

**From energy wasters to climate savers -
delivering sustainable buildings**



Tony Robson, CEO of Knauf Insulation, speaks at COP 15 in Copenhagen about the necessity to reduce energy use in buildings and the challenges that this effort will create

<http://unfccc.int/>
<http://en.cop15.dk/>

Whilst world governments were meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark to discuss the level of cuts in greenhouse gas emissions that will be necessary to protect society from dangerous climate change, Tony Robson, CEO of Knauf Insulation, spoke about the huge cost effective potential from energy efficiency in buildings and the challenges that will be faced as we move from good intentions to actions on the ground.

Over a decade ago, the parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change concluded the Kyoto Protocol, which set legally binding obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Today, the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) is taking place in Copenhagen from 7-18 December and Knauf Insulation was amid the action, promoting the significance of energy efficiency in buildings.

On the third day of the UN Climate Change Conference, Tony Robson, spoke at Responding to Climate Change's side event on sustainable buildings. He reminded the audience about the essential role of buildings in the fight against climate change, in particular that 40% of all energy worldwide is used in buildings, whilst cutting this energy use in half could provide huge cost savings for homeowners and society at large.

Tony Robson commented in particular that, "Every euro spent on insulation in buildings can provide up to 11 euro back over the life time of the measure", he continued, "Given the millions of buildings with no or very limited insulation, the time to act is now".

Across the world the key role that buildings must play in terms of supporting the fight against climate change is increasingly recognised. To take one example, the EU has recently agreed a new law on energy efficiency in buildings that will ensure that all new buildings in Europe built after 2020, will need to be near zero energy. It is likely that post Copenhagen that such laws will be considered necessary far beyond the borders of the EU. Whilst such a development would be good news for climate change, energy security, the economy and job creation, Tony Robson struck a note of caution,

"The absolute necessity that exists to massively reduce energy use in buildings must not be put at risk by a failure to realise what is needed to make this happen" said Tony Robson, continuing, "It is vital that we ensure that adequate financing is available to support building owners to take these measures, whilst providing the necessary training for the building chain, in particular builders and architects. Given the vital role of buildings in tackling climate change, a failure to provide either adequate training or finance would be paramount to failing to tackle climate change itself."

Given the theme of sustainable buildings, Tony Robson also raised the importance of ensuring that efforts to make buildings more energy efficient

should go hand in hand with using products that minimise their impacts on the environment. On this topic, he took the opportunity to talk to participants about Knauf Insulation's new mineral wool made with ECOSE® Technology, an insulation material with a reduced impact on the environment through lower embodied energy and where the traditional phenol-formaldehyde binder has been replaced with a new technology based on rapidly renewable bio-based materials.

Tony Robson finished by reminding everyone that, "The challenge of climate change is great, the efforts ahead will be significant but a focus on energy efficiency in buildings is the best way to ensure that efforts to reduce emissions can go hand in hand with efforts to put our economy back on track."



- ▶ Responding to Climate Change (RTCC) is a global exchange for information on responding to climate and development challenges and is an official observer to the UNFCCC process.

The RTCC event on Sustainable Living/Sustainable Buildings, also welcomed presentations from Velux, Philips, the city of Bergen (Norway), and Argo Wiggins.

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