

Portugal SB07

Sustainable Construction Materials and Practices

Challenge of the Industry for the New Millennium

edited by

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Part 1

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IOS
Press

Foreword

The international conference "Portugal SB07: Sustainable Construction, Materials and Practices - Challenge of the Industry for the New Millennium" is organised in the scope of the International Initiative for Sustainable Built Environment (iISBE). This event is supported by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union during the second half of 2007 and by a range of international organisations such as CIB, UNEP, SD-MED and COST / European Science Foundation.

This international conference is part of the SB07 regional/national event series and as such constitutes also a preparation for the 2008 World Sustainable Building Conference to be held in September 2008 in Melbourne, Australia. The venue of this conference is also relevant, as it is the first international conference on this topic to be held in Portugal. The organisers hope that this initiative will promote further the sustainability of construction industry and the built environment, consequently, contributing to further sustainable development of Portugal and the other participating countries.

The construction industry is a vibrant and active industry representing approximately 10% of Portuguese GDP. The building sector is responsible for creating, modifying and improving the living environment of humanity. On the other hand, construction and buildings have considerable environmental impacts, consuming a significant proportion of limited resources of the planet including energy, raw material, water and land. Therefore, the sustainability of the built environment, the construction industry and the related activities is a pressing issue facing all stakeholders in order to promote Sustainable Development.

The new millennium is challenging practitioners and researchers with the sustainability of the built environment and the construction industry. Hence, the main purpose of this conference is to discuss these challenges and look for solutions that actively facilitate and promote the adoption of policies, methods and tools to accelerate the movement towards a global sustainable built environment.

The intention of the organizers is to give an opportunity to practitioners, academics, scientists, engineers, architects, contractors, manufacturers, owners and users from all over the world to come together in a pleasant location to discuss recent developments in the field of sustainable construction, materials, practices and construction sustainability assessment.

The conference main topics cover a wide range of up-to-date issues and the contributions received from the delegates reflect critical research and the best available practices in the Sustainable Construction field. The issues presented include:

- Building sustainability assessment tools
- Indoor environment quality and benchmarks
- Sustainable resources and materials use
- Use of non-conventional materials
- Use of industrial waste
- Eco-materials and technologies
- Sustainable management of existing building stock
- Innovative sustainable construction systems
- Design for climate change
- Design and technologies for energy efficiency and conservation
- Design for minimizing and using construction and demolition waste
- Design for service-life
- Design for deconstruction

- Design for flexibility
- Use of IT in design
- Closing the loop
- Actions and policies to implement sustainable construction
- Designing the sustainable city of tomorrow and Urban Sustainability
- Planning aspects for sustainable construction (construction site, procurement and commissioning)
- Integrated decision making process
- Biomimicry and design with nature
- Teaching sustainable construction
- Case Studies

All the papers selected for presentation at the conference and published in these Proceedings, went through a refereed review process and were evaluated by, at least, two reviewers.

We want to thank all the authors who have contributed papers for publication in the proceedings. We are also grateful to the reviewers, whose effort and hard work secured the high quality of papers expected for this conference. Their efforts reflect their commitment and dedication to Science and Sustainable Construction.

We want to thank the support given by InCI (Instituto da Construção e do Imobiliário) that sponsored and made possible the international edition of these Proceedings.

Finally, we want to address a special thank to iiSBE, CIB, UNEP, Ordem dos Engenheiros and SD-MED and wish great success for all the other SB07 events that are taking place all over the world.

The Organizing Committee and Proceedings Editors

Luis Bragança (University of Minho)
Manuel Pinheiro (Instituto Superior Técnico)
Said Jalali (University of Minho)
Ricardo Mateus (University of Minho)
Rogério Amoêda (University of Minho)
Manuel Correia Guedes (Instituto Superior Técnico)



Welcome

The strategy defined by the Portuguese Government for construction and real estate is based in sustainable concepts, optimizing the State regulatory functions in view to reduce bureaucracy, improve processes transparency, strengthening cooperation and guarantying an effective coordination in the definition and implementation of Government Program policies.

As a result of the above mentioned strategy, the Portuguese Government recently assigned a new mission and new challenges to InCI - Instituto da Construção e do Imobiliário, I.P. (Institute of Construction and Real Estate).

The mission of InCI, I.P. comprehends the regulation of the construction and real estate markets being the new challenges the promotion and implementation of solutions that achieve sustainability priorities, reduce environmental impact, enable energy efficiency in buildings, contribute to energy and environment certification, improve the rational use of materials and the construction waste management in Portugal. Summarizing, InCI, I.P. has an ambitious and challenging aim that is the modernization of the Portuguese construction sector contributing to the efficiency and sustainability of construction in general and of buildings in particular.

The aims of InCI, I.P. are fully in line with the scope of the conference "Portugal SB07: Sustainable Construction, Materials and Practices - Challenge of the Industry for the New Millennium" and, therefore, participating in the edition of these Proceedings is a contribution to positively changing the construction industry towards the adoption of sustainable and efficient building practices.

InCI's support will also promote the opportunity to increase awareness and interest among the economic operators to the issues related to sustainable construction, through the exchange of practices, experiences and information.

It is with a great pleasure that InCI, I.P. warmly welcomes all the participants and wishes a great success to the Conference Portugal SB07.

The Executive Board

Contents

Part 1

Foreword	v
<i>Luis Bragança, Manuel Pinheiro, Said Jalali, Ricardo Mateus, Rogério Amoêda and Manuel Correia Guedes</i>	
Welcome	vii
Chapter 1. Actions and Policies to Implement Sustainable Construction	
Energy Ratings Based on Measured Energy Consumption: A Practical Approach for Implementation of EPBD and Identification of High-Energy Use Buildings	3
<i>P. Hernandez, P. Kenny and R. Cohen</i>	
Achieving Sustainable Infrastructure in Washington DC	11
<i>M. Cederroth</i>	
Sustainability Recommendations for a Social Housing Project: Barreiros, Vitória (BR)	19
<i>M. Bissoli, J.L. Calmon and K. Caser</i>	
Sustainable Housing: From Consensual Guidelines to Broader Challenges	27
<i>J. Mourão and J. Branco Pedro</i>	
The Impacts of Residential Buildings – How to Identify Life Cycle Based Improvement Potentials	35
<i>B. Wittstock, C. Makishi, A. Braune, J. Kreißig, N. Gallon and C. Wetzel</i>	
The Contribution of the National Laboratory of Civil Engineering (LNEC) to a Sustainable Built Environment	40
<i>C. Pina Santos, J. Branco Pedro and J. Vasconcelos Paiva</i>	
Energy Efficiency of Old and New Buildings in Romania	48
<i>D. Dan, V. Stoian, T. Nagy-Gyorgy and C. Dăescu</i>	
Construction Sites Environment Management: Establishing Measures to Mitigate the Noise and Waste Impact	56
<i>J.P. Couto and A.M. Couto</i>	
How to Attract Consumers and Real Estate Agents to Sustainable Housing	63
<i>A. van Hal</i>	
Promoting the Environmental Management Systems into Construction Industry: The First Step	68
<i>J. Šelih</i>	

Reasons to Consider the Deconstruction Process as an Important Practice to Sustainable Construction <i>J.P. Couto and A.M. Couto</i>	76
Methodology for the Application of Sustainable Construction <i>L.N. Jesus, M.G. Almeida and A.C. Almeida</i>	82
The Calculation Model of the New Portuguese Thermal Regulation – Put Side by Side with Dynamic Simulation <i>P. Silva, L. Bragança and M. Almeida</i>	90
Local Actions to Improve the Sustainable Construction in Italy <i>C. Clemente</i>	98
Alternative Network Geometry of Essential Networks for Enduring Sustainable Development <i>A. van Timmeren, J. Kristinsson and L.C. Röling</i>	105
The Certification of Buildings as an Enterprise Strategy of the Real Estate Sector: A National Scope Analysis <i>E. Cepinha, P. Ferrão and S. Santos</i>	113
The Sustainability in Rehabilitation and in its Education <i>J.S. Eliziário, A.R. Pereira Roders and I. Valverde</i>	121
Chapter 2. Sustainable Management of Existing Building Stock	
A Framework to Sustainable Renewal of Existing Building Stock in Brazil <i>M.A.S. González and A.P. Kern</i>	131
Sustainability and Natural Resources Uses at a South Brazilian University: Proposing an Environmental Plan to University of Passo Fundo <i>M.A. Leite Frandoloso, E. Grala da Cunha, L. Brandli, F. de Brito Rodrigues, J.A. Rostirolla, L. Turella, L. de Negri and T. Marchiori</i>	139
The Service Integrated Envelope Applied for Sustainable Office Refurbishment <i>T. Ebbert and U. Knaack</i>	147
Characterization of the Lisbon Elementary Public School Building Stock <i>S. Raposo, M. Fonseca and J. de Brito</i>	155
Overcoming the Barriers to Improving the Sustainability of Existing Commercial Office Buildings <i>J.B. Storey</i>	163
Sustainable Management of Existing Building Stock: A Strategy to Reduce the Energy Consumption and the Environmental Impact <i>É. Mata, F. López and A. Cuchi</i>	171
Housing and Information Society: Integration of ICT in the Existing Housing Stock <i>S. Eloy, I. Plácido and J.P. Duarte</i>	178

Thermal Rehabilitation of a Student's Hostel Belonging to the "Politehnica" University of Timișoara <i>D. Dan, V. Stoian, T. Nagy-Gyorgy and C. Dăescu</i>	186
Existence and Progress of Deterioration of Concrete Facades <i>J. Lahdensivu, I. Weijo and U. Marttila</i>	194
Environmental Assessment of the Maintenance of Façade Openings in Dwellings – The Dutch Case <i>I.S. Blom and L.C.M. Itard</i>	202
How Sustainable Rehabilitation Designers Really Are <i>A.R. Pereira Roders, J. Post and P.A. Erkelens</i>	210
Sustainable Management of Building Stock Refurbishment by Using MCDM <i>J. Šelih</i>	218
Renewal of a Big High Density Housing Block in Berlin Kreuzberg <i>S. Giussani</i>	226
Sustainable Management of Buildings <i>T. Häkkinen, E. Vesikari and S. Pulakka</i>	233
Effect of Balcony Glazing on the Durability of Concrete Structures in Nordic Climate <i>J.S. Mattila</i>	241
Technical Solutions for Sustainability in Post-War Residential Areas <i>S. Vidén</i>	249
Sustainable Technologies in the Refurbishment of Existing Building Envelopes in Italy <i>S. Brunoro</i>	257
Sustainable Recovery Approach to the Existing Housing Stock in Italy <i>P. Civiero</i>	265
Living Building Concept: New Approach to Value Delivery in the Built Environment <i>R. Vrijhoef and H. de Ridder</i>	273
Measuring the Effect of Design Changes by a Neuro-Fuzzy System <i>S. Durmisevic, S. Sariyildiz and Ö. Ciftcioglu</i>	281
Chapter 3. Building Sustainability Assessment Tools	
Early Design Stage Evaluation Tool for Sustainable Energy Systems in Large New Buildings <i>K. Shanks</i>	291
The Use of EPDs in Building Assessment – Towards the Complete Picture <i>A. Braune, J. Kreißig and K. Sedlbauer</i>	299
Some Observation About the Efficiency of Building Sustainability Assessment Tools <i>C. Monterotti and A. Cuchi</i>	305

Vitória's Healthcare Buildings Environmental Performance Based on LEED/NC 2.2 <i>L.S. Araujo and J.L. Calmon</i>	310
Assisting the Commissioning of the Low-Energy Buildings Design: From a Methodology to a Dynamic Tool <i>N. Hannachi-Belkadi, M. Jandon, F. Guéna and Y. Diab</i>	318
Selecting Aspects and Indicators in Environmental Assessment Methods for Buildings <i>T. Malmqvist and M. Glaumann</i>	326
Life Cycle Assessment Tool for Building Assemblies <i>J. Carmody, W. Trusty, J. Meil and M. Lucuik</i>	334
Performance Assessment for Sustainable Construction: Lest We Forget About the Client <i>W. Gyadu-Asiedu, F.J. Scheublin and E.L.C. van Egmond</i>	341
Urban Bioclimatic Indicators for Urban Planers with the Software Tool <i>SOLENE</i> <i>F. Miguet and D. Groleau</i>	348
Perspectives of Building Sustainability Assessment <i>L. Bragança, R. Mateus and H. Koukkari</i>	356
Life Cycle Assessment of Construction Processes <i>J. Šelih and A.C.M. Sousa</i>	366
Optimization of Variable Selection for Sustainable Construction <i>S. Pushkar, A. Katz and R. Becker</i>	373
Sustainability Assessment of Building Refurbishing Operations <i>L. Bragança and R. Mateus</i>	381
The Portuguese LiderA System – From Assessment to Sustainable Management? <i>M.D. Pinheiro</i>	389
Life Cycle Assessment of Steel and Reinforced Concrete Structures: A New Analysis Tool <i>A. Peyroteo, M. Silva and S. Jalali</i>	397
Constant or Variable Indoor Environments? Sustainable Option of Adaptive Thermal Comfort <i>L. Matias, C. Santos, M. Rebelo, D. Silva and M. Correia Guedes</i>	403
Developing a Method to Characterize Indoor Environmental Parameters in Naturally Ventilated Classrooms <i>N. Mahyuddin and H.B. Awbi</i>	411
Towards an Integrated Decision Process of Sustainable Urban Projects <i>L. Adolphe and B. Rousval</i>	418
Application of the EcoBlock method to Eco-Design – Electric Hand Dryers Versus Paper Towels <i>J. Joanaz de Melo, L. Macedo and A. Galvão</i>	426

Life Cycle Costing as Part of Decision Making – Use of Building Information Models	433
<i>G. Kringsvoll</i>	
A Fuzzy-Neural Tree Knowledge Model for the Assessment of Building's Transformation	441
<i>S. Durmisevic and Ö. Ciftcioglu</i>	
Chapter 4. Design for Sustainability	
Splitting and Managing the Solar Spectrum for Energy Efficiency and Daylighting	451
<i>A.V. Pelegrini, D. Harrison and J. Shackleton</i>	
A Sustainable Technical System for Ventilated Façades	459
<i>J. Avellaneda, J.M. Gonzalez, A. Carbonnel and D. López</i>	
Architectural Beam of Light Use of Daylight Pipes in Climates of High Latitude	466
<i>A. Perez, R. Serra and A. Isalgué</i>	
Examination of Solar Control of Existing Building Stock in Izmir and Suggestions for a Sustainable Future	475
<i>M. Altin</i>	
Energy Consumption of RC Buildings During Their Life Cycle	480
<i>Ö. Bozdağ and M. Seçer</i>	
Poly-Optimal Method of Designing Environmentally Friendly Buildings	488
<i>R.R. Gajewski, A. Węglarz and K.H. Żmijewski</i>	
Natural Lighting in Office Buildings – Energy Saving Potencial in Electrical Lighting	494
<i>A.D. Coelho</i>	
Gypsum Plasters for Energy Conservation	502
<i>N. Silva, J. Aguiar, L. Bragança, T. Freire and I. Cardoso</i>	
Implementing the Low Energy Concept into Current Irish Housing Building Delivery Processes – Issues and Barriers	508
<i>I. Kondratenko, V. Brophy and P. Hernandez</i>	
Service Life Prediction for Buildings' Design to Plan a Sustainable Building Maintenance	515
<i>B. Daniotti and S. Lupica Spagnolo</i>	
Durability Design of Metal Structures Based on Lifetime Safety Factor Method	522
<i>L. Cascini, F. Portioli and R. Landolfo</i>	
The Redesign for Residual Service Life of Existing Structures	530
<i>A. Kudzys, P. Bulota and O. Lukoseviciene</i>	
The Flexible and Upgradeable Facade Concept for Refurbishment	538
<i>T. Ebbert and U. Knaack</i>	
Performance Based Design Using Life Cycle Cost Analysis	546
<i>M. Seçer and Ö. Bozdağ</i>	

Hygrothermal Profiles of Building Elements in the Context of Service Life Design <i>C. Giarma, D. Bikas and D. Aravantinos</i>	553
Comparison of Two Structural Reuse Options of Two-by-Four Salvaged Lumbers <i>S. Nakajima and T. Murakami</i>	561
Building Deconstruction and Building Heritage Preservation: A Case Study at Porto's World Heritage Historical Centre <i>R. Amoêda and C. Pinheiro</i>	569
Organisation of Reverse Logistics Tasks in the Construction Industry <i>F. Schultmann and N. Sunke</i>	577
Overview of Deconstruction Activities in Portugal <i>A. Santos and J. de Brito</i>	585
Salvageability of Building Materials <i>A.S. Nordby, B. Berge and A.G. Hestnes</i>	593
Reusability of Massive Wood Components <i>A.S. Nordby, B. Berge and A.G. Hestnes</i>	600
Motives for Design for Disassembly in Building Construction <i>C. Thormark</i>	607
Bionic Breathing Skin for Buildings <i>L. Badarnah and U. Knaack</i>	612
An Ecosystem Based Biomimetic Theory for a Regenerative Built Environment <i>M. Pedersen Zari and J.B. Storey</i>	620
Practices and Sustainable Principles on the Rural Constructions in Molise Region (Italy) <i>G. Ausiello and D. Fornaro</i>	628
Author Index	I

Part 2

Foreword <i>Luis Bragança, Manuel Pinheiro, Said Jalali, Ricardo Mateus, Rogério Amoêda and Manuel Correia Guedes</i>	v
Welcome	vii
Chapter 5. Designing the Sustainable City of Tomorrow and Urban Sustainability	
Environmental Performance and Management of Sustainable Urban Projects <i>E.D. Dufrasnes, E.W. Wurtz, G.A. Achard and C.B. Buhe</i>	637

Assessment on Urban Ecosystems <i>J. Mourão and A. Cuchi</i>	643
The Compact City: An Urban Path Towards Sustainability in Arid Areas <i>K. Hamel and S. Mazouz</i>	650
One Planet Living Pioneer Project <i>P. Reis Silva</i>	658
Reflecting About the Emergence of Sustainable Urban Communities – A Social Ecological Point of View <i>J. Craveiro, P. Machado, D. Silva and Á. Pereira</i>	665
Sustainable Tourism Indicators for the Coastal Places. State of Research <i>M.N. Suárez Sánchez</i>	670
Sustainability and Human Comfort at Urban Level: Evaluation and Design Guidelines <i>F. Ali-Toudert</i>	678
reCHARGEDcity ²¹⁺ – From a Perforated, Shrinking City to a Energy-Self-Sufficient Town <i>F. Lüter and T. Meinberg</i>	686
Methods in Sustainable Urban Process <i>M.P. Amado, A.J. Pinto, C.V. Santos and A. Cruz</i>	694
Towards Urban Sustainability: Trends and Challenges of Building Environmental Assessment Methods <i>F. Ali-Toudert</i>	702
Green Cities of Tomorrow? <i>E. Alexandri</i>	710
Comprehensive Water and Nutrient Planning for Sustainable Design <i>J.H. Todd, D. Benjamin and J. Todd</i>	718
Noise Abatement from the Point of View Sustainable Environment <i>O. Yilmaz Karaman</i>	726
Regenerating Lost Places in Old Cities (Link Linguistic with Sustainability) <i>S. Shadravan</i>	734
The Urban Planning Tools as Quality Control Device for Sustainable Projects <i>E. Arbizzani, C. Clemente, P. Civiero, M. Nocera and P. Piermattei</i>	741
Urban Rehabilitation with Sustainable Principles: The Case Study of Montefalcione, South Italy <i>D. Francese and C.F. Ambrosino</i>	749
Chapter 6. Sustainable Resources, Eco-Materials and Technologies	
Energy and Resources, Material Choice and Recycling Potential in Low Energy Buildings <i>C. Thormark</i>	759

Construction and Demolition Waste Management in Portugal <i>A.D. Coelho and J. de Brito</i>	767
Lime-Metakaolin Mortars – Properties and Applications <i>A. Velosa and R. Veiga</i>	775
Characterisation of External Renderings of Rammed Earth Construction in Algarve <i>L. Mateus, J. de Brito and M.R. Veiga</i>	781
Environmental Life Cycle Assessment of Concrete Made with Fine Recycled Concrete Aggregates <i>L. Evangelista and J. de Brito</i>	789
Recycled Aggregate Production: Remark and Assessment of the Economical Advantage of a Case Study <i>V. Basilico and M. Quattrone</i>	795
Be Aware: Built Environment Action on Waste Awareness and Resource Efficiency <i>G. Hobbs and A. Conroy</i>	803
The Need and Means for Sustainable Use of Wood in the Tanzanian Construction Industry <i>T.S. Mufuruki, E.L.C. van Egmond and F.J.M. Scheublin</i>	810
An Experimental Study on Properties of Mortar Mixing Activated Hwangtoh Considering Pozzolanic Reaction <i>H.-C. Lee, G. Lee, S.-W. Hong, D.-O. Yang and S.-S. Go</i>	818
A Study on the Physical Properties of Hard Concrete Mixing Various Type of Recycled Aggregate <i>S.-S. Go, D.-R. Yoo, H.-C. Lee, G. Lee and Y.-C. Park</i>	826
Sustainable Steel Buildings Through Natural Fire Safety Concept <i>M. Braun</i>	834
Sustainable Concrete Production <i>J. Šelih and R. Žarnić</i>	842
General Issues of Construction Materials Recycling in the USA <i>A.R. Chini</i>	848
Eco-Concrete: Preliminary Studies for Concretes Based on Hydraulic Lime <i>A. Velosa and P. Cachim</i>	856
Structural Aluminium Alloys and Sustainability in Building Applications <i>E. Efthymiou</i>	861
Eco-Efficiency and Sustainability of Traditional Turkish Houses <i>M. Tanac Kıray</i>	868

- Dynamical and Thermal Modelling of PDEC: Using Traditional Chimney and New Dwelling as Case Studies in Portugal 872
C. Melo

- Eco-Efficient Mortars with Enhanced Mechanical, Durability and Bactericidal Performance 880
R. Eires, A. Camões and S. Jalali

- Structural Concrete with Incorporation of Coarse Recycled Concrete and Ceramic Aggregates 887
M. Gomes and J. de Brito

- An Energy Efficient Solution to Mitigate Heat Islands and Reduce Cooling Energy Loads 895
A. Synnefa, A. Dandou, M. Santamouris, M. Tombrou and N. Soulakellis

Chapter 7. Use of Industrial Waste

- Composite Panels Reinforced with Waste Fibrous Materials 905
M.G. Gomes, R. Fangueiro and C. Gonilho Pereira

- Using Mine Waste Mud to Produce Environmentally Friendly New Binders 912
F.P. Torgal, J.P. de Castro Gomes and S. Jalali

- Use of Cellulose Sludge in the Production of Fibrocement Building Materials 918
R. Modolo, J.A. Labrincha, V.M. Ferreira and L.M. Machado

- Application of Crushed Glass Residues in Mortars 923
A. Fragata, H. Paiva, A.L. Velosa, M.R. Veiga and V.M. Ferreira

- Optimization of Pozzolanic Reaction of Ground Waste Glass Incorporated in Cement Mortars 928
L.A. Pereira de Oliveira, J.P. Castro Gomes and P. Santos

- Chemical Characterization and Leaching of Treated Fly Ash from a MSWI Plant 935
I.M. Martins, A.M. Esteves and J.P. Forth

- Eco-Friendly Construction Materials Using Gypsum and Industrial Wastes 943
R. Eires, A. Camões and S. Jalali

- Concrete Produced Using Crushed Bricks as Aggregate 950
P.B. Cachim

Chapter 8. Innovative Sustainable Construction Systems

- Glocal Structural System in a Seismic Desert City 959
S. Shahnoori and A.I.M. Voorbij

- Coolhouse: Integrating Very Low Energy Geothermal Cooling with Sustainable Construction 967
J. Mainwaring

- The Environmental Benefits of the off-Site Manufacturing 974
S. Russo Ermolli

Jee – Janela Eco-Eficiente (Eco Efficient Window); Development of a High Performance Standard Window <i>M. Verissimo, M.G. de Almeida and L. Bragança</i>	982
A Research on the Integrated System for Efficient Management of Construction Site <i>H.-M. Lee, D.-H. Kim, J.-H. Hong, H. Song and S.-S. Go</i>	990
Recycling Prefabricated Concrete Components – A Contribution to Sustainable Construction <i>C. Asam</i>	998
Guidelines for a Good Practices Manual on Sustainable Construction <i>I. Santos, L. Soares and J. Teixeira</i>	1006
Sustainability in Lightweight Modular Construction for Housing <i>G. Wadel, J. Avellaneda and A. Cuchi</i>	1013
Chapter 9. Case Studies	
East London Line Sustainability Initiatives <i>L.B. Carse</i>	1023
The First Cooperative Building of Sustainable Housing in Portugal <i>J.P.T. Coimbra</i>	1031
Directing Sustainable Investments in Commercial Real Estate <i>A.G. Entrop and H.J.H. Brouwers</i>	1035
Life Cycle Assessment of a Tourism Resort with Renewable Materials and Traditional Construction Techniques <i>H. König, E. Schmidberger and L. de Cristofaro</i>	1043
A Sustainable Planning Design Tool for the Environmental Compatibility of the Tourist Coastal Territory <i>A. Serafino</i>	1051
Building Deconstruction in Portugal: A Case Study <i>A. Santos and J. de Brito</i>	1059
Impacts in the Internal Environment Quality of a Music School from the Urban Design of a University Campus <i>I.S. Castro, M.C.G. Silva, P.A. Rheingantz, L.E. Bastos and E. Diniz</i>	1067
Reducing CO ₂ . Are Industrialised Construction Systems Better? <i>A. Pagès, O. Paris and A. Cuchi</i>	1075
Integration of Sustainability Solutions in Sanitary Installations: The Example of the AveiroDOMUS “House of the Future” <i>R. Castro and A. Silva-Afonso</i>	1083
Certifying a Sustainable Reconstruction of Vernacular Architecture in Peneda-Gerês National Park <i>M.I. Cabral</i>	1088

982	Sustainable Building Structures for Housing <i>D. Dubina, V. Ungureanu and M. Mutiu</i>	1096
990	Sustainability of Constructions. Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven <i>Y.K. Aktuglu</i>	1104
998	Sustainability of Constructions. Suleyman's Mosque, Istanbul <i>Y.K. Aktuglu, M. Altin, M. Tanac Kiray, O. Yilmaz Karaman, M. Secer, O. Bozdog and I. Kahraman</i>	1110
1006	Case Study: LEED™ by Design in the School of the Future <i>J. Kliwinski</i>	1118
1013	Influence of End-of-Life Scenarios on the Environmental Performance of a Low-Rise Residential Dwelling <i>H. Gervásio and L. Simões da Silva</i>	1126
1023	The SHE Project: Sustainable Housing in Europe. Social Housing Coops' Best Practices for Sustainable Communities <i>A. Lusardi and A. Braccioni</i>	1134
1031	Natural Illumination Availability in Ponte Da Pedra Apartment Block – A Case Study <i>C. Cardoso, M. Almeida and L. Bragança</i>	1142
1035	Author Index	1151

The Calculation Model of the New Portuguese Thermal Regulation – put side by side with Dynamic Simulation

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ABSTRACT: Nowadays, there is a global urge to reduce the energy consumption, in order to slow down the environmental pollution. Since the building sector is one of the main energy consumers in Portugal, there is a great pressure for enhancing the energy efficiency in this sector. Currently the measure with more potential to effectively reduce the buildings energy consumption is the new Portuguese thermal regulation. However, to guarantee a good performance in reducing the energy consumption, the thermal regulation must present a good precision in the heating and cooling needs estimation. Therefore, the calculation model of this regulation was evaluated in relation to a dynamic simulation tool - VisualDOE. This evaluation was carried out applying both estimation methods to the Test Cells built in the School of Engineering of the University of Minho and the results obtained demonstrated a good performance of the thermal regulation.

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the main challenges that nowadays humankind has to face is the climatic changes and environmental depletion. It is known that these challenges are closely related to the energy consumption. In the 15 European Union, there are about 164 million buildings, responsible for 40% of the final energy demand and 1/3 of the greenhouse gas emissions. So, in order to promote the reduction of energy consumption, it is fundamental to apply sustainable development principles in the construction sector (Tzikopoulos et al, 2005; Eyckmans and Cornillie, 2002).

There are several measures that can be applied in order to reduce the buildings energy consumption, since the appeal of the consumers consciousness to the environmental problems, to the development of new construction solutions more energy efficient.

However, one of the measures with a larger impact in building energy consumptions is the implementation of more restrictive thermal regulation. The new Portuguese thermal regulation – Regulation of the Characteristics of the Thermal Behavior of Buildings (RCCTE) – increases the minimum requirements, promote the use of renewable energy and support the use of certified materials.

The driving force of the thermal regulation revision was the European Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (European Commission, 2003). The main objectives of the EPBD are the harmonization of all thermal regulations in the European Union and the increase of buildings energy performance, taking in account the climatic conditions, interior comfort of the occupants and economic viability, for both new buildings and existing buildings.

In order to be efficient and effective, the thermal regulation must correctly estimate the energy performance of buildings. Having this fact in mind the RCCTE calculation model was put side by side with the dynamic simulation for the energy performance estimation.

The case study was the heating and cooling needs estimation of the Test Cells built in the School of Engineering of the University of Minho, using the RCCTE calculation model and the dynamic simulation tool VisualDOE.

2 BUILDING DISCRIPTION

The Test Cells applied in this study are formed by a Sustainable Test Cell (STC), a Conventional Test Cell (CTC) and a Passys Test Cell (PTC). This study focuses on STC and CTC, in order to guarantee that the RCCTE can estimate with good accuracy conventional solutions and also non-conventional solutions.

2.1 Sustainable Test Cell

The Sustainable Test Cell (STC) contains two rooms:

- Room 1 (simulates a bedroom) – It was constructed using compacted earth walls (Goodhew & Griffiths, 2005) and an opening in the south façade. The high thermal inertia combined with an opening equipped with exterior horizontal and vertical shading devices to avoid overheating in the summer. In order to improve the sustainability of the solution the exterior walls of this room were built with a locally available material - Earth;
- Room 2 (simulates an office) – It is an insulated lightweight construction with a large opening in the north façade to promote daylighting and thus reduce the energy spent in lightning.

Between the two rooms of this Test Cell there is a movable partition that allows testing the performance of this Test Cell as a whole or as being constituted by two distinct rooms (Silva, 2006).

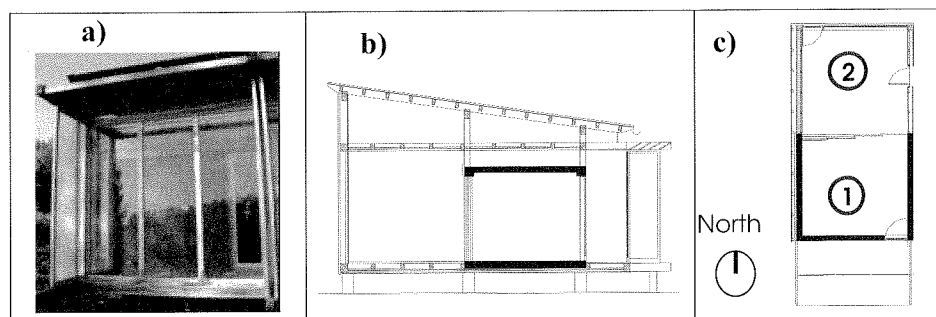


Figure 1. Sustainable Test Cell: a) Photo; b) lateral view; c) top view.

2.2 Conventional Test Cell

The Conventional Test Cell (CTC), shown in Fig. 2, contains three rooms: the room 1 simulates a bedroom; room 2 simulates a bathroom; room 3 simulates a hall. The CTC was built with a double pane hollow brick envelope wall with insulation on the air gap. This Test Cell represents the conventional Portuguese Construction (Mendonça, 2003).

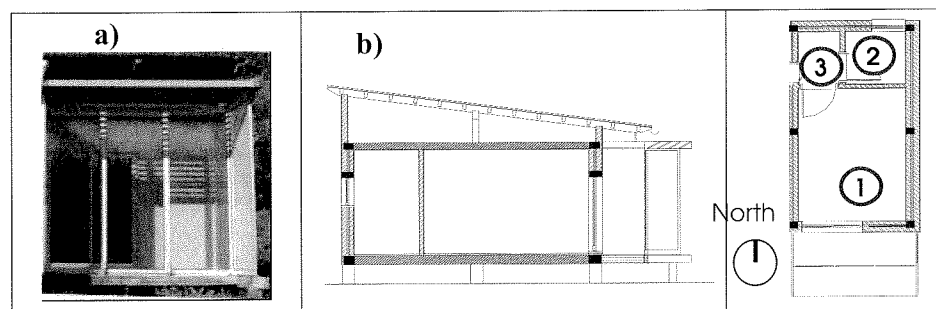


Figure 2. Conventional Test Cell: a) Photo; b) lateral view; c) top view.

3 ESTIMATION METHODS

3.1 RCCTE

The new Portuguese thermal regulation focuses residential buildings and service building without HVAC systems. One of the main updates in this regulation was due to the recent higher comfort required by the occupants, especially in terms of cooling demands. Then, the objectives of this regulation are: Guarantee that the heating and cooling requirements for thermal comfort the ventilation requirements for air quality and the hot water requirements are satisfied without an excessive energy consumption; Minimize the pathologies in the construction elements due to condensation. The main updates in this regulation where (RCCTE, 2006):

- New climatic zoning;
- Interior comfort set points – Winter (20°C); Summer (25°C + 50% RH);
- Minimum air changes per hour – 0.6;
- Domestic Hot Water (DHW) reference consumption – 40 l at 60°C per person and per day;
- New methodology for thermal bridges calculation;
- Heating needs methodology reviewed;
- New Cooling needs methodology;

This regulation defines reference values for the *primary energy global needs* (N_t) in order to limit the *specific nominal primary energy annual global needs* (N_{tc}). So, the N_{tc} value cannot be higher than the N_t value. The N_t and N_{tc} are obtained using the following equations:

$$N_t = 0,9.(0,01.N_i + 0,01.N_v + 0,15.N_a) \text{ (kgep/m}^2\text{.year)} \quad (1)$$

Where N_i , N_v , N_a are the heating, cooling and DHW reference needs, respectively.

$$N_{tc} = 0,1.(N_{ic}/\eta_i).F_{pui} + 0,1.(N_{vc}/\eta_v).F_{puv} + N_{ac}.F_{pua} \text{ (kgep/m}^2\text{.year)} \quad (2)$$

Where N_i , N_v are the heating and cooling system efficiencies, respectively; N_{ic} , N_{vc} , N_{ac} are the heating, cooling and DHW specific needs, respectively; F_{pui} , F_{puv} , F_{pua} are the weighting factors for the heating, cooling and DHW needs, respectively.

3.2 VisualDOE

VisualDOE is a Windows™ application that can estimate the energetic performance of buildings. The calculation engine used in this tool is the, very well known and tested, DOE2.1E. However, only the 3rd version of this tool (VisualDOE 3.1) can be considered as a Graphical User Interface of the DOE engine, as it allows a good control of the introduction of geometrical elements, in real-time, thru the visualisation of the model produced by the tool and it has the possibility to edit the model by simply clicking with the mouse in a element. This tool can be used without any knowledge of the source engine (Green Design Tools, 2001).

For estimate the buildings energy performance with VisualDOE it is necessary to follow 3 steps:

- Project data introduction;
- Execution of the simulation;
- Results analysis.

The project data introduction begins with the definition of all the VisualDOE databases with the elements applied in the building – Glazing, Openings, Materials, Constructions, Occupancy, Schedules and Utility rates – and afterwards the introduction of the model and project data that is formed by 6 folders – Project, Blocks, Rooms, Façade, Systems, Zones. As VisualDOE was created for the Windows™ platform, the databases are easily updated with new material and constructions thru a graphical interface, as shown in Figure 3.

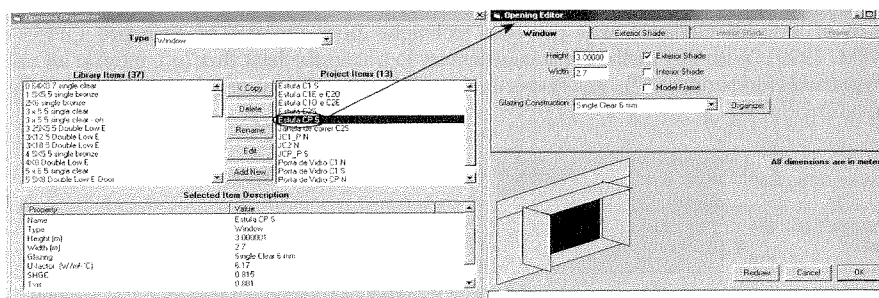


Figure 3. Openings definition in VisualDOE databases.

In the 2nd step there will be present three folders – Simulation, Standard DOE-2 Reports and Hourly Reports – where the user can define the base case, the alternatives (if necessary) and all the reports needed (hourly, daily, monthly or yearly results) for each specific study.

For the results analysis there are two main groups of data – the VisualDOE graphs and reports and the DOE-2 reports. The main difference between these sets of results is that the ones obtained by VisualDOE follow the WindowsTM platform (allows exporting results to other tools) while the DOE-2 reports follow a DOS platform.

3.3 Model Calibration

To guarantee a good accuracy of the model, it is necessary to calibrate it, adjusting the model to the reality. In this Case Study the calibration was possible due to the existence of a measurement system in the Test Cells and it was carried out in three main steps (Silva et al, 2006):

- Obtaining a climatic file that represent the climatic conditions which the Test Cells were exposed;
- Obtaining the “in-situ” thermal resistance of the exterior walls;
- Comparing the interior temperature, measured “in situ” with the interior temperature calculated by VisualDOE.

Climatic File – For this case study the climatic file was obtained using the data retrieved from the weather station installed in the Test Cells. However, in addition to the parameters directly obtained by the weather station it was necessary to calculate more parameters (underlined in Table 1) using the ones obtained “in-situ” (ASHRAE, 1997; Buhl, 1999; ISQ, 2000; Krieder and Rabl, 1994).

Table 1. VisualDOE required climatic data.

"In-Situ" Parameters	Required Parameters	Obtained from:
1) Temperature	Dry bulb Temperature	1)
2) Relative Humidity	<u>Wet bulb Temperature</u>	1); 2)
3) Precipitation	<u>Humidity Ratio</u>	1; 2)
4) Wind Direction	<u>Enthalpy</u>	1); 2)
5) Wind Speed	Precipitation	3)
	Wind Direction	4)
6) Total Horizontal Solar Radiation	Wind Speed	5)
	Total Horizontal Solar Radiation	6)
	<u>Direct Solar Radiation</u>	6)
	<u>Clarity ratio</u>	6)

"In-situ" thermal resistance – The method used for the calculation of the "in-situ" thermal resistance of exterior elements was the sum technique from the ASTM Standard C1155–95 (ASTM, 1999). With this method it was necessary to obtain the heat flux (q_i), interior an exterior superficial temperature (T_{is} , T_{es} , respectively). Then, the thermal resistance is obtained by the Equation 3:

$$R_c = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^M \Delta T_{Sk}}{\sum_{k=1}^M q_{ik}} \quad (3)$$

However, to guarantee a good performance of the calculation it is necessary to execute a convergence test (CR_n), where two consecutive time intervals must have a convergence lower than 0.1, and a variance test [$V(R_c)$] where the variance must be lower than 10%.

The thermal resistances of the Test Cell elements identified in Figure 4 were obtained by the use of this technique and the respective values are:

Wall A – Compacted earth, 15 cm; *Thermal Resistance* – **0.34** m².°C/W;

Wall B – Agglomerated board (concrete / wood), 1.2 cm + Air layer, 4 cm + Expanded cork insulation, 5 cm + Compacted earth, 15 cm; *Thermal Resistance* – **2.97** m².°C/W;

Wall C – Agglomerated board (concrete / wood), 1.2 cm + Air layer, 6 cm + Agglomerated board (concrete / wood), 1.9 cm + Expanded cork insulation, 8 cm + Coconut fiber insulation, 2 cm + Carton / plaster gypsum board, 1.3 cm; *Thermal Resistance* – **1.04** m².°C/W;

Wall D – Stucco, 2cm + Hollow brick, 11 cm + Air layer, 4 cm + Extruded Polystyrene insulation, 4 cm + Hollow brick, 15 cm + Stucco, 2cm; *Thermal Resistance* – **0.34** m².°C/W.

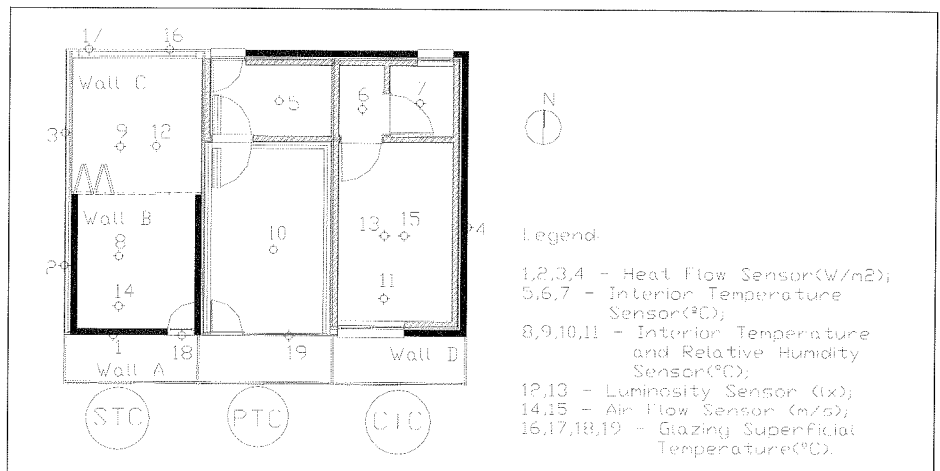


Figure 4. Distribution of sensors inside the Test Cells.

"In-Situ" temperature Vs VisualDOE calculated temperature – This procedure is very useful for making the last adjustments of the model, being possible the detection of some inaccuracy in the model as well as adjusting the thermal inertia. In Figure 5 it is possible to observe the results from the model adjustments.

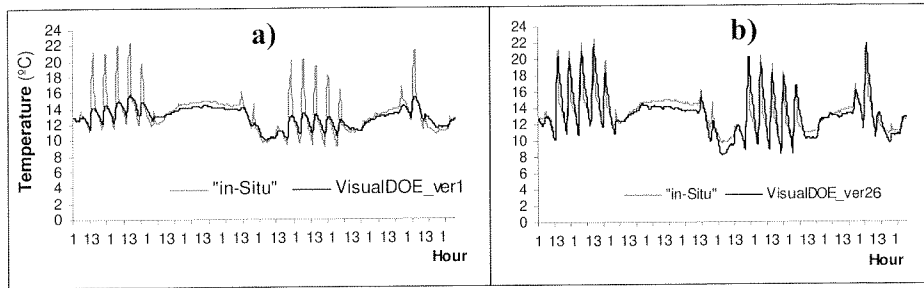


Figure 5. CTC interior temperature in VisualDOE model: a) before calibration; b) after calibration.

After the model calibration, the average error of the model was tested comparing the “*in-situ*” measured Test Cells interior temperature with the VisualDOE results, for the whole period of the simulation – October 2003 to October 2004. Between October 2003 and February 2004, the Test Cells were not equipped with the Sunspace (built in March 2004), and thus the model of the Test Cells without sunspace was tested for an average error between October 2003 and February 2004. The model with sunspace was tested for the remaining period.

The average error of the model without sunspace is of 8% and for the model with sunspace is of 4.8%. Taking into consideration that the obtained average errors are relatively small and that the calibration was performed for one year of “*in-situ*” measurements, the achieved results assure that the application of VisualDOE is representative and thus it is possible to use it to test the energetic performance of the Test Cells.

4 RESULTS

4.1 RCCTE

To achieve better results using the simplified model RCCTE, was necessary to calibrate some parameters specifically to this case study. Then, the Degree-Days, the average monthly solar energy and the summer average temperature, were calculated from the Test Cells weather station data instead of using the standard values tabulated in the thermal regulation.

Also, for the walls to which the “*in-situ*” thermal resistance was calculated the respective values were applied in the RCCTE.

Following the thermal regulation methodology to the CTC and the PTC it was obtained the result shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Heating and Cooling need from RCCTE.

Test Cells		Heating Needs	Cooling Needs	Total Needs
		(kwh/m ² .year)		
With Sunspace	STC	127.7	49.5	177.2
	CTC	100.9	13.8	114.7
Without Sunspace	STC	139.8	51.3	191.1
	CTC	129.4	30.3	159.7

4.2 VisualDOE

After the calibration of the Test Cells model, the entire project data was inserted in VisualDOE and a “warming” simulation was carried out being created an Input file to the DOE-2 calculation model. This Input file was modified to allow the introduction of all the particularities of the Test Cell, as the introduction of some construction materials, the modification of some construction elements in the interior walls, floors and roofs, the definition of the sunspaces, the modification of the thermal inertia. Then, the Test Cells VisualDOE final model (Figure 6) was created and became ready to be used.

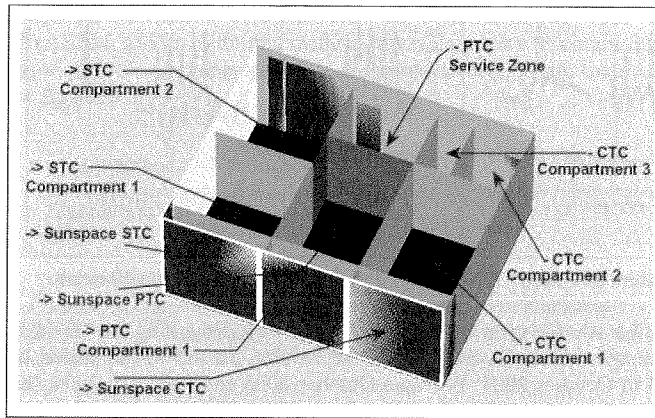


Figure 6. Model of the Test Cells.

In order to run the final simulation, it was inserted the final model in VisualDOE and defined a HVAC system with the heating and cooling setpoints as established in RCCTE – 20°C for heating and 25°C and 50% RH for cooling. For the final reports it was selected the hourly energy consumption spent by the HVAC system. The results obtained are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Heating and Cooling need from VisualDOE.

Test Cells		Heating Needs	Cooling Needs	Total Needs
		(kwh/m ² .year)		
With Sunspace	STC	124.7	41.9	166.6
	CTC	120.5	13.6	134.1
Without Sunspace	STC	135.2	42.5	177.7
	CTC	149.8	32.3	182.1

4.3 RCCTE Vs VisualDOE

In order to test the precision of the RCCTE calculation methodology the results obtained were compared with the ones obtained by VisualDOE (the heating and cooling needs obtained from VisualDOE were calculated only for the periods defined in RCCTE as heating season and cooling season). The differences between the two estimation methods are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Difference between RCCTE and VisualDOE estimation.

Test Cells		Heating Needs	Cooling Needs	Total Needs
		Differences (kwh/m ² .year)		
With Sunspace	STC	3	7.6	10.6
	CTC	19.6	0.2	19.4
Without Sunspace	STC	4.6	8.8	13.4
	CTC	20.4	2	22.4

From Table 4 it can be concluded that there is an unexpected very high convergence between the STC total needs estimated by RCCTE and by VisualDOE, with only an average variance of 6.5% in the total needs. This fact is due to the good calculation methodology adopted by RCCTE in association with the accurate calibration of the models. The higher variation in the estimation of CTC total needs, 13.4%, is due to the heating needs part. This fact can be explained by a higher south oriented glazing area in this Test Cell that can lead to very high solar

radiation entering the building. This inaccuracy can lead to an overestimation of the thermal gains in the RCCTE methodology.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study was to evaluate the precision of the new Portuguese thermal regulation calculation methodology. Therefore, the RCCTE heating and cooling needs estimation was put side by side with the ones calculated with the dynamic simulation tool VisualDOE.

From this evaluation it can be said that the RCCTE calculation methodology have a better precision than what was expected, as it is a simple method based in the Degree-Day method. This method just appears to have a higher difficulty in estimate accurately the heating needs for buildings with large openings.

Then it can be assumed that this new regulation can estimate the buildings energy needs accurately and thus it can be used as a simplified tool to evaluate the energy efficiency of buildings.

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