
ACTE HLM

2016-2020

Commitments of the HLM
Affordable Rental Housing Movement

Action
Climate
Transition
Energy



Preamble

In 1972, the United Nations conference on the environment adopted a series of principles for rational and ecologically sound management of the environment. Known as the Stockholm Declaration it raised environmental questions to the rank of high international concern and marked the beginning of a dialogue between the industrialised countries and the developing economies, out of a concern for the link between economic growth, the generalised pollution of the global environment (air, water, oceans) and the well-being of the world's peoples.

In June 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development adopted a declaration which heralded progress for the concept of national rights and responsibilities in the environmental field. The Rio conference was a fundamental turning point in the international recognition of environmental challenges. It affirmed that *"in accordance with the United Nations Charter on the principles of international law, States have the sovereign right to exploit their own resources in accordance with their environmental and developmental policies, and they have a duty to do so in such a way that the activities exercised within their jurisdiction or under their control do not cause damage to the environment in other States or in other zones not covered by any national jurisdiction."* *"The States must cooperate in a spirit of global partnership with a view to preserve, protect and re-establish the health and integrity of the terrestrial ecosystem. Given the diversity of roles played in the degradation of the global environment, States have common although differentiated responsibilities. Developed countries **acknowledge the responsibility incumbent upon them as part of the international effort in favour of sustainable development**, given that their societies exert pressure on the global environment and given the technical and financial resources available to the developed countries."*

It was then declared that the Earth, birthplace of humanity, was an interdependent whole.

From that date on, the French State quickened the pace of its action in favour of sustainable development.

The Law of 2 February 1995 set out the general principles of environmental law and new obligations. The Law of 19 February 2001 conferred on measures to combat the greenhouse effect and to manage the risks of climate change, the status of a national priority and set up a national Observatory on the effects of global warming. The Law of 1 March 2005 relating to the Environmental Charter enshrined environmental law as part of the French legal system by incorporating its principles into the Constitution whilst it recognised the environment as the *"common heritage of human beings."*

In 2009, the first Grenelle law, known as Grenelle 1, was adopted virtually unanimously by the French Parliament. In 2010, the second Grenelle law, known as Grenelle 2, moved from the stage of general principles to that of practical measures.

In 2013, The French government launched a process of wide-ranging consultation (*états généraux*) for the modernisation of environmental law.

Momentum has been maintained in the last two years with numerous Government initiatives in the field of construction and building renovation, mobilising those involved in a response to the challenges and issues of energy and environmental protection.

The Law of 17 August 2015 (relating to energy transition for growth of green energy) represents a determined effort to combat climate deregulation, to reduce the costs of energy spending in France, to transform the country's energy model, combat unemployment, place greater value on new technologies, conquer new markets in the fields of renewable energies, for clean transport, sustainable buildings and thermal efficiency, improved enterprise competitiveness, better protection of public health, improved quality of life and greater purchasing power for citizens, thanks to energy savings in the economic sectors of the construction, housing and transportation industries.

Early in December 2015, France is hosting COP21, whose intended outcome is a new international agreement on the climate. This will also be an opportunity to demonstrate to the rest of the world the dynamism and concrete actions set in train in France by various actors, in both public and private sectors.

The construction sector, which includes residential housing as well as industrial and office building more generally, accounts for a major part of the energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in France. This sector poses a major challenge that must be addressed if the energy transition is to be successfully achieved. Building energy performance is also a challenge for society, particularly with regard to lower household energy bills for lower income households.

In this framework, the HLM affordable rental housing movement has an important role to play in favour of the energy transition and combating energy poverty.

The HLM affordable rental housing movement 2015-2018 on 24 September 2014 signed an agreement with the French state making provision for an agreed voluntary commitment by the HLM movement within the framework of the energy transition and the growth of green energy.

The drive by HLM affordable rental housing organisations over the several past decades has achieved as one of its intended outcomes, a general improvement in energy performance. This represents considerable progress in the wider context of the French housing market.

Thus, at a time when France will host the 21st United Nations Conference on Climate Change, the HLM affordable rental housing movement is committed to continually reinforcing its action to combat climate deregulation and energy poverty, in its specialist field of residential accommodation.

With ACTE HLM 2016 – 2020, the HLM affordable rental housing movement seeks to make an important contribution to quickening the pace of energy transition and greater environmental protection, thereby achieving positive outcomes for housing occupiers. It identifies a number of key success factors and brings them to the table for public debate with the authorities and partners. This commitment is a vector for progress and innovation in the technical, social and urban fields, as part of the drive of the HLM affordable rental housing movement for the promotion and further development of increasingly attractive residential housing.

1 - Production, renovation and restructuring

The drive for greater energy and environmental efficiency in the construction sector and in the renovation of social housing through the redevelopment of poor quality urban districts and by better management of urban and social issues is a major source of innovation and employment not only in the construction and housing sector more generally, but the for local economic development of our communities.

Action to promote energy and the environmental transition in buildings means taking concrete steps to simultaneous and massively improve existing housing and open up sources of new social housing. It involves better cost control, that is, of the costs of both construction and occupation of residential housing, while also setting and achieving target levels of performance and low costs of building occupancy and maintenance for low income households.

The HLM Movement seeks stability in the energy and environmental footprint of the housing assets managed by the affordable rental housing movement. More energy consumption and higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions are entailed by new-build social housing. They must be offset by actions targeted to legacy housing assets, particularly by their refurbishment for energy savings purposes.

NEW HOUSING

HLM Movement commits to:

-) Develop and optimise new housing for rental and home ownership purposes;
-) Gradual and controlled advances with a view by end 2018 to widespread achievement of:
 - low-energy consumption buildings and positive energy consumption buildings when local conditions allow;
 - buildings of exemplary environmental performance, notably in terms of greenhouse gas emissions throughout their life cycle.
-) Involvement in processes under State guidance for improved energy and environmental performance of buildings;
-) Mobilisation of HLM organisations alongside local authorities as part of the "Investment for the Future" programmes, as well as "Cities for sustainability and solidarity, environmental excellence in urban regeneration" (led by ANRU), the "City of tomorrow" (led by Caisse des Dépôts), "Renewable Energies" and "Industrial methods for building renovation and construction" (led by ADEME) ;
-) A Request for Proposals (RFP) launched by Caisse des Dépôts in the field of "Transformational architecture" and the emergence of innovative, practical and reproducible projects for new-build and existing housing; the aim is to design and build developments that are exemplary in terms of environmental protection and energy savings, innovation and adaptation of housing to future and fast-changing needs including the new technologies to fulfil those needs. After the RFP stage, 5 selected projects will go into an incubation phase for experimentation and determination of the procedures required for their technical and economic replication;
-) Capitalisation on experience feedback from exemplary developments that focus on quality energy and environmental performance, cost control, building maintenance and management, occupier behaviour and attitudes, in order to plan future conditions for the introduction by law of new regulations on energy transition for green growth.

Key success factors:

-) Extend and broaden the scope of exemption of new-build from the Taxe Foncière sur les Propriétés Bâties (TFPB – Tax on standing properties);
-) Develop more extensive access by HLM organisations to “Investment for the Future” programmes;
-) Develop the regulatory framework so as to get better value from carbon-free energy and give greater consideration to the need to reduce household energy expenses;
-) Develop the legal framework for experimental trials of town planning regulations and regulatory obligations to promote the emergence, implementation and assessment of innovative technologies.

RENOVATION AND RESTRUCTURING

HLM affordable rental housing movement commits to:

-) **Expanding its action in the fields of energy and environmental renovation**, to encompass 1000,000 residential units annually.

Key Success Factors:

-) Continuing extension and simplification of procedures for granting the social housing eco-loan, with following aims
 - ⇒ actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
 - ⇒ investment in the plan for removing and replacing antiquated electric convactor heaters.
-) Improved financial incentives for second stage EU processes aimed at comprehensive housing renovation;
-) Harmonised terms and conditions of eligibility for grants of finance through HLM organisations (social housing eco-loan, EU, Feder Funds, exemption from TFPB real estate tax..);
-) Improve access by HLM organisations to “Investment for the Future” programmes;
-) Develop regulatory framework for promotion of low carbon energy sources in the context of reducing energy prices paid by households;
-) Research and Development asbestos removal action plans.

2 – Requests for Proposals under scheme for “200 positive energy communities for green growth”: registration of respondents seeking to take part

HLM affordable rental housing movement commits to:

-) Greater involvement by HLM organisations in the energy transition as it takes place in the local communities, by supporting local authority-driven policies;
-) Systematic consideration given to forward-looking projects at urban district and local authority level to promote targeted action to combine densification of urban occupation and quality of life, combat urban sprawl, better use natural resources, better plan the set-up of retail and services at local level and contain the need for long distance travel...;
-) Develop the energy and environmentally-sensitive approaches suited to the local context: renewable energies, smart grids, decentralised power supply, bio-sourced materials, optimised treatment of waste and water cycles, atmospheric air quality, promotion of biodiversity...;
-) Develop flora and fauna in the city environment by involving the occupiers of buildings and land managed by HLM organisations; richer biodiversity in the urban environment depends on raising awareness to issues of energy production and consumption in a greener environment;
-) Support occupiers necessarily engaged or affected by in the change process, including incentives for the adoption of new technologies for personal mobility (“soft” transport, car-sharing, shared car-parking spaces, intermodal transport...) while building long-term urban resilience through local population initiatives in the housing environment.

3 – Reinforced contribution by HLM organisations to enhanced energy and environmental performance in jointly-owned properties

The HLM Movement has acquired considerable experience feedback in the field of energy renovation in the housing sector and has developed real expertise as manager of jointly-owned properties.

HLM affordable rental housing movement commits to:

-) Membership of the Professional Actor Mobilisation Charter for Energy Renovation in Jointly-owned Properties led by the Sustainable Building Plan;
-) Converging understanding and transfer of skills between HLM organisations and the Local Energy Renovation Platforms;
-) Promote Requests for Proposals in the area of development of positive energy schemes in jointly-owned properties;
-) Expand support for self-initiated energy renovation projects;
-) Reinforce capacity of HLM organisations to support jointly-owned properties by facilitating the acquisition and sharing of know-how gained by experience feedback.

Key Success Factors:

-) Adopt new tools for joint local authority public/private building projects, focus by HLM organisations on **failing jointly-owned housing assets** with a view to their short term management or longer term acquisition;
-) Support additional investment by property managers in turning around **failing jointly-owned properties**;

4 – Combat energy poverty and develop strategies for personal mobility and home ownership

HLM affordable rental housing movement commits to:

-) Improve the identification and handling of situations of energy poverty while supporting continuing work by the National Observatory of Energy Poverty;
-) Create procedures favouring better understanding of step changes family life and circumstances of household dislocation, thereby and encouraging moves by tenants into accommodation where heating and other energy-intensive facilities are better designed to match energy consumption and real needs;
-) Boost the capacity of SACICAP to support Social Support Missions that combat energy poverty and promote energy renovation in privately-owned property;
-) Reinforce information targeted to and support of private purchasers of properties previously part of HLM rental assets, with a focus on incentives for energy improvement works and self-initiated housing renovation projects.

5 – Develop procedures for support, awareness-raising and involvement of tenants and home-owners

Feedback and assessment work has demonstrated the importance of giving early consideration to the lifestyles and behaviour of tenants and home owners. The HLM affordable rental housing movement seeks to place tenants and home-owners at the heart of the challenge facing them. **4.6 million social housing units accommodate 11 million occupiers affected by the energy and environmental transition.** Their successful contribution to meeting those challenges depends on their shared understanding of the benefits of energy and environmental issues, so that they adopt the changes in life-style that will make them “comfortable” about the future of responsible energy consumption.

HLM affordable rental housing movement commits to:

-) Promote any and all approaches that will bring tenants together to contribute to the delivery of the Quality services required from HLM organisations;
-) Launch a competition/challenge organised by Union sociale pour l’habitat (Social Union for Residential Accommodation), for “11 million tenants involved in the energy transition”, the aim being to stimulate the take-up of strategies to reduce energy consumption;
-) Reinforced long-term awareness-raising of the need for new consumption habits, new equipment and energy savings, supported by specialist involvement particularly when supporting of disadvantaged households;
-) Extension of the “Jobs for the Future” programme beyond 2015 by recruiting young people with a view to the new employment opportunities created by the energy and environmental transition;
-) Support local initiatives by householders and tenants contributing to the development of a low-carbon society (shared gardens, mobility, shared non-merchant services);
-) Support for participatory housing projects, both in the private home ownership and social housing fields;
-) Develop and promote initiatives for shared spaces and car-sharing.

6 – Develop innovation and experimentation to capitalise on results

HLM affordable rental housing movement commits to:

-) Set up a Partnership Platform to promote the energy and environmental transition in the field of housing, and thereby:
 - Unite initiatives to respond to the challenges of upgrading assets in both the new-build and housing renovation sectors, to achieve a better grasp of the energy and environmental transition by householders and gather positive feedback from all players in the sector.
 - Provide a united focus for volunteers active in the drive for dynamic action by the HLM Movement, so as to organise local partnerships based on the three orientations for building renovation going forward under central government supervision, as part of its policy of promotion of new housing.
 - Seek out in collaboration with policy-makers in charge of planning initiatives, and by end 2015, find an operational agreement for jointly agreed directions that bring into play sources of combined finance.
 - Initiate experimental work on innovative solutions by sharing experience feedback and supporting householders in their effort to better grasp the challenges of the energy and environmental transition.
-) Contribute to the development and successful conclusion of outstanding projects in the fields of construction, building management and renovation, urban renewal, design of sustainable territories, emergence of low-carbon societies and renewable energies;
-) The focus of all action should be householders themselves: their energy uses, their comfort, health and purchasing power should be the focus of all action;
-) Forward-looking work on future of HLM assets should be set in train to ensure that the affordable rental housing market evolves along the lines of greater awareness of the need for resilience in order to better respond to the consequences of climate change and extreme weather conditions.

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Signed on 24 September 2015, in