and traditional biomass towards electricity, which had a higher carbon content due to the high proportion of fossil fuels used in generation.

When adding emissions from the building construction industry on top of operational emissions, the sector accounted for 38 per cent of total global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

*"The rising emissions of the buildings and construction sector emphasizes the urgent need for a triple strategy to aggressively reduce energy demand in the built environment, decarbonize the power sector and implement materials strategies that reduce lifecycle carbon emissions," said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).*

*"Green recovery packages can provide the spark that will get us moving rapidly in the right direction," she said. "Moving the buildings and construction sector onto a low-carbon pathway will slow climate change and deliver strong economic recovery benefits, so it should be a clear priority for all governments."*

To get on track to net-zero carbon building stock by 2050, the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that direct building CO<sub>2</sub> emissions need, by 2030, to fall by 50 per cent and indirect building sector emissions by 60 per cent. This equates to building sector emissions falling by around 6 per cent per year until 2030, close to the 7 per cent decrease in 2020 global energy sector CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due to the pandemic.

Worryingly, the GlobalABC's new Buildings Climate Tracker – which considers measures such as incremental energy efficiency investment in buildings and the share of renewable energy in global buildings – finds that the rate of annual improvement is decreasing. It has, in fact, halved between

**KEY MESSAGE****1 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the building sector are the highest ever recorded.**

- Despite stable energy demand, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from building operations and construction reached their highest level ever recorded in 2019 at around 10 GtCO<sub>2</sub>, or 38% of global energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- CO<sub>2</sub> emission increased because of a high proportion of fossil fuels used for power generation, combined with higher activity levels in regions where electricity remains carbon-intensive.
- This underlines the need to aggressively reduce energy demand, while decarbonising the power sector and implementing materials strategies that reduce lifecycle carbon emissions.

**KEY MESSAGE****2 The sector's decarbonisation progress is slowing down: it needs to increase by a factor of 5 to achieve net-zero by 2050.**

- The rate of annual improvement is decreasing and moving the sector away from achieving decarbonisation.
- Annual decarbonisation progress in the buildings and construction sector is slowing down, and has halved from 2016 to 2019.
- To get the buildings sector on track to achieving net-zero carbon by 2050, all actors across the value chain need to contribute to the effort to reverse this trend and increase decarbonization actions and their impact by a factor of 5.

**KEY MESSAGE****3 In 2019, spending for energy efficient buildings increased for the first time in the past three years, but remains outpaced by investment in conventional buildings and construction.**

- Building energy efficiency across global markets increased to USD \$152 billion in 2019, an increase of 3% from 2018.
- Spending for energy efficient buildings remains a small proportion of the USD \$5.8 trillion spent in the building and construction sector: for every \$1 spent on energy efficiency, \$37 is spent on conventional construction approaches.
- More investment effort is needed to decarbonize buildings.





**KEY MESSAGE 4** Finance institutions and property companies are realizing the strong growth potential and investment opportunities of sustainable buildings' investment.

- Green buildings represent one of the biggest global investment opportunities of the next decade, estimated by the IFC to be \$24.7 trillion by 2030.
- Most of this investment potential – \$17.8 trillion – lies in emerging market cities in East Asia, the Pacific, and South Asia, where more than half of the world's urban population will live in 2030.
- Key ingredient to unlocking investment flows is green building certification, which helps serve as a verification instrument for facilitating the issuance of green bonds and other forms of sustainable finance.

**KEY MESSAGE 5** The pandemic recovery can help transform sector, it offers a chance to reset and re-align commitments to higher levels of sustainability going forward.

- The impact of COVID-19 on the global construction industry has been severe and construction activities have dropped by 10-25% compared to 2019.
- Governments must prioritize low-carbon buildings in pandemic stimulus packages and updated climate pledges. Sustainable construction creates jobs, boosts economic activity, and activates local value chains while pushing for decarbonization, higher circularity and efficiency.
- The IEA estimates that up to 30 jobs in manufacturing and construction would be created for every million dollars invested in retrofits or efficiency measures in new builds.

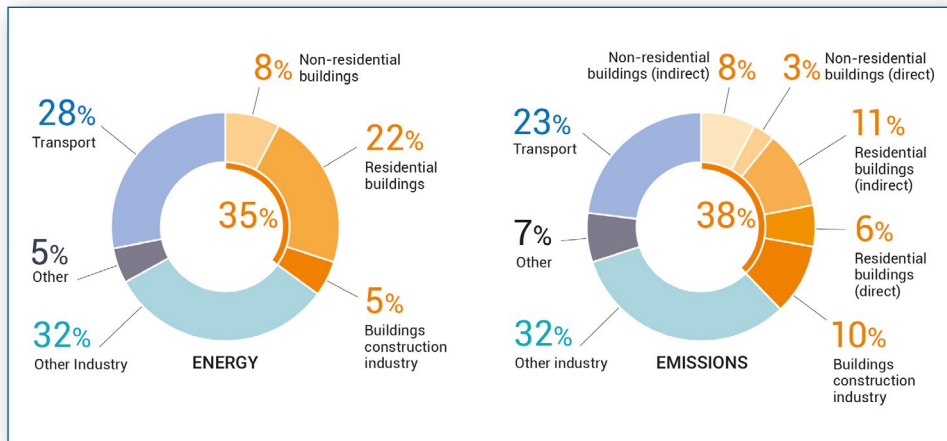
**KEY MESSAGE 6** The time to act is now and everyone needs to get on the road to zero.

- COVID-19 recovery packages and the resubmission of National Determined Contributions provide unique opportunities to build back greener.
- National governments must step up commitments in NDCs, longer-term climate strategies and support for regulation to spur uptake of net-zero emissions buildings.
- It is time for radical collaboration between public and private actors, across the entire value chain and across mitigation, adaptation and health agendas towards a zero-emission, efficient, and resilient buildings and construction sector.

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## KEY FIGURE 1

### Global share of buildings and construction final energy and emissions, 2019

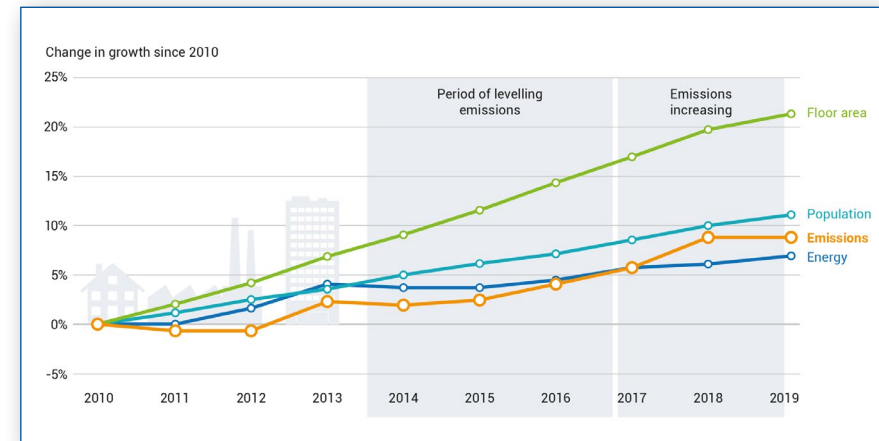


Notes: Construction industry is the portion (estimated) of overall industry devoted to manufacturing building construction materials such as steel, cement and glass. Indirect emissions are emissions from power generation for electricity and commercial heat.

Sources: Adapted from IEA (2020a), World Energy Statistics and Balances (database), [www.iea.org/statistics](http://www.iea.org/statistics) and IEA (2020b), Energy Technology Perspectives, buildings model, [www.iea.org/buildings](http://www.iea.org/buildings).

## KEY FIGURE 2

### Change in global drivers of trends in buildings energy and emissions 2010-2019

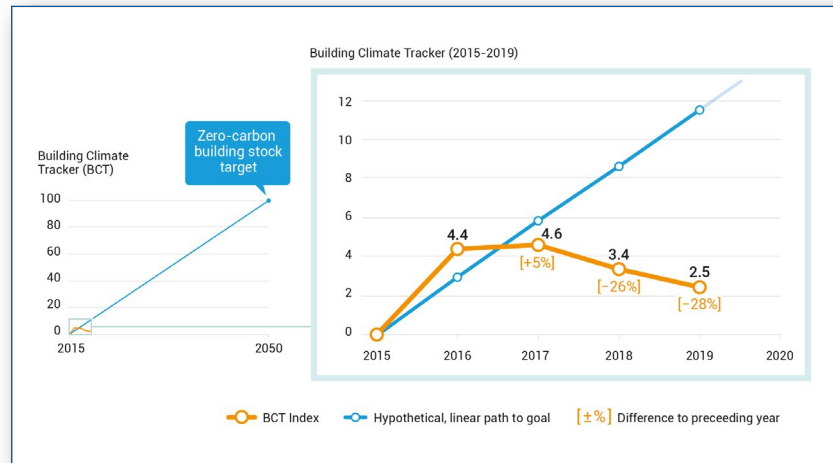


Source: IEA, Energy Technology Pathways, 2020

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## KEY FIGURE 3

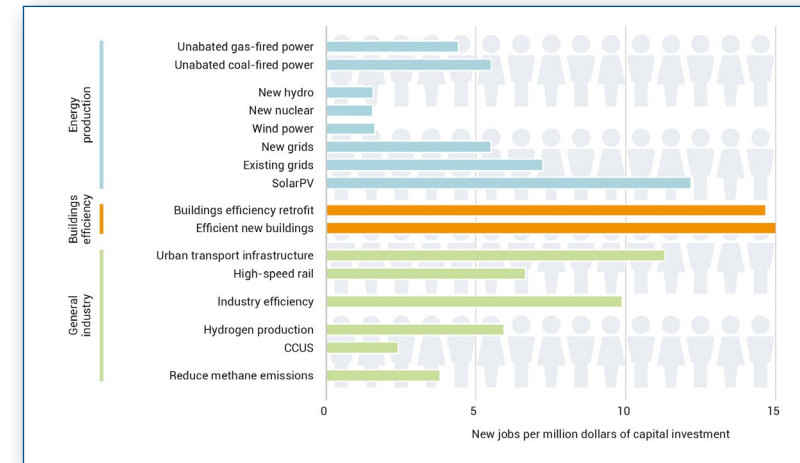
### Buildings Climate Tracker (BCT): Decarbonisation index trend for buildings and construction



This Buildings Climate Tracker (BCT) is comprised of the following seven indicators: Incremental energy efficiency investment in buildings (global, \$bn); Building Energy Codes (number of countries); Green Building Certifications (cumulative growth); NDCs with building sector action (Number of Countries); Renewable Energy Share in Final Energy in Global Buildings (%); Building Sector Energy unit Intensity (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>); CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

## KEY FIGURE 4




### Jobs created per million dollars of capital investment and spending by measure



Source: IEA Sustainable Recovery [IEA Sustainable Recovery, 2020]







## TWITTER

**#KeyFact1:** Building sector #emissions hit a record high in 2019   

**#Buildings** constitute 35% of global **#energydemand** 38% of **#CO<sub>2</sub>emissions**  

Read more about drivers and solutions in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [@Join\\_GlobalABC @UNEP](#)  




**#KeyFact2:** Global floor area is growing faster than population, **#energydemand** & #emissions  



But in 2020 due to **#COVID19** construction dropped by 10-25% compared to 2019  




Read more about drivers & solutions in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [@Join\\_GlobalABC @UNEP](#)  

**#KeyFact3:** Interventions for **#buildingefficiency** and **#retrofits** have the highest job creation potential






Read more about the role of the **#buildingsector** in a **#GreenRecovery**  in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [@Join\\_GlobalABC @UNEP](#)  

**#KeyFact4:** We are not on track to a **#netzerocarbon #buildingstock** by 2050  

The **#decarbonisation** index halved between 2016 and 2019   

Read more about drivers & solutions in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [@Join\\_GlobalABC @UNEP](#)  



## LINKEDIN



**#KeyFact1:** Building sector #emissions hit a record high in 2019   



**#Buildings** constitute 35% of global **#energydemand** 38% of **#CO<sub>2</sub>emissions**  

CO<sub>2</sub> emission increased because of a high proportion of **#fossilfuels** used for **#powergeneration**, combined with higher activity levels in regions where electricity remains carbon-intensive.

This underlines the need to aggressively reduce energy demand, while **#decarbonising** the **#powersector** and implementing **#materials** strategies that reduce **#lifecyclecarbonemissions**.



Read more about drivers and solutions in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction \(GlobalABC\)](#) and [UN Environment Programme](#)  

**#KeyFact2:** Global floor area is growing faster than population, **#energydemand** & **#emissions**  

But in 2020 due to **#COVID19** construction dropped by 10-25% compared to 2019  . Now is the time to change course and start investing in **#BetterBuildings!**

**#Greenbuildings** represent one of the biggest global investment opportunities of the next decade, estimated by the IFC - International Finance Corporation to be \$24.7 trillion by 2030, most of which lies in cities of **#emergingmarkets**.

Key ingredient to unlocking investment flows is **#greenbuildingcertification**, which helps serve as a verification instrument for facilitating the issuance of **#greenbonds** and other forms of **#sustainablefinance**.

Read more about drivers and solutions in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction \(GlobalABC\)](#) and [UN Environment Programme](#)  

## LINKEDIN

**#KeyFact3:** Interventions for **#buildingefficiency** and **#retrofits** have the highest job creation potential      

Governments must prioritize **#lowcarbon** buildings in **#pandemicstimulus** packages and updated **#climatepledges**.

**#Sustainableconstruction** creates **#jobs**, boosts **#economicactivity**, and activates local value chains while pushing for decarbonization, higher **#circularity** and **#efficiency**.

Read more about the role of the **#buildingsector** in a **#GreenRecovery**   in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction \(GlobalABC\)](#) and [UN Environment Programme](#)  



**#KeyFact4:** We are not on track to a **#netzerocarbon #buildingstock** by 2050  

The **#decarbonisation** index halved between 2016 and 2019    The time to act is now!

**#Recoverypackages** provide unique opportunities to **#buildbackgreener**.

**#Governments** must step up commitments in **#NDCs**, longer-term **#climatestrategies** and support for **#regulation** to spur uptake of **#netzeroemissions #buildings**.

It is time for radical **#collaboration** between **#public** and **#private** actors, across the entire **#valuechain** and across mitigation, adaptation and **#health** agendas towards a **#zeroemission**, **#efficient**, and **#resilient** buildings and **#construction** sector.

Read more about drivers and solutions in the new **#BuildingsGSR** by [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction \(GlobalABC\)](#) and [UN Environment Programme](#)  

# USEFUL ACCOUNTS AND HASHTAGS <<



## USEFUL ACCOUNTS:

- Twitter: @UNEP @Join\_GlobalABC
- LinkedIn: UN Environment Programme, Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC)
- Facebook: @UNEnvironmentProgramme #GlobalABC
- Instagram: @UNEP #GlobalABC

## USEFUL HASHTAGS:

- #BuildingsGSR #2020BuildingsGSR #BuildingsAndConstruction #GlobalABC #ParisAgreement #ClimateAction #BuildBackBetter #GreenRecovery

# SOCIAL MEDIA CARDS


# PRE LAUNCH




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# SUGGESTED MESSAGES | PRE LAUNCH <<

## TWITTER

SAVE THE DATE  for the launch of the new **#GlobalStatusReport** for **#BuildingsAndConstruction!**




Stay tuned to get updates on **#emissiondrivers** and **#energydemand** trends in the sector since 2018 and some exciting new features   

 **16 December 2020**

 **@UNEP & @Join\_GlobalABC**

## LINKEDIN / FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM

SAVE THE DATE  for the launch of the new **#GlobalStatusReport** for **#BuildingsAndConstruction!**

This year's report will provide an annual snapshot of the progress of the buildings and construction sector on a global scale.   

It will zoom in on emerging issues and trends in the sector, including **#COVID19** impacts and opportunities, and some new focus topics including **#materials**, **#health**, **#naturebasedsolutions**, and **#cooling**.

The **#BuildingsGSR** provides an overview of the status of **#policies**, **#finance**, **#technologies**, and solutions to monitor whether the sector is aligned with the **#ParisAgreement** goals.

 **16 December 2020**

 **[UN Environment Programme](#) & [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction \(GlobalABC\)](#)**

# SOCIAL MEDIA CARDS

# LAUNCH DAY

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# SUGGESTED MESSAGES

# LAUNCH DAY <<



## TWITTER

Did you know? Building sector **#emissions** hit a record high in 2019   


But we already have solutions: together, we can still transform the sector!  

→ Share your solutions to decarbonize the **#buildings** & **#construction** sector with the hashtags **#GreeningBuildings** **#BuildingsGSR**  

## LINKEDIN / FACEBOOK / INSTAGRAM

Did you know?  

  Building sector **#emissions** hit a record high in 2019...

  But **#recovery** interventions and **#climateplans** can help transform the sector!

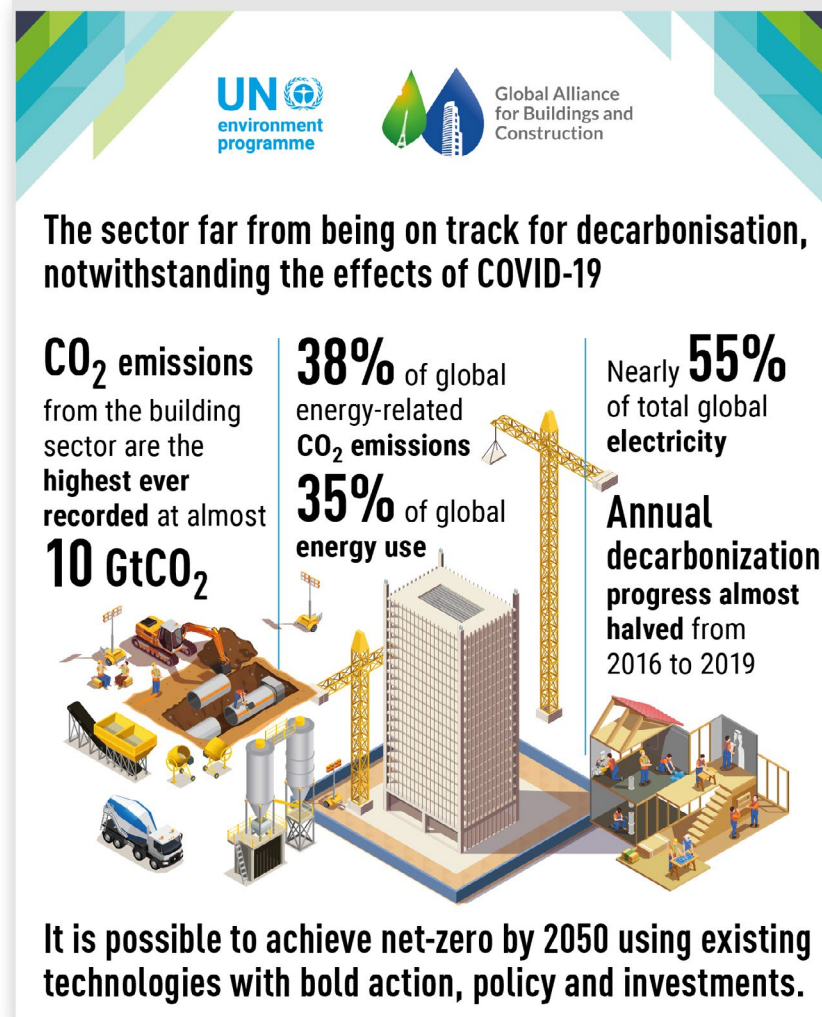
What can you do?

→ Share your solutions to decarbonize **#buildings** and **#construction** sector with the hashtags: **#GreeningBuildings** and **#BuildingsGSR**  

→ Read this year's **#BuildingsGSR** by [UN Environment Programme](#) & [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction \(GlobalABC\)](#) to learn about the latest **#emissionsdrivers** and **#energydemand** trends in the sector  



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**VIDEO** <<

Download the Video <<