



CIB NEWS ARTICLE

International Council for Research and Innovation
in Building and Construction

Providing a global network for international exchange and cooperation in research and innovation in building and construction, in support of an improved building process and of improved performance of the built environment.

May 2009

From the CIB Management

95th Board Meeting

Shanghai 20th – 21st April 2009



Hosted by CIB Vice-President Prof. Wang Wei – Shanghai Research Institute of Building Sciences (SRIBS) the CIB Board and Committee meetings were held on 20th and 21st April 2009 in Shanghai, China.

During these two days, the current and future operations of CIB were discussed in open lively discussions. Below a few topics.

Mid-term review strategy implementation

At the annual General Assembly held on 17th May 2007 in Cape Town, South Africa the Board was elected for the period 2007-2010.

Once elected and in communication with the Board, the CIB Strategy for the period 2007 – 2010 was redefined by CIB President Prof Peter Barrett. (See *separate news article* [here](#).)

With responses by the Programme Committee (PC), Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC) and Administrative Committee (AC) on what has been implemented so far and what is envisaged to be implemented during the remainder of the three-year term, an in depth discussion took place on the CIB 2007 – 2010 strategy; with special attention for the strategic aspects of:

- Membership development: trends and expectations

- IfG – Investments for Growth: accomplishments so far and new proposals
- Strategic Partnerships
- Secretariat and financial resources / constraints

Generally speaking the meeting feels the adopted strategy and vision should not be changed. At the same time it is felt that “industry” needs more attention and that in an effort to attract as many as possible, CIB must offer topics that are of specific interest to them.

With regard to membership development, amongst the biggest challenges in the current economic downturn are retention of the existing membership and acquisition of new members. This requires a constant re-aligning and updating of the medium term strategy.

With regard to the AC and strategy implementation, the Secretary General’s role in the way of working of the General Secretariat was highlighted and it was thought that with having an Assistant Secretary General since 1st April, we can very well take things forward.

Budgeting is in place, which makes it possible to make sound decisions on investments.



Programme Committee

As usual the half-year review of all Task Groups and Working Commissions took place.

Moreover the meeting was happy to conclude from the 'traffic light' monitoring tool overview, that with only one exception – which is a very good sign - all of the in total approximately 60 groups are functioning well.

Priority Themes

The priority themes are all developing well.

An overview was given of the envisaged Sustainable Building *SB10 Regional Conferences* plus the *SB11 World Conference* that are being organized under the auspices of CIB, iSBE and UNEP, which is a most eminent series of conferences.

The required overall conference coordination on behalf of the three responsible organizations is in the process of being transferred from the former SB Conference Coordinator Nils Larsson (director iSBE) to the recently employed CIB ASG / SB Conference Coordinator Dr. Bill Porteous. (See *separate news article* [here](#).)

Furthermore it was reported that CIB now is an "official" UNEP SBCI (Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative) partner and that this relationship is developing very well. (See *separate article* [here](#).)

Both the Clients and Users (C&U) and Revaluing Construction (RC) themes are ticking along nicely.

The Integrated Design Solutions (IDS) theme is making good progress in various parts of the world, it seems that the momentum is there.

One of the theme's highlights is the June 2009 "First International CIB Conference on IDS", organized by VTT and RIL, to be held in Helsinki.

Marketing and Communications Committee

The – electronic – CIB Newsletter is actually doing very well and is now read by some 50.000 people worldwide.

The CD-rom presentation as also featured on the CIB homepage (CIB Video Presentation) has been modernised.

In conclusion it was said that one might say that CIB has a more 'modern' appearance now.

An in depth discussion took place on membership acquisition and retention.

The progress in selected countries shows that in particular the US and China are showing very promising membership acquisition developments, which are the result of the personal efforts of Board

Members Prof. Thomas Regan and Prof. Wang Wei respectively.

At the same time, Membership retention is of utmost importance and the General Secretariat is putting a lot of time and effort in this.

In this context the meeting feels that targeting a specific group instead of a general approach and the use of new 'social media', is a good one.

Sustainable developments and the climate change topic could well be of interest and attract people.

Investments for Growth (IfG)

The Investments for Growth topic initially contained the following items:

- new presentation and redesign CIB website
- promotion in China
- elaboration theme documents C&U and IDS
- 1st round SHIP - Special High Impact Publications

Per item, the first stage (2007 – 2008) progress was discussed and it was concluded that all is progressing well and that the exercise is raising CIB's profile.

Next the IfG – Stage 2 / 2009 Proposals new items were discussed, including:

- follow through on C&U and IDS theme development
- preparation for a series of CIB internet based seminars for the Industry

These items have been provided for in the 2009 budget.

Joint MCC / PC issues

The per 1st April 2009 appointed Assistant Secretary General Dr. Bill Porteous will amongst his other duties, focus quite a bit of his attention on reviewing the various CIB Guidelines and the monitoring of the by now approx. 20 CIB Student Chapters.

An alternative name for the chapters e.g. "Future Research Leaders" was suggested; the actual renaming will be further discussed.

The former CIB Gyula Sebestyén Student Chapter Award will be replaced by the Sebestyén Future Leaders Award.

As no Call for Proposals was made in 2008, the Award for the winning proposal this year has been doubled to a sum of Euro 5000 and CIB-endorsed Student Chapters at CIB Member Universities are invited to submit proposals for activities for the 2008/9 CIB Sebestyén Future Leaders Award. (See *separate article* [here](#).)



Administrative Committee

The 2008 Financial Report with Auditor's Statement was discussed and a few points were highlighted.

Fortunately 2008 showed a continued growth in membership fee income, as well as a growth of total operational income as compared to 2007.

At the same time the 2008 operational expenditures showed a slight increase of approx. 1,7% only, as compared to 2007; thus keeping the costs of the General Secretariat at an operational minimum.

The year ended with an operational surplus of 48,3 k€. A negative impact on the net result was the book value decrease of the shares component of the investment portfolio.

The meeting agreed to ask and advise the General Assembly to approve the report and to discharge the Board and Treasurer for the year.

Next the 2009 Budget was briefly discussed and approved by the meeting.

At this stage the meeting also discussed a document called "Global Economic Crisis and a CIB Worst Case Scenario" as distributed prior to the meeting. This document describes a calculated financial situation for the years 2009 – 2014, that assumes that the global economic crisis will become worse in 2009 and that actual recovery will not take place until in 2012, resulting in i) a loss of Members (and income from membership fees) and a loss of income from our shares and ii) the need for substantial decreases in Expenditures, wherever possible to maximally compensate for this.

The meeting agreed that this document represents a good and realistic look at the situation and concluded from this document that CIB will certainly survive, even in the assumed worst case scenario.

In the context of the 2009 budget and the current global economic situation it was said that close monitoring of CIB's financial position, will continue.

CIB World Building Congress 2010

In May 2010 this Triennium will come to an end and this will coincide with the next CIB World Congress to be hosted in Salford in the UK.

This promises to be a vibrant event involving practically every working commission and task group of the CIB. It will also be an occasion to make connections to global partners and issues through interaction with the UN, OECD ECTP / EC and others.

CIB President Prof. Peter Barrett reported that all is progressing nicely and is shaping up as expected and hoped for.

Since almost 50 CIB TG / WC's - which is almost all of them - are involved, Prof. Peter Barrett invites all attendees to ask their people for abstracts (see the congress website at www.cib2010.com/).

Acknowledgements

As mentioned by the Committee chairs in the CIB 2008 Board Report and as a closing remark here, it is absolutely important to recognize that the data on the Membership fees, provide only a very inadequate reflection of the Membership inputs to CIB's activities. In reality for most Members what they pay as the annual membership fee is but a part and sometimes only a relatively small part of their total contribution to CIB. None of the other responsibilities that they shoulder (i.e. provision of Coordinator, Organization of or participation at a meeting, preparation or publishing documents) appear in CIB's accounts.

Nevertheless, they represent considerable expenses by those members and the benefits are enjoyed by many others. Not least on behalf of those who derive these advantages, the Meeting would like to record their appreciation that much of this is undertaken without any charge to CIB.

The success of our work is entirely dependent on the effort the large number of experts put on making progress within a wide variety of topics. Particularly the role of leaders of the Working Commissions and Task Groups is worth mentioning.

The unselfish, often entirely voluntary input for the benefit of the whole membership is highly appreciated.

However, this is the essence of all the membership organisations: the more each and everyone of us is putting to the common pool, the more we also get ourselves. By continuously updating the work programme to respond to the needs of the members, we continue to provide the global focus on the challenges facing the built environment community.