



Interview Paul King, CEO Built by Nature.

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What is BBN's mission/purpose (in a few words)?

At its core, Built by Nature exists to accelerate a fundamental shift in how we build. The global built environment is responsible for nearly 40% of global emissions and 50% of natural resource use, and we are forecast to double its size over the next 35 years. We simply can't afford to continue building in the way we have over the last 100 years. Our mission is to lead a transformation towards using timber and other biobased materials as mainstream, high-performance solutions, in a way that benefits climate, nature and people.

In practical terms, we connect the people who can make that happen – investors, developers, contractors, designers, insurers, policymakers and cities - and help turn that shared ambition into real-world progress. Because when you bring the right actors together, support innovation and share what works, you start to move from isolated projects to system-wide change.

Ultimately, the goal is quite simple: a built environment that works in harmony with nature, rather than against it.

How does the network operate globally? Why partner with BBCA?

We operate as a network of networks, connecting change-makers across markets. Globally, our role is to bring together the people who influence how we build, and create the conditions for them to work differently. When developers, designers, investors and policymakers engage openly across professional silos and industry markets, it becomes much easier to tackle shared barriers and turn ambition into practical action.

That model really comes to life at country level, which is where partners like BBCA are so important. France has a strong ecosystem already, from policy leadership to technical expertise and built examples. Working with BBCA allows us to anchor our approach locally, learning from leaders and avoid reinventing wheels. Together we can strengthen collaboration across that ecosystem, and focus effort where it can have the greatest impact.

So it's a combination of shared vision and direction globally, and trusted partnerships locally, that's what gives the network its strength.

Which countries are the most advanced in using biosourced materials in construction? How does France compare?

We're seeing strong progress across Europe and increasingly worldwide. Our recent Built by Nature Prize, with nearly 400 entries from 39 countries, shows that biobased construction is no longer niche, there is real momentum across a wide range of markets and building types.



At the same time, progress varies. Cost perception remains a major barrier across Europe, and several technical topics (e.g. fire and moisture) still require greater shared understanding. The policy landscape is also mixed, with some cities actively promoting timber and biobased materials, while others are more cautious.

France stands out, particularly for RE2020, which is one of the most advanced regulations globally and is clearly accelerating the shift towards low-carbon, biobased construction. This leadership is also visible in practice. One of our 2025 Prize winners came from France, La Maison de la Réserve Écologique by Archipel Zéro, a low-impact, circular building using locally sourced timber, straw and earth. You can explore the full list of shortlisted projects on our website: [Prize - Built by Nature 2025 Prize is open for entry now. Submit your project.](#)

What were the main topics discussed in the Paris meeting? What were the challenges at stake? Who attended, and what's the key takeaway (in a few words)?

It was a very focused exchange on where we need to act next. We brought together our Network Leads from France, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom, meeting in Paris at La Maison de la Réserve Écologique. Together, we shared insights from each market and mapped where progress is aligning and where challenges differ.

The programme combined discussion with site visits, including the Olympic Athletes' Village, the Olympic Aquatic Centre, and of course the Maison de la Réserve Écologique itself. Seeing these projects first-hand helped ground the conversation in what is already being delivered. Our discussions focused on practical barriers such as cost perceptions, fire safety, and a complex and evolving policy landscape. Looking at these side by side across countries gave us a clearer picture of where our collective action can have the greatest impact.