

English:

Hello, I'm Judith from Architects for Future.

You've already heard a lot about the problems that cement causes as a building material. It consumes enormous resources. Its extraction leads to social and ecological degradation worldwide and its production is enormously greenhouse-gas intensive.

Millions of years ago, in another geological era, many small crustaceans absorbed CO₂ from the atmosphere when building their lime shells and stored it in their shells in the form of lime. The resulting limestone is therefore a fossil resource. When we heat it, as is necessary in cement production, this CO₂ dissolves again and, in addition to the emissions from heat generation, it accounts for around two thirds of the total emissions from cement production in Germany.

So there is not just one problem to solve. This building material comes with a whole bagful of issues. Is there already a satisfactory solution in sight for these problems? No!

And now?

Well, don't bury your head in the sand! There are other ways, for example through alternative building materials and through reduction, the reuse of components, and the reuse of building materials.

What do you mean: reduction? - Yup, it helps to turn the huge problem that cement production poses for people, the climate, and the environment into a smaller problem to begin with. We can use the material more efficiently per component, for example with lightweight instead of solid ceilings. But right now, there's simply too much new construction going on, with far too much wasted. So demand has to come down. According to the Association of German Cement Works, demand for construction will only drop by 6% by 2050. We say: More is possible - so less! Nobody in Germany needs more than 300 kg of cement per year. Nobody needs more and more living space per year for themselves. At the beginning of the 90s, we got along with a quarter less in Germany, because we shared more. No one needs vacancies with umpteen unused square meters because someone is speculating with the property. No one can seriously want more and more sealed, partly concreted-over land, and yet land consumption in Germany is still over 50 hectares per day. Dear shareholders, we as a company are tackling these problems decisively. It is already trendy (and also super relieving) to live minimalistically and only have what we really need.

And why reuse now? - When an older building slowly becomes due for renovation, it is often demolished instead and replaced with new construction because this sky-scraping waste is usually CHEAPER! Thus, any development towards a sustainable building culture is kept small or nipped in the bud.

The words and the actions of politicians and lobbyists make us furious! And it should make you furious too, dear shareholders! You are betting your money on the wrong horse: on a bloated super horse that, without the direct or indirect subsidies from the state, without mafia structures and crimes, would have long been just a cute little pony.

And how now reuse? - Architects for Future advocates demolition only when it is better for the climate or really necessary for people in a particular case. If that happens, then the components in the building can be resources for other construction projects instead of just ending up in the trash. To do this, they have to be passed on via building component exchanges. That market needs to be built up, and if we use more of what's already there, we'll need even less new material. That, too, will depress construction demand, dear shareholders.

And how different? Not only can it be done differently, it can be done much better with other building materials, and there is a lot to do!

Clay, which occurs almost everywhere, does not have to be heated at all and does not release any greenhouse gases, is disposed of as waste in many places. And this despite the fact that we can build with it wonderfully. People all over the world have been building with it for thousands of years. With its outstanding properties, it is sometimes even the best air conditioning system of all. It stores incident solar energy in the form of heat and releases it only slowly. This has a cooling effect in summer and a warming effect in winter. Many well-built houses made of natural materials therefore need neither heating nor air conditioning. Sounds fantastic? It is!

With leftover plant parts from agriculture, for example straw, we can insulate houses instead of using greenhouse gas-intensive Styrofoam for this purpose. When well-pressed and plastered with clay, straw bales don't burn very easily and the houses are less susceptible to mold because they breathe. Plants store CO₂ as they grow instead of emitting it, and straw bales can even carry loads. Thus, neither concrete, nor stones, nor large amounts of wood are needed to build load-bearing straw bale houses. We can even build high-rise buildings from wood, a renewable building material, when we need to. We can take components and building materials from dilapidated buildings and reinstall them elsewhere, or at least recycle them. Lime-producing bacterial cultures can maintain concrete components. This can prevent demolition... the list goes on. There is so much to do and renovate that we certainly won't get bored even without new construction!

So why isn't all this happening everywhere already?

Because it is supposedly too early for this change!

Because the industry is allegedly not yet ready. Probably to admit to themselves that their previous methods and practices are not sustainable.

Because it is too expensive?

Of course, sustainability costs more today, as long as we don't calculate the costs of tomorrow in, as long as industries are exempt from energy taxes, and as long as they don't pay for the damage they do to our ecosystem through their resource extraction. Yes not even on the CO₂ that escapes from the limestone are paid taxes!

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Studies have shown that the biggest lever in climate protection is our financial investments. Support sustainable projects with your money, they need it! Take to the streets with us, because we need more people joining the fight to put more pressure to that things finally change for the better. We have to be brave and break away from the structures we know, go unfamiliar paths and reduce and let off at the points where we do not get ahead. BUT: is reducing and letting go really bad??? No! It is great! Because what we reduce in one place, we get back in another, a much better place!

We can only accomplish this great task together. Resting on cowardly excuses means having to tell young people in 5 - 10 years that it's too late. That we had a rich life, but it is not enough for them.

We are not only stealing resources from ourselves, our children and all other living beings, we are stealing their future!

Do your part to prevent a tragic outcome! Help to be part of the positive change, part of a future we look forward to!