

The Brilliance of Green Building is Shining at Rio+20

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"It is time that we steered by the stars, not the lights of each passing ship."

— General Omar Bradley

The green building world knows the following statistic all too well. On average, we spend 90 percent of our time indoors. That's 21.6 hours out of every day. That's 328 and a half days every year. Inside a building.

And we certainly take this to heart because, while we're spending all this time inside, the quality of air we're breathing is on average 3-5 times more polluted than outside, according to the EPA.

Here at [Rio+20](#), the historic UN Conference on Sustainable Development, a strong global contingency of green building advocates have been spreading the word about the triple-bottom-line benefits to green building.

Sure, the strict business case for green building is stronger than ever. Much of that is based on the deep energy reductions that come from green building projects (See Greg Kats' analysis about the amazing net present value of green building in his book *Greening our Built World*).

But green building is not about some narrow crusade to drive energy efficiency alone. Instead, it's all about a sophisticated approach to balance multiple sustainability values, like energy, water conservation, daylighting, indoor air quality, resiliency, siting & location and others – that ensure we are working to achieve multiple objectives simultaneously. The brilliance of green building – and the reason so many international stakeholders are flocking to accelerate action in this area – is the integrated framework that drives synergies across the sustainability spectrum.

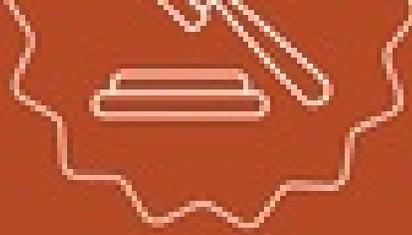
So too, is the goal of Rio+20.

In fact, this novel idea was born and delivered to the world at the original [Earth Summit](#) twenty years ago. In two words – sustainable development – we committed to a path that would guide our actions, a course that ensures economic prosperity, social inclusion and environmental protection.

No longer guided by the lights of other ships, instead, we look to the stars.

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