

USGBC Explains Who's Who at COP17 for Green Building and Climate Change

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When our delegation of green building council representatives arrived in Durban for the COP 17 climate conference, we hoped we had what it took to help change the world. The diverse group seemed to possess that peculiar mixture of naiveté, enthusiasm and focused passion that can distinguish successful from merely aspiring troublemakers. Through participation and attendance at a variety of different events I was, as usual, impressed with the astounding effort on the part of various individuals and organizations to bring to scale energy efficiency and green building solutions. I was proud to be a part of this movement at the COP.

COP17 has officially ended on a generally positive note – the Durban Platform for Advanced Action was agreed to by parties (for pros and cons of the official outcome see Jason Hartke's blog, "[Good COP, Bad COP](#)"). While nearly 200 countries reaching consensus agreement on the messy issue of the Kyoto Protocol is no small feat, I would be remiss to not also take this opportunity to wave the flag for a record number of parallel achievements in our small yet increasingly growing world of green building and energy efficiency within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

These achievements include (but are not limited to) a [landmark report](#) issued by the [Institute for Building Efficiency](#) that directly connects the dots to building efficiency in the UNFCCC context, six major international cities [recognized](#) for their progressive local green building policies, and an entire [Durban street](#) of low-income houses retrofitted for the occasion of COP17 among many other important initiatives.

With so much happening it seems fitting to make a note of all the experts and talented people whom I encountered at COP17 with a shared agenda to make progress on green building in the name of climate action.

My hope is that this good work doesn't simply end along with the two-week negotiating session when everyone goes home and files their business cards away in a special COP17 pile. These lessons are important, relevant, and applicable now. Thus, I bring you, "Who's Who in Green Building and Climate Change," a cheat sheet of experts and accompanying resources from COP17 that will hopefully continue to foster global collaborations for the rest of the year.

THE LIST:

Jason Hartke and **Hope Lobkowicz** with USGBC represented the interests of green buildings as an integral component of emission reduction goals at the COP.

Jorge Wolpert Kuri with the Mexico National Housing Commission gave an inspiring presentation on the Sustainable Housing Initiative that satisfies its Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) as a Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Programme of Activities (POA).

Sandra López Tovar with the Colombian Ministry of the Environment revealed the progressive work that the Colombian government has pursued to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Dr. Lisa Ryan and **Philippe Benoit** with the International Energy Agency and their [25 Energy Efficiency Policy Recommendations](#) and [Energy Performance Certification of Buildings](#) in which LEED is highlighted as one of the most well-known and applied whole building rating schemes.

Jennifer Layke and **Katrina Managan** with the [Institute for Building Efficiency](#) at Johnson Controls and their [report](#), "Driving a Transformation to Energy Efficient Buildings: Policies and Actions."

Lisa Jacobson and Laura **Tierney** were at the COP on behalf of the [Business Council for Sustainable Energy](#). BCSE hosted expert panels and facilitated the important discussion on the role of the private sector in global climate negotiations.

Simon Reddy, Executive Director with [C40 Cities](#), represents the interests of the 40 largest cities in the world which account for 18% of global GDP and 10% of global carbon emissions. C40 in inspiring and enabling cities to make the emissions reductions necessary to mitigate the effects of climate change to which countries are reluctant to commit.

Reid Detchon, Vice President for Energy and Climate, and Mark Hopkins, Director of International Energy Efficiency, with the United Nations Foundation promoted [energy efficiency](#) as a low hanging fruit for emissions reduction opportunities.

Kateri Callahan with the [Alliance to Save Energy](#) is a long-time ally of our mutual policy goals and mission.

Thierry Berthoud, Managing Director, Energy & Climate at the [World Business Council on Sustainable Development](#) is prominently featured in the Guardian UK's Sustainable Business Blog with his [blog series](#) on green investment. The WBCSD [Energy Efficiency in Buildings Program](#) facilitate emissions reductions made at least economic burden—through the low hanging fruit of energy efficiency.

Jeff Moe, Director of Global Policy and Advocacy at the [Center for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability](#), an initiative at [Ingersoll Rand](#) is a true UNFCCC expert and a consistent advocate for building efficiency in the global arena.

Mark Watts, Director of Climate Change and Energy Consulting at [ARUP](#), has become a notable player in the international policy arena. Their joint report with the C40, "[Climate Action in Megacities](#)," explains the innovative policy-based prescriptions being pursued by the world's 40 largest cities. We were excited to discover that nearly 30% of all city-level actions were building related and that buildings accounted for the largest sector of emissions reductions activity!

Dan Hoornweg, Lead Urban Advisor for Sustainable Cities at the World Bank, is shaping the future of city-level efforts under the Clean Development Mechanism. Dan along with a vast team have developed a city-wide, multi-sector [Clean Development Mechanism Program of Activities](#) which has the potential of greening all sectors of a developing city, including buildings, energy and water use, waste management, transportation and much more. The first project of which is currently underway in Amman, Jordan.

Safa Jayoussi with the [Jordan Green Building Council](#) who supported WGBC events while remaining very active in CAN International efforts to pressure negotiators for a better outcome. Its unquestionable that we have Safa and her colleagues to thank for keeping Kyoto alive coming out of COP17.

Stephane Pouffary, founder, President and General Director of [ENERGIES 2050](#), was a pleasure to meet as an expert on the inclusion of buildings under international climate finance mechanisms, including the Clean Development Mechanism and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions.

Carl Wesselink with [South South North](#) who developed one of the first building-related [CDM projects](#) which retrofitted over 2,300 low income housing to be more energy and resource efficient in Cape Town, South Africa.

Bruce Kerswill, Executive Chairman, and **Brian Wilkinson**, Chief Executive Officer, (and the rest of their incredible team) at the [Green Building Council of South Africa](#) who organized the Cato Manor retrofit and hosted the members of the World Green Building Council in their beautiful home country.

Nicola Brewer, British High Commissioner who was the major sponsor of the [Cato Manor Retrofit](#) and who additionally accepted the Urban Retrofit Award on behalf Birmingham, UK in the WorldGBC Government Leadership Awards press conference.

The **community of Cato Manor** in Durban, South Africa – who welcomed us into their homes to witness the impact that this green retrofit has had on their lives. **Larry Schweiger**, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation, joined us at the Cato Manor event. USGBC and NWF work closely to advance green schools through the Department of Education's [Green Ribbon program](#).

Pooran Desai and **Sarah Alsen** with [BioRegional](#), which has developed a [One Planet Living](#) framework for sustainable communities based off the simple notion that, after all, we only have one planet to support us. If everyone lived like Americans, we would need the resources of five planet earths.

Rodney Milford with the [Construction Industry Development Board of South Africa](#) and the [UNEP Sustainable Buildings and Climate Initiative](#). **Nana Mhlongo** with the [Council for the Built Environment](#) who also serves on the Advocacy Committee of the UNEP Sustainable Building and Climate Initiative.

Romilly Madew, the CEO of the [Green Building Council of Australia](#), who was instrumental in securing funding from the Australian government for the Cato Manor COP17 legacy project and who spoke to WGBC's efforts on sustainable cities.

Jane Henley, CEO of the World Green Building Council who spearheaded the WorldGBC Government Leadership Awards and who continues to be the [global ambassador](#) for green buildings and GBCs wherever she goes. At right is a photograph of some of the award winners and representatives from the partner organizations for the competition.

David Cadman and **Yunus Arikan** with [ICLEI International](#), a partner of the Government Leadership Awards, attended the conference on behalf of their extensive network of local governments.

Axumite Gebre-Egziabher and **Raf Tufts** with UN HABITAT, the third partner of the Government Leadership Awards. Their [Sustainable Cities Programme](#) helps cities build capacity and improve their urban infrastructure.

Martha Delgado, Minister of the Environment with the Government of Mexico City accepted the Climate Action Leadership Award for their [Climate Action Plan](#).

Yoshio Wagai, **Kenji Suzuki** and **Yuko Nishida** with the Tokyo City Government and the [Tokyo Emissions Trading Scheme](#), which was awarded the Most Groundbreaking Policy Award. We are extremely excited about this innovative policy to address GHGs from buildings and look forward to working with the City of Tokyo on developing a policy template that is replicable worldwide.

For more photos from USGBC's trip to Durban, visit our [Facebook album](#).

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