

Salon Suisse 2014 : Possible «Scenarios for an Alpine City State»

Opening Session 7th June - Speech Stefan Cadosch SIA

Dear Federal Councillor

Dear curators and organizers

Dear guests

The Swiss Society of Engineers and Architects SIA is delighted to support and attend this years' Salon Suisse, curated by Hosoya Schaefer, as a sponsor. Being in the wonderful Palazzo Trevisan degli Ulivi is one reason. The common interest of the SIA and the Salon Suisse is another: Both aim at raising the awareness of contemporary building culture, not only in a circle of experts and professionals, but especially in society and politics.

Every generation creates its own built environment and overwrites the layout of the precedent generation, in order to adapt to new requirements. Every generation is entitled to do so. But the identity of a society is determined by the past as well as the current. Certain well-proved qualities need to be conserved or further developed in order to maintain a collective memory while at the same time allowing new thoughts. Both aspects should be reflected by contemporary building culture. Quality itself is a constantly changing intangible asset, which has to be negotiated continuously.

Therefore, new flexible concepts and holistic approaches dealing with diversity and shifting conditions are needed. The growing demand of smart, green and livable cities with a unique character and identity not only require excellent technical skills but also interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary competences.

With their persistent work on standards, their specific involvement in political and public debates and their strong engagement in continuing education and training, the SIA and its members contribute to a high-quality and sustainable built environment, capable to meet future challenges.

Although the focus of this years' Salon Suisse lies on cities - due to their dynamic and strength as economic and cultural engines - let's not forget that questions of sustainability, quality and identity are also eminent in rural (shrinking) regions and a concept for a future Alpine City State should be able to cover both, urban and rural areas.

However, the SIA is very much interested to follow these discussions and wishes fruitful debates and new insights to all participants of this years' Salon Suisse.

Last but not least, special compliments and thanks go to the Federal Council for considering specific support of contemporary building culture in its new Cultural Message 2016-19 which has been presented in draft last week. This result is an important milestone for the SIA and its engagement in this respect.

Thank you for your attention.