



International Green Roof Congress 2013 – The Future of Urban Roofs

Over 250 participants from more than 40 countries attended the 3rd International Green Roof Congress (13th-15th May) in Hamburg, using it as a platform to gather information on future trends for roof and façade greening. One of the highlights of the event was Lord Mayor Olaf Scholz’s appearance to present the new Green Roof strategy of Germany’s second largest city Hamburg.

The International Green Roof Association (IGRA) and the German Roof Gardener Association (DDV) invited the Green Roof branch to Hamburg for the three day multidisciplinary and transnational information exchange under the patronage of the Federal Minister of Transport, Building and Urban Development, Dr. Peter Ramsauer. Given the other events which were also taking place in Hamburg, namely the International Garden Show (IGS) and the International Building Exhibition (IBA), with their spectacular landscape designs and innovative living concepts, there was no better place this year to present a status report on Green Roofs at an international level and to identify future areas of application.

The programme of lectures over the next two days, which was moderated by the American green roof expert Linda Velazquez, gave the more than 250 attendees from over 40 countries an overview of the many design and application areas of Green Roofs and façade greening. IGRA President Roland Appl provided the guiding principle for the congress with his speech “Green Roofs Quo Vadis?”. The subject of Green Roofs in Germany is often limited to the ecological values of the so called “extensive” Green Roofs, which hampers the creative potential of architects. The Danish architect Jakob Lange (Bjarke Ingels Group - BIG) demonstrated in his speech “Green is the New Black” that green areas on roofs also have an impact on fun, quality of life and the design of experience spaces for the residents. It’s not for nothing that the multi-award winning architecture firm feels bound to the concept of “hedonistic sustainability”. The Singaporean architect Wong Mun Summ (WOHA) also places the needs and wishes of homeowners and tenants to the fore in his greening philosophy “Breathing Architecture”. The same holds true for the urban waterscapes of the urban planner and landscape architect Prof. Herbert Dreiseitl, who brings rain water as lifeblood and a natural climate buffer back into public spaces and makes it a tangible experience. The inspiring morning round ended with Prof. Manfred Köhler’s presentation on traditional and forward-looking techniques for façade greening systems, their possibilities and



their limits. One of the highlights of the afternoon was the workshop “Green Roof Policies – Urban Planning and Stormwater Management” (in cooperation with the Hamburg State Ministry for Urban Development and the Environment - BSU and the Hafencity University of Hamburg - HCU). The cross-border information exchange with experts from Portland (Amy Chomowicz), Chicago (Michael Berkshire), Copenhagen (Dorthe Romo) London (Dusty Gedge), Linz (Edmund Maurer) and Hamburg (Dr. Hanna Bornholdt) was moderated by Prof. Wolfgang Dickhaut and dealt with the question of how cities in the 21st century can be sustainably redeveloped.

The second day of the congress also delivered a varied potpourri of presentations on the subject of Green Roofs. Martin Haas from the architecture firm haascookzemrich/Studio 2050 kicked the proceedings off by presenting his ideas and concepts for sustainable architecture which are not simply defined by energetic parameters. The American Green Building Pioneer Peter Busby, who was awarded with the IGRA Green Roof Leadership Award for the VanDusen project the day before, explained the combination of nature and architecture which flow in the philosophy of regenerative designs to the participants. The momentum which the subject Green Roofs can take when political deciders set the agenda was made clear by the Lord Mayor of Hamburg Olaf Scholz in his greeting to the congress participants. With his vision of a living roof landscape with green and recreational qualities, he has commissioned the development of a comprehensive municipal Green Roof strategy. During the two days 30 speakers from 10 countries presented new and fascinating ideas for the future of urban roofs. Special interest was aroused by the new green roof system “Naturline” which is made from renewable resources and was presented by ZinCo’s managing director Dieter Schenk. The programme came full circle with the announcement of the 4th International Green Roof Congress to be held in Istanbul in 2015. Further information about the 3rd International Green Roof Congress can be found at <http://www.greenroofworld.com>. The congress volume with summaries of the speeches and contact details for the speakers can be downloaded as a PDF.

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Pictures International Green Roof Congress 2013

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Picture: Auditorium.JPG

Caption: The congress venue, Hotel Empire Riverside in Hamburg, was filled to capacity.

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Picture: WOHA-Singapur.jpg

Caption: The buildings of the Singaporean architect Wong Mun Summ seem to “breathe”.

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Caption: Participants visited various Green Roof projects in Hamburg with camera teams from the national television channels on the first day of the congress.

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Picture: Panel-Discussion.JPG

Caption: The panel discussion with Peter Busby, Martin Haas, Heiner Baumgarten, Wong Mun Summ, Prof. Manfred Köhler and Roland Appl (from left to right) was first class and multidisciplinary.

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Picture: IGRA-Award.jpg

Caption: Exemplary Green Roof projects and initiatives in Canada, the USA and Turkey were presented with the IGRA Award 2013. From left to right: Wolfgang Ansel (Director IGRA), Peter Busby (Perkins+Will), Amy Chomowicz (City of Portland), Burhan Karahan (Onduline Avrasya A.S) and Roland Appl (President IGRA).

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Picture: Scholz-Hamburg.jpg

Caption: Hamburg's Lord Mayor Olaf Scholz gave an exclusive overview of the city's Green Roof strategy. From left to right: Reimer Meier (President DDV), Roland Appl (President IGRA), Olaf Scholz (Lord Mayor Hamburg)

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