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Skanska-sponsored global study shows that energy use in buildings can be cut 60 percent by 2050

Today, buildings use more energy than any other sector in the world - approximately 38 percent of the global energy use compared with 33 percent for industry and 26 percent for transportation sectors. But if a major, coordinated and global effort is launched, it would be possible to cut energy use in buildings 60 percent by 2050 and arrive at a situation in which buildings produce or recover as much energy as they consume.

These are among the major findings in a new research report, "Transforming the Market: Energy Efficiency in Buildings," released April 27 by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). This is the most rigorous study ever conducted on the subject and the findings apply to both existing and new building stock. Skanska is one of 14 global companies behind this report and is the only Nordic participant and the only construction company involved in the study.

"Buildings use more energy during their life cycle than any other sector, and as such are a major contributor to climate change. Unless there is immediate action, thousands of new buildings will be built without any concern for energy efficiency and millions of existing, inefficient buildings using more energy than necessary will be standing in 2050," says Johan Karlström, President and CEO, Skanska AB.

The study is based on extensive research and also included developing an advanced computer model for analyzing energy use for millions of existing and new buildings and projecting it out to 2050. Using these simulations, researchers have been able to identify the optimum mix of financial, technical, behavioral and policy options. The result is six principle recommendations for action:

- Strengthen building codes and energy labeling for increased transparency.
- Use subsidies and price signals to incentivize energy-efficient investments.
- Encourage integrated design approaches and innovations.
- Develop and use advanced technology to enable energy-saving behavior.

- Develop workforce capacity for energy saving.
- Mobilize for an energy-aware culture.

“The study shows that there is a need for immediate action to significantly reduce energy consumption. This has to be done in a joint and coordinated global effort to achieve the necessary results. Skanska is supporting this and some of the actions that the report calls for are already on our agenda. We will now assess how we can intensify our efforts,” says Johan Karlström.

Skanska is currently applying such environmental certification systems as EU GreenBuilding and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) to reduce energy use in buildings and has also implemented the Nordic Swan label for its Uniqhus residential concept. Other actions already on the company agenda are extensive training of employees in energy efficiency and energy saving behavior as tenants. The integrated design tool Building Information Modeling (BIM) is also being implemented in all design/build projects.

Later this year Skanska and the other companies behind the research study will commit to further actions for energy efficiency through a company manifesto linked to the report.

The full report, "Transforming the Market: Energy Efficiency in Buildings," is available at: www.wbcSD.org.

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This and previous releases can also be found at www.skanska.com

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