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Embodied Carbon & Sustainability in the Built Environment – From the Inside Out

1. **Globally, what proportion of greenhouse gas emissions can be attributed to the building and construction sector?**

   According to the UN Environment Program, 37% of global emissions can be attributed to the building and construction sector.

2. **Define the term 'operational carbon'.**

   Operational carbon refers to the carbon emissions released during the day-to-day energy use and running of a building or infrastructure. This includes things like lighting, HVAC, the operation of appliances, hot water and so on.

3. **Define the term 'embodied carbon'.**

   As distinct from operational carbon, embodied carbon refers to the total greenhouse gas emissions associated with the entire lifecycle of a material, product, or building.

4. **Outline the various product lifecycle stages.**

   The product lifecycle stages include:
   - Raw material extraction
   - Manufacturing and processing
   - Transportation
   - Construction and installation
   - End-of-life

5. **What is meant by the term 'circularity'?**

   Unlike the traditional linear economic model – in which goods are produced, used, then disposed of – circularity (or the circular economic model) involves maximising the life of products, as well as re-using and recycling them for as long as is practical in order to minimise waste and negative environmental impacts.

6. **How can architects and specifiers identify products that have undergone a lifecycle analysis (LCA) and can be considered genuinely sustainable?**

   Architects can identify building products that have undergone a Lifecycle Assessment by looking for third-party verified documentation, such as Environmental Product Declarations(EPDs) and other environmental certifications.

Competency Codes: PC10, PC31, PC35, PC45