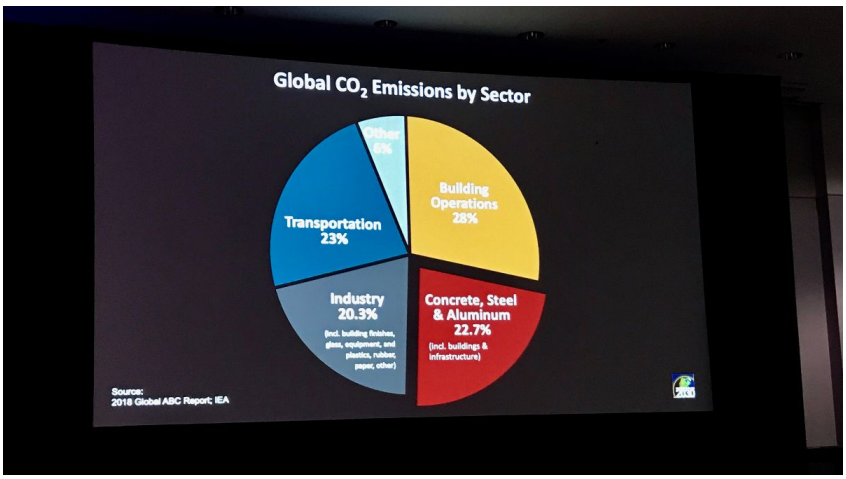
Insights From NZ19: The World's Largest Net Zero Building Conference

There is a distinct feeling of joy that comes with being surrounded by inspired, like-minded people. And that's exactly the feeling we had this morning at Verdical Group's net zero building conference.

There are few graphics that drive home the importance of green building more than this one:



As you can see, building operations and materials (yellow and red) are responsible for about half of all global CO2 emissions. And NZ19 brought together some of the brightest minds in green building to talk about the past, present, and future of

sustainable building operations and development.

Edward Mazria of Architecture 2030 gave a powerful morning keynote and we thought we'd share some of the key insights we learned from his talk.

Takeaways From Edward Mazria's Morning Keynote

Takeaway #1: To have any chance of meeting the goal of 65% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2040, the role of policy will be essential.

Mazria has developed a national and international building energy standard that applies to new commercial, institutional, and mid- to high-rise residential buildings (the prevalent building types being constructed in cities today). The ZERO Code, which can be adopted immediately, integrates cost-effective energy efficiency measures with on-site and/or off-site renewable energy requirements resulting in Zero-Net-Carbon (ZNC) buildings.

Takeaway #2: Big buildings produce nearly half of all building emissions in cities. Therefore, focusing efforts on addressing building requirements for high-rises (new and existing) will allow us to make the biggest impact on reducing emissions in the short term.

Takeaway #3: Between 2020-2030 (a very critical time), it's projected that 72% of emissions related to building will come from the processes of creating concrete, steel, and aluminum (referred to as "embodied carbon"). And while these represent a huge challenge, they also represent the biggest opportunities for reducing emissions through the use of alternative materials.

One surprising alternative he mentioned is mass-built timber. Another is bio-cement like the product being made by bioMason.

"What happens in California goes global"

Mazria's work has taken him all around the world. And when he spends time talking to stakeholders in important countries like China and India, everyone asks what California is doing.

They say, "Once California does it, we'll do it."

And he used this point to emphasize the importance of California continuing to push forward and lead the charge in sustainable building policy. With that, he left us with a call to action, and we're inviting you to join us (Tweet w/ us):