e² design "Architecture 2030"

Background Essay

In 2002 architect Edward Mazria established Architecture 2030, a non-profit organization with a mission to rapidly transform the U.S. and global Building Sector from being the major contributor of greenhouse gas emissions to being a central part of the solution to the global-warming crisis. Because the Building Sector is responsible for almost half (48%) of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, Mr. Mazria decided to step away from his architecture career and dedicate himself full-time to convincing the Building Sector to change its ways.

The goal of the organization is to dramatically reduce the GHG emissions of the Building Sector by changing the way buildings and developments are planned, designed and constructed. The organization issued a challenge (The 2030 Challenge) to the global architecture and building community asking them to adopt the following targets:

- All new buildings, developments and major renovations shall be designed to meet a fossil fuel, GHG-emitting, energy consumption performance standard of 50% of the regional (or country) average for that building type.
- At a minimum an equal amount of existing building area shall be renovated annually to meet a fossil fuel, GHG-emitting, energy consumption performance standard of 50% of the regional (or country) average for that building type.
- The fossil fuel reduction standard for all new buildings shall be increased to:
  60% in 2010
  70% in 2015
  80% in 2020
  90% in 2025
  Carbon-neutral in 2030 (using no fossil fuel, GHG emitting energy to operate).

It is Ed Mazria's belief that, by using innovative sustainable design strategies, generating on-site renewable energy, or purchasing renewable energy credits, these targets can be met. In fact he believes that they must be met to avert catastrophic climate change.

To find out more about Architecture 2030, visit www.architecture2030.org

To learn more about green buildings, visit www.buildinggreen.com

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PRE-VIEWING QUESTIONS

1. Where do you think most of the CO_2 being released into the atmosphere comes from?

2. What are some of the effects of climate change that we have already seen?

3. What do you think the term "green architecture" means? What is a "green building"?

POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS

1. Why does Ed Mazria compare the 2030 challenge to an insurance policy?

2. What can you do if you're not an architect to help the 2030 challenge succeed?

3. Ed Mazria talks about three valves: investment, building codes, and education. What are some specific actions that can be taken within each of these values to support the 2030 challenge?