

## Book Review

### What is to be Done? : Climate Change for Beginners

Bon, Ranko (2014). What is to be done? : Climate Change for Beginners. Hesperiaedu, Belgrade. 150 pages. ISBN: 978-8679560735

Bon (2014) "What is to be done?" is a selection from Bon's *Residua*. Bon's work is intellectually stimulating and equally challenging. It ingeniously throws challenges at the built environment; practitioners and academics alike. I was referred back to the early work surrounding sustainability in construction and the wider built environment, particularly the work by Bon (2001)<sup>1</sup>. Bon (2001) expresses the stringent need for a deeper understanding of the complex interactions of processes in delivering a sustainable built environment as well as the need for a sharp understanding of market-based measures that are effective in producing desired behaviour amongst the built environment stakeholders. Looking at the global economy, it seems that market based initiative, based on the ubiquitous "self-regarding" principle only, will not provide an urgently needed outcome. As such, one might conclude that all efforts to advance sustainability in the built environment will remain futile.

The debate around the definition was already taking place during his early work (Bon 2001) and it is surprising to see it continue within the construction and built environment community today. One would expect the industry to have moved on from the debate to concrete actions and be making a serious drive towards the sustainability agenda by now. Movement not only in energy consumption reductions but also in the vital and critical issues of social sustainability with all the serious concerns the world is currently facing such as global poverty, workers' rights and child labour to mention a few. It was timely to see the Edge Commission Report on the Future of Professionals: Collaboration for Change (Morrell 2015)<sup>2</sup>, recently published in the UK. The report called upon all professional bodies to collaborate for change through: industry reforms; policies for climate change; building performance; ethics and public interest; and education and competence. It supports the argument by Opoku, Ahmed and other colleagues.

The report further advances the debate by calling for actions around the aforementioned themes, by:

- Developing a shared vision of how to improve efficiency and meet clients and societal needs;
- Developing the needed policies together with the required industry capabilities and skills indispensable to respond to the impact of the built environment on climate change and natural resources;

---

<sup>1</sup> Bon, R., (2001) "Sustainable Construction: Some Economic Challenges," in Nicola Maiellaro, ed., *Towards Sustainable Building*, Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer, 2001, pp. 227-240.

<sup>2</sup> This report can be found at [http://www.edgedebate.com/?page\\_id=2829](http://www.edgedebate.com/?page_id=2829).

**Copyright:** Construction Economics and Building 2015. © 2015 Abbas Elmualim. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Unported (CC BY 4.0) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), allowing third parties to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format and to remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially, provided the original work is properly cited and states its license.

**Citation:** Elmualim, A. 2015. Book Review –What is to be done: Climate Change for Beginners, *Construction Economics and Building*, 15(4), 106-107. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/AJCEB.v15i4.4721>

**Corresponding author:** Abbas Elmualim; Email – [abbas.elmualim@unisa.edu.au](mailto:abbas.elmualim@unisa.edu.au)

**Publisher:** University of Technology Sydney (UTS) ePress

- Tackling the gap between what is promised by the industry and what is really delivered while developing common metrics and committing to measurement and evaluation, and the dissemination of findings;
- Developing and standardising a national code of conduct/ethics across the built environment professions, building on shared experience in the UK and internationally;
- Urging built environment institutions to commit to a cross disciplinary review of the silo nature of the education system and establish a joint think tank that could pool the resources of the Institutions to conduct research and develop policy for the industry.

This report seems like a befitting response and addition to Bon's question with regards to what is to be done. Bon (2014), through his personal thoughts and reflections, showed "The Anthropocene" is upon us. "The Universe in Us" was a stimulating start for a very absorbing commentary on climate change. Challenging for some in many parts, Bon presents the case for the futility of all the answers put forward to address climate change to date. According to his work, "despite the horror foretold, the future is bright" as it will be a primavera "new day" for humanity. The book by Bon provides an interesting read for academics and practitioners alike and is highly recommended for students and young academics, to further challenge their thinking and research approach to sustainability and leadership in the build environment.

Abbas Elmualim,  
Professor and Discipline Head: Construction and Project Management  
School of Natural and Built Environments  
University of South Australia