

CEMBUREAU WELCOMES EU RENOVATION WAVE

Life-cycle approaches and material neutrality are key to decarbonise the Europe's built environment, says European cement industry

Brussels, 15/10/2020 – CEMBUREAU, the European Cement Association, welcomes the publication of the European Commission's Renovation Wave.

"The renovation wave provides the EU with a unique opportunity to make a difference in citizens' lives, and the cement industry is fully ready to play its role" said Koen Coppenholle, CEO of CEMBUREAU. Concrete, which is the cement industry's end product, offers key advantages for deep renovation in terms of energy savings, thermal mass, flexibility, insulation, resilience and recarbonation.

"By focusing on life-cycle approaches, circularity and ambitious building energy targets, the European Commission offers a convincing view of a decarbonised building stock", said Mr Coppenholle. *"Concrete, which was at the heart of the Bauhaus movement, is critical for European buildings and everyday infrastructure such as schools and hospitals. Thanks to its capacity to absorb CO2 during its lifetime and end-of-life, its recyclability and its thermal mass properties, it plays a decisive role in decarbonising European buildings".*

"We now look forward to ambitious policy proposals based on the principle of material neutrality and full life-cycle approaches", said Mr Coppenholle. *"In this respect, the preference expressed by policymakers for one category of construction materials – nature-based solutions – over others without any scientific substantiation, is disconcerting and worrying. Concrete, as fully local product, can absolutely compete with nature-based materials when considering life-cycle emissions and the full value chain impacts such as sourcing or transportation".*

As highlighted in its [position paper](#) on the renovation wave, CEMBUREAU supports an approach in which:

- Building renovation is not limited to energy efficiency, it should include a focus on material efficiency, the circular economy and resilience;
- Throughout the regulatory framework, attention for a cross-material life cycle assessment at the level of the building should be one of the key policy drivers;
- A renovation wave focuses on deep renovation and considers rebuild when it is the best environmental outcome.

CEMBUREAU has published its own [carbon neutrality roadmap](#), which looks at achieving net zero emissions along the cement and concrete value chain. Amongst other issues, the roadmap looks at how carbon emissions savings can be made through a better use of concrete, and highlights the decisive role it can play as a sustainable construction material.

CEMBUREAU also supports the Commission's new building assessment framework, Level(s), and has contributed to its pilot tests (please see [press release](#)).

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