

Background of SB Conference Series

18 December 2013

In 1994, the *International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction* (CIB, www.cibworld.nl), held an international green building conference in London, UK. An international conference on green building was held in Vancouver in 1998, sponsored by the Canadian energy ministry and the *International Initiative for a Sustainable Built Environment* (iiSBE, www.iisbe.org). Following these initial ground-breaking events, CIB and iiSBE joined forces to promote international conferences on sustainable building in Maastricht in 2000 and in September 2002 in Oslo.

In 2003 the *Division of Technology, Industry and Economics* (DTIE) of the *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP-SBCI, Sustainable Building and Climate Initiative, www.unep.org/sbci/), became a third co-promoter of the series.

In 2004, the co-promoters assisted in the organization of several regional sustainable building conferences, which took place in Brazil, South Africa, China, Poland, Egypt, Malaysia, and Greece. All of these regional or national events were designed to elucidate sustainable building issues in these regions, and to create a strong link with the global event in Tokyo in September 2005, chiefly through the tabling of regional SB strategy documents, including agendas for research and action programmes.

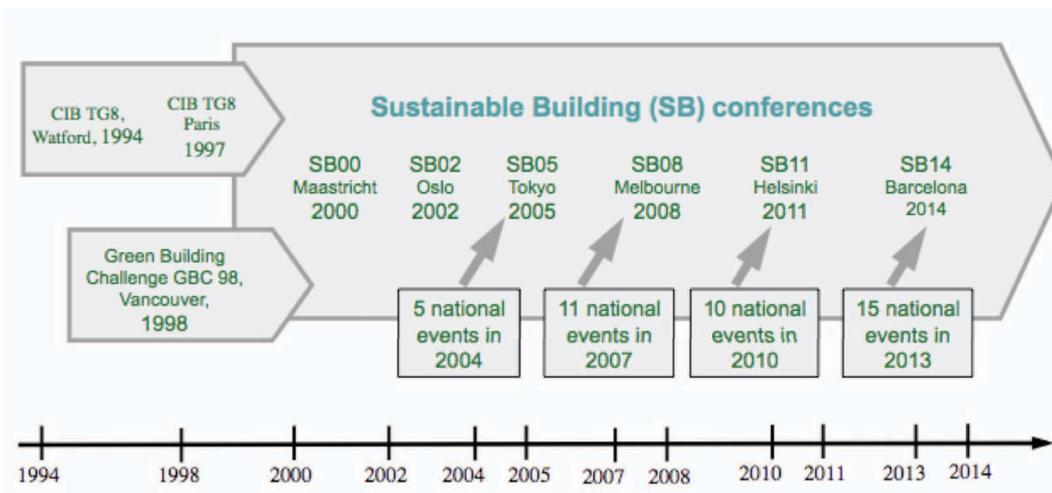
A similar series of regional SB conferences was sponsored in 2007, with links to the 2008 Melbourne conference. This national series included conferences in Toronto, Torino, Seoul, Lisbon, Malmo, Prague, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, Auckland, Hong Kong and Athens.

The next cycle of regional or national SB conferences took place in 2010 and 2011. Regional or national conferences took place in Seoul (South Korea), Vilamoura (Portugal), Madrid (Spain), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Wellington (New Zealand), Prague (Czech Republic), Amman (Jordan), Espoo (Finland), Maastricht (the Netherlands) and São Paulo (Brazil). The global event in that cycle was the SB11 World Sustainable Building conference in Helsinki.

In 2011 FIDIC, the *International Federation of Consulting Engineers*, www.fidic.org, joined CIB, iiSBE and UNEP-SBCI as promoter of the regional conferences in 2010 and the global SB11 World Sustainable Building Conference in Helsinki, Finland, in October 2011,

Finally, the last series of regional SB Conferences leading to the World SB14 Barcelona Conference, has recently concluded with sixteen SB13 events that took place in Munich (Germany), Oulu (Finland), Vancouver (Canada), Colombo (Sri Lanka), Pomona (California, EEUU), Prague (Czech Republic), Coventry (UK), Seoul (South Korea), Singapore (Singapore), Hong Kong (HK), Graz (Austria), Cape Town (South Africa), Guimarães (Portugal), Cairo The World SB14 Barcelona Conference, www.wsb14barcelona.org, will take place on 28 to 30 October 2014.

The graph below provides a visual impression of the development of the series over time.





Screen shot of the wsb14barcelona webpage developed by GBCe

In all of these conferences one or more local organizations have taken financial and organizational responsibility, while iiSBE, CIB and UNEP-SBCI as the international co-promoters have given organizational advice and have used their networks to ensure a large audience for the events. This role has been effective, as evidenced by an attendance of 600 in Vancouver, 850 in Maastricht, 1,100 in Oslo, 1,700 in Tokyo, 2000+ in Melbourne and 1,100 in Helsinki.

The SB conference series is now considered to be the pre-eminent international conference series on sustainable building and construction. The series is held on a three-year cycle and still features a core emphasis on peer-reviewed papers, presentations of regional policy papers and displays of assessed projects. These events also provide fast-track inclusion of the best technical papers from regional conferences into the global event, as well as registration policies designed to encourage the attendance of students and delegates from developing countries.

At its World Congress 2013, the CIB acknowledges this relevance by giving the Construction and Society Award to the SB Conference Series, with the rationale: *“The SB Conference series embodies everything that the CIB aims to achieve in promoting research and innovation that is to the benefit of society”*.

The increasingly high reputation of the series has resulted in other research groups and organizations holding events concurrently with SB conferences thereby maximizing the benefit for delegates. In short, the SB-series of conferences provides delegates with an unparalleled view into regional and international sustainable building issues every three years, while providing host organizations with increased visibility and effectiveness in their own regions.

The global partners have appointed coordinators to manage the process:

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For continuing updates on the series and on World SB14, please go to www.sbconferences.org.

