

## **Unit 4/5\_3 Building environmental assessment tools: Applications**

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### **Applying the tools**

Initially, the development of building environmental assessment methods was largely an exercise in structuring a broad range of existing knowledge and considerations into a practical framework, rather than requiring or demanding new research. The ever-going question of how can assessment tools balance the opposing needs for increased comprehensiveness of assessment with ease of application is displayed here. Nibel presented the French certification system on the issues of concerning the French HQE® approach and the assessment method, Sakaguchi with CASBEE and BREEAM for the UK while other tools were also mentioned in the session such as ESGBC, NEAT, GBtool and LEED. The session was interesting to see how these assessment tools fit into different type of buildings as well as different climatic conditions.

Sakaguchi presented his showcase from a stakeholder's perspective which promotes integration with the whole community on one development. Not only that the building will be better planned, it would definitely increase harmony and the spirit of working together as a society while ensuring the environmental awareness, intact and well kept with CASBEE. Lin presented the ESGBC that is unique to China. But Lin also concludes that the need of awareness and involvement from the stakeholders are also essential in order to achieve the goal for sustainability. Similarly, Lechner presented the TQB which is tailored for Austria.

Encompassing a wide range of issues, papers from Hudson, Panek and Bohdanowicz discusses the use of these tools pertaining to the design and construction of sustainable or high performance buildings on existing urban sites. Within the building, points are awarded for allowing for maximizing sustainability features. They range from the environmental benefit of reduced natural resource consumption to improving the bottom line of the building operation due to less utility costs over the life of the building.

Assessment tools have a profound effect in providing focus to the building environment thus benefits in a greater communication and interaction between members of the design team and various sectors with the building industry. Such tools as mentioned can be used to communicate with stakeholders and create more awareness that can contribute to benchmarking for both public and corporate policymaking as well as to motivate better architecture and the environment. Perhaps there will be no one tool that fits all conditions, climate,

topology, and culture even when globalization is imminent as we leave in a location that will always be unique in its own way.