ASSESSMENT AND LABELLING OF A BUILDING IN OPERATION

L'impact des activités d'une institution culturelle sur l'environnement

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Here are concerned "public buildings" in operation. By public building, one has to understand a building used by several persons or families (school, Opera, office or flats tower blocks, etc.). The owner could not be the public authorities.

For these public buildings, a more sustainable way of functioning is needed. Experiences are regularly initiated. The difficulty is to assess supposed progresses, to communicate about them and promote sustainability. Which parameters to take into account? Which are the reliable data? How to find them, to capitalize them? Etc.
The Hedebygade ecology project puts in evidence that some data are objectives and more or less easy to collect (water consumption, energy consumption, etc.), some others are more difficult to obtain and to rationalise (transport means, pesticide used, etc).

An important parameter is the skill of the assessment, its rapidity and efficiency. Subsequently, the definition of a label, considered as an efficient mean of promotion, asks methodological questions.

The impact of building in operation is part of the environmental but also economic and social sustainable challenge. This preoccupation is encountered in many European countries and local authorities are aware of the sustainability policy they could impulse supporting these kinds of initiatives.
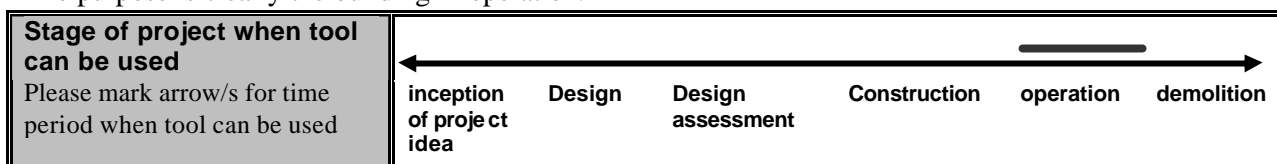
Parameters are interconnected and it remains difficult to assess progresses, and deliver a label. The European Union is aware of it and developed eco-management procedures (as EMAS, ISO 14001, etc) but these standards are often deemed too complex, too time and money

consuming to be applied in practice. Step towards sustainability has to be easier. Some end-users (from Denmark and Belgium) have clearly formulated the demand.

Assessment and labelling tools of that type have been referenced by PETUS (Green Accounts (Dk), GPR3 for schools and offices (Nth), Environmental management Control Panel (Be), etc.). That puts in evidence the relevance of the problem.

TIME AND SPACE SCALES' CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROJECT ?

The purpose is clearly the building in operation.

Stage of project when tool can be used Please mark arrow/s for time period when tool can be used	inception of project idea	Design	Design assessment	Construction	operation	demolition

If the object directly looked at is a "public building", the neighbourhood is also part of problem.

Scale of project that can be investigated using the tool	Component	Building	Neighbourhood	City	Region
		X	**X**		

CONFLICTING AREAS

The following conflicts have been identified in the cases studies listed above:

- The respect of private life sometimes impedes the collection of data
- Where experiences are driven, the impacts of changes are difficult to assess. As an example, in the Hedebygade project, flats modifications have implied a change of the residential composition in the building. As a consequence, the causes of the consumption differences are uncertain.
- The complexity of the assessment is confronted to low budget, lack of staff. As important parameters of the problem, the skill of the assessment, its rapidity and efficiency are often put in evidence.
- Sustainable new behaviour is still facing routine

CASES STUDIES LINK TO THE ISSUE

- Evaluation of Hedebygaden, Urban ecology project, Copenhague, Dk
- Environmental management Control Panel for the Royal Theater "La Monnaie", Brussels, Be

These 2 ones are more dealing with tools:
- GPR2 indicators, (GPR3 for schools and offices) Tilburg, Nth
- Eco-quantum. Evaluation Report in Almere, Nth

WHAT COULD BE ENHANCED TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY?

The skill of the assessment has to be improved, be more flexible and adapted to practical situations.
The conditions of sustainable improvement have to be more clearly defined.

Assessment and labelling methods for this type of problem have been listed. End-users are very interested in different European experiences and approaches. It will be useful to have a panel of existing methods with their different philosophies and positions. Eventually, to gather all of them in a generic tool could be of interest.