

BUILDING THE FUTURE

Sustainable and Regenerative Construction - Materials, Healthy Indoor Environments and New European Rules

Friday 13th November 2026 | 15:00 - 17:30

Classroom B003 | Ground floor - Pavilion B. | Matera University Campus

The Changing Context

The construction sector accounts for around 40% of energy consumption and more than one third of greenhouse gas emissions in the European Union. After years of focus on energy efficiency during the use phase, attention is shifting to the whole life cycle of buildings: the environmental impact of materials, embodied carbon, resource circularity and indoor environmental quality. At the core lie the health of the planet and that of the people who live in buildings.

Construction and Climate Change

The building sector faces a twofold challenge: reducing emissions along the entire supply chain, from material production to demolition, and adapting buildings to a changing climate, with more frequent heatwaves, extreme events and growing pressure on resources. Low embodied carbon materials, bio-based products capable of storing carbon, and solutions that ensure thermal comfort and durability are becoming central to sustainable design. In this respect, the traditional architecture of the Sassi of Matera, built with local resources and in balance with the local climate, still offers relevant insights.

The Credibility Challenge

The spread of generic environmental claims on construction products – "eco", "green", "natural" – has highlighted the need for shared and verifiable criteria to prevent greenwashing. Third-party certification, based on life cycle assessment, composition analysis and emission testing, is therefore gaining importance as a tool for market transparency.

The European Framework: Challenges and New Developments

European legislation is changing the rules for manufacturers, designers and clients. The main developments include:

- The new Construction Products Regulation (EU) 2024/3110, which progressively introduces the digital product passport and the obligation to declare environmental performance, starting with global warming potential
- The revised Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EU) 2024/1275, which requires all new buildings to be zero-emission from 2030 (from 2028 for public buildings) and the calculation of whole-life-cycle emissions
- The Ecodesign Regulation (EU) 2024/1781, which extends sustainability and circularity requirements to a growing range of products
- Directive (EU) 2024/825 on empowering consumers for the green transition, applicable from September 2026, which prohibits unsubstantiated generic environmental claims





For companies, these rules represent a challenge in terms of data, verification and transparency, but also an opportunity to stand out in the market. In Italy, the Minimum Environmental Criteria (CAM) already steer public procurement towards lower-impact and low-emission materials.

The Natureplus Approach

Natureplus is an international NGO that issues a Type I eco-label (EN ISO 14024) for construction products, based on transparent criteria, independent verification and third-party certification. Its approach integrates three dimensions: health, resource conservation and/or climate protection. Products must consist of at least 85% renewable and/or mineral raw materials from sustainable sources; hazardous substances are excluded and indoor air emissions are verified through laboratory testing. The assessment also considers life cycle impacts, fitness for use and recyclability. It is a system that anticipates many of the requirements of the new European legislation and provides designers, companies and clients with verified and comparable information. The seminar is held on the occasion of the natureplus Board meeting hosted by ICEA in Matera and offers a forum for dialogue between institutions, research, professionals and businesses.

Towards a New Construction Paradigm

The seminar aims to explore how regulatory innovation, materials research and certification are shaping a new way of building. Topics will include:

- The contribution of construction to climate change mitigation and adaptation
- The implementation of the new European regulatory framework and its effects on manufacturers and designers
- Life cycle assessment and the environmental impact of construction materials
- Indoor air quality and the control of harmful substance emissions
- The role of third-party certification, the natureplus label and the digital product passport

Objectives and Outlook

The discussion will extend to the dialogue between building tradition and innovation, highlighting how the natureplus approach and the use of certified materials contribute to a construction system capable of:

- Reducing emissions and environmental impact across the entire life cycle of buildings
- Improving the resilience of buildings to the effects of climate change
- Protecting the health and well-being of occupants
- Promoting renewable, mineral and local raw materials
- Supporting companies and professionals in complying with new European obligations and in accessing public procurement and international markets

This event is an opportunity to understand how material quality, information transparency, the response to the climate crisis and new European rules are redefining the future of sustainable construction.



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natureplus.

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PROGRAM

15:00	**Introduction**	**Dr. Paolo Lumaca** [President, ICEA]
	Institutional greetings	**Prof. Arch. Antonella Guida** [University of Basilicata] **Dr. Rolf Buschmann** [President, natureplus e. V.] **Dr. Eng. Teresa Bengiovanni** [President, Order of Engineers of the Province of Matera] **Arch. Pantaleo De Finis** [President, Order of Architects PPC of the Province of Matera]
	Moderator	**Dr. Mariano Serratore** [Technical Director, ICEA]
	Speakers	**M.A. Tilmann Kromolisch** [Natureplus e.V., Director] **Prof. Graziella Bernardo** [University of Basilicata – Associate professor of Technical Architecture] **Arch. Antonello Capodiferro** [Councillor Secretary, Order of Architects PPC of Matera]
17:30	**Q&A** Closing remarks	

Event in collaboration with

ORDINE DEGLI ARCHITETTI PIANIFICATORI PAESAGGISTI CONSERVATORI DELLA PROVINCIA DI MATERA

ORDINE INGEGNERI DI MATERA

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