

## **REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL BUILDING BIOLOGY FORUM**

International Building Biology Forum took place for the first time in Turkey on 27 April 2019 with the partnership of IBN- Building Biology and Sustainability Institute Germany and ANAB- Building Biology Association Italy. Having the main focus of 'Healthy Buildings and Living Spaces', the Forum main themes were 'Buildings effects on human physiology and psychology', 'Healthy building examples throughout the world' and 'Importance of building - human relationship in the context of public health'. The first part of the Forum included presentations and the panel session, in the second part three-discussion groups approached different topics under the agenda of disseminating building biology know-how and finally presented the outcomes.

Together with experts' presentations and idea exchanges in discussion groups, the Forum content is enriched with side events like Architectural visits to Natural Buildings in the vicinity and Natural Building Materials Exhibition. IBN and BIJ- Building Biology Institute Japan publications gave wide coverage to The Forum content.

120 people from 10 different cities of Turkey participated to the Forum; there were also expert speakers from 4 different countries. While most of the participants were architects, there were experts from the fields of medicine, building and environmental engineering, education, sociology, etc. The Forum venue was visitor centre of the Yeşilova Mound, which is the prehistoric settlement area of Izmir. The entrance hall of the centre, its auditorium and meeting rooms were used for the event. At the end of Forum, Associate Professor Zafer Derin, the excavation head and the director of the visitor centre, guided the participants through the exhibition and excavation areas.

Opening speeches started with the inaugural speech of Merve Titiz Akman, co-founder of YBE, who spoke about the intention of the Forum and thanked the stakeholders, voluntary supporters and sponsors of the Forum. Then M. Arch. Evren Başbuğ, the architect of the Yeşilova Mound Visitor Centre and representative of İzmir Chamber of Commerce 70'th Architect Group, made an opening speech about the importance of focusing on human and environmental health in the building design process. Later on, the hosting venue director Associate Professor Zafer Derin made a presentation about building types found in the excavation of Yeşilova Mound, which is the prehistoric settlement area of İzmir and some activities in the visitor centre.

## **FIRST SESSION**

### **Main presentations:**

Winfried Schneider, the director of IBN, in his presentation spoke about the activities of IBN in the local and through its international network. Afterwards And Akman, co-founder of YBE, explained building biology principles and talked about the Institute activities in Turkey, later



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he also presented the features of flagship building called 'Kadıoavak Biohouse' which is also partly used as YBE central office. Later, Dr. Siegfried Camana, as the honorary president of ANAB and the one who helped increase building biology literacy internationally, spoke about the holistic approach behind the knowledge of building biology and how much it helps the integrity of human soul and body together with the natural environment. Prof. Dr. Tsuneo Ishikawa, on the other hand, pointed to the architectural works in Japan designed and applied with building biology approach and explained how different features of these projects contribute to socio-cultural, environmental and aesthetic sustainability.

Besides being the founder of BIJ- Building Biology Institute Japan, Prof. Dr. Tsuneo Ishikawa continues his academic works focused on human health oriented architecture and natural building technics. Nurgül Ece, building biologist and architect, presented selected buildings' features from the book 'Building Biology: Criteria and Architectural Design' which she edited.

#### **Primary and secondary sponsors' presentations:**

As the representative of [Forbo Flooring Türkiye](#), which was one of the primary sponsors, architect and Product Development Manager Sevda Sevimlier presented the company's sustainability vision and how they reflect this vision to their production process and she also spoke about Marmoleum collection which is constituted of %97 natural materials. As the representative of the other primary sponsor [İzmir Chamber of Commerce](#), M. Arch. Evren Başbuğ made an opening speech. The secondary sponsors; [Turgutlu Brick and Tile Manufacturers Association](#), presented by its president Dr. Gökhan Görçiz, [Işıklar Building Materials](#)' presentation is made by Technical Product Manager, M. Arch. Funda Algın and Hart Keramik is presented by marketing manager Hans Peter Schatz.

#### **Panel discussion:**

The panel discussion, targeted to the 'Dissemination of Building Biology Knowledge' has been moderated by Md. PhD. Uğur Özkutlu who was senior executive for long period in pharmaceutical industry and has numerous referenced academic works in neuroscience field. He posed two main questions to the panelists: 'what can you tell us based on your study and work experiences focused on Health Literacy', 'What are the relationships of generally speaking health proposals and building biology from your point of view, and if there are examples of communication models built in your geography concerning this area, what are your opinions about them?'

Prof. Dr. Sibel Sakarya and Prof. Dr. Dr. Thomas Abel respectively answered these questions in their presentations where they also spoke about recent progress in public health realm. Prof. Dr. Dr. Thomas Abel's major research program addresses issues of social stratification and inequalities in health and health behaviours. Prof. Dr. Sibel Sakarya's major areas of interest include epidemiology and management of chronic diseases, health promotion and



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migration health. Prof. Dr. Tsuneo Ishikawa as the third panellist answered the same questions according to his study and experiences in Japan.

## SECOND SESSION

The participants were separated to 3-discussion groups which were moderated by the expert speakers. These groups approached to the below subjects:

Group A subject: Importance of materials and design decisions in reaching wellbeing

Group B subject: Sustainable strategies for building biology in different socio-cultural environments.

Group C subject: Dissemination of building biology knowledge and consciousness: ways to increase literacy in this field.

Important aspects of the discussions were harvested by the reporters and after the group parallel meetings participants came together in the auditorium where the group representatives presented summary of discussion to all the participants.

Afterwards, Associated Professor Zafer Derin guided the participants through the exhibitions of the visitor centre and the excavation area of the Yeşilova Mound. Around 19:30 the cocktail started and continued until 20:30.

## FORUM IMPACT & OUTPUTS

- Forum participant's interest didn't dissipate throughout the sessions. Most of the participants actively involved to the discussions in the second session. It was mostly acknowledged that Building Biology field needs an action plan for its healthy progress in Turkey. General consent was that workshops had to be designed in order to reach a common action plan.
- The pioneers of the building biology field contributed as speakers to the Forum. The Forum was also very beneficial to Building Biology Institutes' representatives and experts coming from foreign countries to see closely the progress and potential capacity of the field in Turkey. Most of the experts in the building biology field remarked that from their impressions of the attentive audience and from the idea exchanges in the discussion groups, they can see the start of a grass root movement in this field. Plus, they are very impressed by the session contents, event format, venue selection and the professional organisation. You can reach from the Forum page the article about the event published in the digital magazine of IBN - Building Biology and Sustainability Institute Germany and the pages dedicated to the Forum in the monthly publication of BIJ- Building Biology Institute Japan



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- Natural Building Materials Exhibition that took place for the first time in the Forum attracted quite an attention. The exhibition comprised posters of natural buildings' design and constructions, natural material productions in Turkey and samples of natural building materials and structures made out of natural materials.
- The architectural trip was organized one day before the Forum to the buildings having building biology and ecology focus. 24 people attended to the trip that was guided by a building engineer and every building is explained in place mostly by their architects.

#### Feedbacks from the participants:

- Participants found the organization contentful, sincere, participatory and thoughtful. Plus, venue selection, sessions' format and services were found quite satisfying and most important of all, they were perceived in integrity with the Forum approach.

## **CONCLUSION**

International Building Biology Forum is organized with the objective of enabling an ecosystem for sustainable buildings. The feedbacks of the participants show us that an important step was taken on this direction. Even though as YBE team we are continuously working on increasing awareness on building biology and ecology field by our sharing on social media, in different events and occasions, the Forum had a unique energy since it brought together deeply involved people. So the Forum was encouraging as much as for the participants as YBE team. It was also very influential for YBE's network and the natural building material working group. We found out that workshops are needed to bring interested people and experts together to brainstorm on the healthy progress of building biology field. And most of these people are ready to work and contribute to these workshops. The Forum also helped YBE build partnerships, create ground for sponsorships and meet related people in public institutions.