A brief introduction to the SBE Conference series

The Sustainable Built Environment (SBE) series of conferences began in 2000, operates on a three-year cycle and now includes four international organizations as co-owners:

- *International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction* (CIB, www.cibworld.nl)
- *International Initiative for a Sustainable Built Environment* (iiSBE, www.iisbe.org)
- *Division of Technology, Industry and Economics* (DTIE) of the *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP-SBCI, Sustainable Building and Climate Initiative, www.unep.org/sbci/)
- *International Federation of Consulting Engineers*, www.fidic.org

The SB conference series is now considered to be the pre-eminent international conference series on sustainable building and construction. The series is held on held on a three-year cycle with planning and preparation in year 1, national/regional conferences held in year 2 and a single global event held in year 3.

The series places a core emphasis on peer-reviewed papers, presentations of regional policy papers, displays of pre-evaluated projects and a small number of high-quality commercial exhibits. These events also provide fast-track inclusion of the best technical papers from national/regional conferences into the global event, as well as registration policies designed to encourage the attendance of students and delegates from developing countries.

The most recent global event was the World SB14 Barcelona Conference, which took place on 28 to 30 October 2014 (www.wsb14barcelona.org) and we are now (2015) in the planning and preparation year for the next cycle. There are already 10 national/regional conferences confirmed for 2016, and Hong Kong has been selected as the site of the World SBE17 conference, to be held in early June 2017.

In all of these conferences, one or more local research-based organizations have taken financial and organizational responsibility while iiSBE, CIB and UNEP-SBCI, as the international series owners, have given organizational advice and have used their networks to help ensure a large multi-disciplinary audience for the events.

At its World Congress 2013, the CIB acknowledged the relevance of the conference series by giving the Construction and Society Award to the SB Conference Series, with the rationale: *"The SB Conference series embodies everything that the CIB aims to achieve in promoting research and innovation that is to the benefit of society"*.

The increasingly high reputation of the series has resulted in other research groups and organizations holding events concurrently with SB conferences thereby maximizing the benefit for delegates. In short, the SB-series of conferences provides delegates with an unparalleled view into national, regional and international sustainable building issues every three years, while providing host organizations with increased visibility and effectiveness in their own regions.

The series continues to evolve. Up to and including 2013 the series was titled the "SB" or *Sustainable Building* conference series, but the series co-owners have now changed the series name to "SBE", standing for *Sustainable Built Environment* series, to more clearly indicate the inclusion of issues related to local urban areas and supporting infrastructure. There is also an increasing emphasis on continuity, reflected by the establishment of a Panel of Advisors, consisting of global conference organizers going back to 2000, and an increased emphasis on involving the World SBE conference organizers in the preceding national/regional SBE events. A meeting of SBE16 and World SBE17 organizers will take place in early March 2015, to discuss matters of mutual interest and to maximize synergies between events. The owners of the series have appointed a coordinator to manage the process until mid-2017. One of his first tasks will be to establish a permanent website for the series with links to the individual conference websites.

For further information please contact Nils Larsson (larsson@iisbe.org)