

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING IN LATVIA: DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

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Sustainable building has become very popular throughout the world. Sustainable building is the application of sustainable development in the construction industry. Construction projects and activities are, in general, associated with a wide range of environmental impacts. Targets of sustainable buildings promotion are protecting the environment, using less energy through natural ventilation provisions and daylight utilization, developing better waste management and taking water conservation into account. Architectural and building design, electrical and mechanical systems, and building management have to be upgraded. Therefore the principles of sustainable development should be adopted during construction just like in any other industrial sector. To realize sustainable development in the construction industry, green building assessment system, which is designed to promote environmental awareness amongst built environment professionals, have been perceived as effective tools. However, when choosing green building assessment tool, we are usually puzzled either to use an international assessment tool or make a totally new tool. A good assessment tool should be judged according to its potential application. The application of green building assessment tools have been widely accepted as useful way to promote sustainable building. The purpose of this study is to explore and analyze present status of sustainable building and green building assessment in Latvia and to indicate the strategies of its development. Further research needs to be conducted based on this initial journey to promote green building in Latvia. From the authors' point of view, the most effective way is to choose an international tool as a basis and then make a customer-tailored tool according to the situation in the market of Latvia. The analysis shows that the process of sustainable building in Latvia is in a progressive stage of introduction.

Key words: Sustainable Building, Green Building, Green Building Assessment, Sustainable Development