



Architecture Supporting Happiness: A message from the President

During the past years, the UIA has harvested a tremendous amount valuable information through the « sustainable by design » initiative. The time has now come to take the lessons and launch the next step: when sustainability creates happiness!! The Bhutanese government has its « Gross National Happiness ». Let's help to build the « Gross International Happiness ». The underlying requirement for global happiness is a sense of sustainable futures. This must, in turn, be supported by universally responsible and sustainable architecture.

The Rio + 20 conference failed to establish a strong policy framework, but two statements were clearly identified and appear to be very important:

- . The role of civil society in the process of mitigating and managing Climate Change
- . The role of the green economy

We architects claim a leadership role in society. Now we have the opportunity to advance our position in the green economy. To achieve this we must reaffirm our leadership in the processes of designing the built environment. To maintain and advance this leadership, we must be in the forefront of advocating and demonstrating fulfilment of humanity's highest aspirations.

Our profession is challenged every day, everywhere. Our position of being a privileged profession is disappearing. We have to act as long it is still possible, and time is short. Let's invest in long term public projects. We will thereby build our social capital.

For that reason, it is time for us to build on our collaboration with specialists in all possible fields and demonstrate our capacity to lead a holistic approach. It is also time to work for everybody. No business can thrive while serving only 2% of its possible clients, which is today's average situation in the world since architects design about 2% of the world's buildings. Let's dare to aim to build for 100% of the world population. This, we trust, can be achieved through a strong commitment to sustainable architecture. The 2011 theme of World Architecture Day was « Architecture is a human right » Let's work to achieve this right.

That's why we urge each of our Member Sections to tackle the issue, to take part, in advancing the Sustainable by Design strategy. Therefore, we await all answers, suggestions, doubts and reservations about the project. To begin, I suggest the following ideas in a list that might look long and tedious, but, that reflects the reality of our situation in the world today. Nothing is either white or black, nothing has only one meaning, and nothing is merely complicated. Everything is complex, everything is linked, interrelated and we do hope this list will grow and evolve very fast with all your inputs.



1. Stop doing things « as usual », become very cautious on every part of our work, because of the result of our work.
2. Raise awareness of the absolute need for collaboration with all stakeholders of the all types of human settlements, from the isolated cabin to the huge mega-city.
3. Collaboration with all sciences, especially those not yet considered to be relevant.
4. Raise awareness of the many ecosystems of biodiversity and of their interdependence.
5. Raise awareness of the evolutionary possibilities of Nature and search for the tiniest impact of human activities on Nature.
6. Become committed to humanitarian initiatives, share their experiences and help them to extend their networks.
7. Raise awareness of the hazardous characteristics of many building components.
8. Take into consideration all traditional techniques, which have proved to be harmless towards Environment and life.
9. Build awareness of the need for maintenance of all the surroundings of our settlements to alleviate all possible unforeseen events and disasters.
10. Build awareness of the value of soil around our settlements, as a food production resource, a habitat for many species and part of the climate moderating system.
11. Demonstrate that we have understood and can apply the theory « less is more ». This theory was been stated by architects and has led the world's architecture for years, for formal reasons. Let's enlarge its field of application to our interventions in the environment.
12. Develop and share sustainable strategies, methodologies and experiences.
13. Check all initiatives developed by all our partners in the fields of design, engineers, landscape architects, craftsmen, contractors, tenants, etc...
14. Taking into account of the fact that vernacular architecture seems to care more about sustainability, pay attention to all vernacular architecture.
15. Work with the lessons of heritage, and heritage buildings. Re-use and recycle the existing.
16. Address urban landscape as a factor of identity and social cohesion.
17. Build up better collaborations among all providers for: energy, transport, education, culture. Create intelligence in all grids of distribution.
18. Become the facilitators of the green industry. Bring strong support to the best initiatives.
19. Seek quality of life for all. Refuse all segregations.
20. Be present in the social and political field, become committed citizen, cease to behave as « idiots » (in ancient greek, those who do not care about City).
21. Dare to be the dreamers of humanity's future, dare to commit ourselves on long term projects as a professional investment. And all other possible initiatives.....

It is against this background that I now have much pleasure in launching

UIA Sustainable Futures / Responsible Architecture Project

Professor Allan Rodger who operated the Sustainable by Design survey of the Member Sections will lead this initiative. We will be grateful to all of you to bring him your very best support and to tell him « everything ». Through this project we will endeavour to achieve the very best outcomes that we can, using the resources already developed across the full spectrum of the Member Sections.



We ask you to work with the Sustainable Futures / Responsible Architecture Project so that it serves its declared objectives while also advancing extension of our aspirations and our operating methods. UIA working languages are French and English. If there is any difficulty, please let us know.

Very soon Allan will be making contact with you.
Please do what you can to advance this initiative. It is important for the whole profession and the global community that we serve.

Than you very much for your kind cooperation,
With all my best hopes and good wishes for success

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, circular loop with a vertical line extending downwards from the center, and a smaller loop on the left side.

Albert Dubler, UIA President

Paris, 13 February 2013