



NEWS RELEASE

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USGBC UNVEILS 8 CLIMATE ACTIONS Goal is to more closely align USGBC with Climate Initiatives

November 15, 2006 (Denver, CO) - USGBC's board and the LEED Steering Committee have this week put forth a series of proposals and recommendations that will bring further focus on green buildings and their impact on climate. Each of the eight specific actions will have an immediate and measurable impact on CO2 reduction; when implemented in concert, they comprise a powerful leadership initiative that sets a high bar for the industry.

1. The 50% CO2 reduction goal

Beginning in 2007 all new commercial LEED projects will be required to reduce CO2 emissions by 50% when compared to current emission levels.

Because LEED drives performance through the synergistic integration of whole building systems, these results will be achieved by looking at all four of the categories that can lessen a building's carbon footprint – energy, water, transportation and materials. This important proposal will go to our membership for ballot in December, and it will become effective after the date of member approval of this goal. We will begin to develop a similar recommendation for residential and neighborhood markets.

2. Increased energy reduction prerequisites in LEED

All commercial LEED projects registered after the date of member approval of this change must achieve at least two energy and optimization credits.

LEED Steering Committee and the Board of Directors' recommendation specifically ratchets up the contributions achieved through energy reduction. This recommendation calls out specific action to improve energy performance in buildings, evolving our rating system in an important way to align with our deep commitment to climate.

3. Implementation of a carbon dioxide offset program

USGBC will develop an innovative carbon dioxide offset program that relies on the verified performance data from LEED projects

By developing robust and meaningful metrics to track and accurately quantify the CO2 emissions and reductions from LEED projects, we will have solid documentation of LEED's significant contributions to mitigating climate change.

This program will capture actual energy performance data along with the associated CO2 emissions for those LEED certified buildings that have achieved energy efficiency points

beyond the LEED Prerequisites. This offset opportunity will help drive owners to make more aggressive and creative decisions around the design and engineering of buildings that will reduce their CO2 emissions. And as the cost of offsets increase, so will the value of these buildings.

4. Continuous process improvement incentives

ALL LEED for New construction and Core and Shell buildings that reach certification will automatically (at no cost) be registered for LEED for Existing Buildings.

The energy optimization credit in LEED for Existing Buildings already addresses actual energy use, and the continuous process improvement practices that are part of LEED for Existing Buildings are where we have a real chance to make significant strides in our mission. This will drive a continued focus on building operations and maintenance, and the sustained performance that it drives.

5. Pushing the envelope on performance - certification fees rebates for Platinum buildings

LEED Platinum buildings are worthy of striving for because they contribute so profoundly to CO2 emission reductions. We will fully rebate certification fees for Platinum buildings. We hope this will encourage owners and developers to reach ever higher, thereby making greater contributions to carbon reduction.

6. A Carbon neutral USGBC

By the end of 2007, USGBC as an organization will be 100% carbon neutral.

This is the fifth year we've been carbon neutral at Greenbuild, and it's a trend we intend to continue. To date, we've offset over 38,000 tons of CO2 to cover emissions from the conference and attendee travel over the past 5 years.

Another way we're reducing our carbon footprint is by moving – next week – into a soon to be certified LEED Platinum commercial interiors space that's in a LEED gold building in Washington.

8. Portfolio Performance Program

The long-term goal of this program is to recognize companies for high environmental performance across their portfolios.

The first step of this effort is to help companies achieve LEED certification quickly on a large number of buildings. A great example is PNC bank. By working closely with USGBC to pilot this process, PNC has just this week certified 18 bank branches, the first of many more to come.

The Portfolio Program is a significant way accelerate LEED project certifications, which means that we'll have more LEED buildings performing at top levels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. To launch the pilot, USGBC has been working with the market leaders in the pilot to implement LEED on this scale. These companies and institutions collectively have 50,000 buildings and 500+million square feet of real estate.

In addition to PNC, other pilot participants include HSBC North America, Bank of America, Syracuse University, Cushman & Wakefield, Thomas Properties Group, and USAA Real Estate Company. Leading this group are representatives from the university and government sector who have made specific building commitments, including American University, California Department of General Services, University of California Santa Barbara, University of California Merced, Emory University and University of Florida.

8. Carbon Reduction Education, and a Challenge to the Industry

USGBC will be launching an important new educational program designed specifically to help industry professionals gain the knowledge they need to apply design and construction practices that are energy efficient and have immediate and measurable impact on CO2 emissions.

To be launched in the first quarter of 2007, this professional curriculum will help to dramatically enhance the expertise of every building professional around practices that can help us deliver on our efforts to slow climate change across the globe. Regardless of the level of LEED knowledge, regardless of your role in the industry, we challenge the industry to learn and contribute to the global efforts to slow climate change.

Other initiatives USGBC is taking on include signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Clinton Climate Initiative (CCI) to engage the largest cities in the world through the Large Cities Climate Leadership Group and provide them with the tools to become leaders in energy efficiency and green building strategies, which will result in the reduction of carbon emissions. CCI is focusing on three key deliverables: improving green purchasing power; mobilizing and deploying technical expertise; and implementing common measurement tools in the areas of buildings, power and water; and transportation. As a partner in the CCI's effort, USGBC will provide technical assistance and expertise in green building practices, engaging the World Green Building Council (WGBC), and mobilizing leading green building experts from around the globe with the goal of increasing the inventory of green buildings around the world. Other partners in the Clinton Climate Initiative include the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the Alliance to Save Energy, and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives.

Earlier today USGBC also signed a collaboration agreement with Autodesk to partner on technology initiatives to transform the practice of sustainable design and reduce causes of climate change through expanded use of building information modeling.

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