



PRESS RELEASE

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'Steel Network Sustainable Construction Charter'

**Sustainability strategy for the European steel construction sector
developed by IPO Steel Network (Independent Promotion Organisations for steel construction)**

At the invitation of IPO Steel Network, the European network of steel promoting organisations, representatives of the European and global steel sector met on Monday 27 September 2010 in Brussels for the signing ceremony of the **Steel Network Sustainable Construction Charter**.

The charter translates into practice a desire to work closer together and maintain a dialogue among all the actors of the steel construction sector in order to lay down a strategy to promote the most effective environmental measures, optimise research and information on steel applications for sustainable construction and make better use of the potential for recycling and reutilisation of steel structures and components.

The signatories of the Charter are the leaders of:

- **worldsteel**, the international association of iron and steel industries
- **Eurofer**, the European confederation of iron and steel industries
- **ECCS and Eurometal**, the European confederations of steelwork construction companies and steel distributors
- Europe's leading iron and steel companies: **ArcelorMittal, Dillinger Hütte, Duferdofin Nucor, Ferrosider, Gruppo Beltrame, Marcegaglia, Ruukki, Salzgitter, SSAB, Stefana, Tata Steel, Tenaris**,
- **Euro Inox**, the European association for the development of stainless steel
- **IPO Steel Network**, which brings together Europe's independent steel promoting organisations, including <<bauforumstahl (DE), Bouwen met Staal (NL), ConstruirAcier (FR), Infosteel (BE-LU), Fondazione Promozione Acciaio (IT), SBI (SE) and SZS (CH)

The Steel Network Sustainable Construction Charter is another tool in the fight against global warming and fits in with the new Europe 2020 strategy plan adopted by the European Council in June of this year, designed to stimulate three types of development:

- smart growth (developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation);
- sustainable growth (promoting a more resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy);

- inclusive growth (fostering a high-employment economy delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion).

The Charter highlights recommendations in the form of a number of actions prioritising the following:

- fostering a new dynamic spirit of cooperation among the players who manufacture, design, study, implement, supervise, service and manage structures;
- raising awareness among stakeholders about the relevant and effective solutions that steel offers at the economic, aesthetic, social and ecological level;
- promoting steel recycling;
- promoting the reuse of steel components;
- disseminating information for good structural design;
- ensuring proper training for designers and builders;
- enhancing the image of the companies responsible;
- cooperating in research into and development of suitable products;
- giving wider publicity to specific advances made in the sustainable application of steel.

The multiple uses of steel and its alloys meet basic human needs and improve our quality of life in many areas: housing and construction, of course, but also means of transport, mechanical engineering, food and water distribution, domestic electrical appliances, medical equipment, electronics, telecommunication, aerospace industry, energy generation and transport installations, etc. The demand for steel will therefore be sustained in the long term to meet worldwide economic and demographic growth.

The European iron and steel industry and the steel construction sector are therefore indispensable partners in tomorrow's economy. As such, they must incorporate the various measures relating to climate change, energy, transport and the environment into a coherent policy of economical use of resources and a low-carbon future.

At production level, the European iron and steel industry is therefore assuming its responsibility to reduce energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions to a minimum. It already cut CO₂ emissions by more than 20% between 1990 (Kyoto reference year) and 2005. To take up the challenges ahead, it is conducting new research programmes such as the Ultra Low CO₂ Steelmaking project (ULCOS).

Thanks to progress made in the steel sector, steel construction is a multiple application technology that is sustainable and widely used in public works and building for framing, reinforcement, flooring, façades, structural steel work, roofing, partitioning, equipment, interior design, etc.

Steel adapts to actual requirements to combine creative freedom with construction efficiency, in particular offering the following advantages:

- prefabrication, continuous quality control, precision machining, building site nuisance control, dry process building, etc.;
- ease of assembly with shorter construction time and faster return on investment;
- structural lightness, long span lengths and material savings, creating more floor space and natural luminosity;
- flexibility of interior space and ease of adaptation, enlargement and height extension of buildings;
- ease of dismantling and possibility of reusing whole structures or structural components;
- strength and resistance over a long period of use, with easy maintenance. Steel exposed to weather conditions is effectively protected by various surface coating systems and some types of stainless or self-weathering steel requiring no protective treatment;

- adaptation to "passive" construction and high-energy efficiency buildings featuring industrialised shell and floor systems with high-performance thermal and acoustic insulation, ventilation and lighting;
- construction of renewable energy installations using wind and solar power and green roofs and façades;
- effective use of technological advances to develop special high-strength types of steel, computer-aided design and manufacture, development of surface coatings based on nanotechnology with active function for optimum environmental management, etc.;
- Moreover, used steel has the advantages of magnetic sorting and complete and perpetual recycling without loss of properties. It can even be remanufactured with upgrading of steel quality. In this way, it makes a significant contribution to the preservation of natural resources for future generations.

Steel offers numerous advantages for the achievement of sustainability with high level environmental and health protection and growth of the economy. Day in day out, this natural, recyclable, recycled, sustainable, high-performance material, which poses no health hazards, proves its capacity to underpin the most inventive and successful solutions in construction and to adapt to the most demanding conditions of use. This potential makes steel an indispensable partner in sustainable development.

ISN - IPO STEEL NETWORK - WHO ARE WE?

IPO Steel Network is the European network of independent organisations promoting the use of steel in the building sector. Each national organisation is supported by members mainly from the iron and steel industry, construction companies, engineering and architecture firms, and it also includes the main teaching establishments for architecture and engineering as well as many students. The national associations organise events, competitions for professionals and students, training courses, seminars and project visits, publish an architecture magazine, issue technical publications and provide free helpdesk services.

All IPO Steel Network members have declared their intention to cooperate in sharing information and undertaking action at European level to ensure wider and more effective promotional efforts.

Infosteel is a founding member of the European ISN - IPO Steel Network, which serves as the umbrella organisation of the following national associations:

 [<<bauforumstahl](#) (DE)

 [Bouwen met Staal](#) (NL)

 [ConstruirAcier](#) (FR)

 [Fondazione Promozione Acciaio](#) (IT)

 [Infosteel \(Staalinfocentrum / Centre Information Acier\)](#) (BE-LU)

 [Stahlbau Zentrum Schweiz / Centre Suisse de la Construction Métallique](#) (CH)

 [Stålbyggnadsinstitutet - SBI](#) (SE)



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