

15 trees win the day

Architect consultants Helen & Hard Arkitektkontor have won the competition to produce Norway's contribution to the World Expo to be held in Shanghai in 2010. "The Nature of Norway" concept was developed in collaboration with Melvær&Lien The Idea Entrepreneur and Sweco Norge. Sustainability and recycling are the central themes in the 3000 square metre pavilion, which will be dismantled, packed and re-erected as park installations at various locations in China after the exhibition.

"Even though the theme for Expo 2010 is sustainability, such exhibits are not in themselves sustainable," says architect Siv Helen Stangeland from Helen & Hard. "Large installations are built, used for a short period, and then scrapped. This was something we wanted to change! That's why we hit on a concept able to be self-sufficient for energy as far as possible, and which can genuinely be re-used afterwards."

Norway's exhibit is built of 15 giant "trees" made of wood laminate and bamboo. They will house a range of activities and experiences, and will be re-used such that the Norwegian exhibit will represent value to the local population even after the exhibition. "The idea is particularly relevant for China, which is undergoing rapid expansion and needs innovative solutions for its urban spaces," continues Stangeland. "It's important for us to produce something people actually need. The content of each tree will therefore be developed in consultation with its future users, schools and local neighbourhoods."

The project group will be travelling to Shanghai in November this year to plant the bamboo to be used in the pavilion. Helen & Hard focused on combining Norwegian and Chinese raw materials and resources. "Norway is a world leader in using wood for construction and energy technology," says Stangeland. "Our pavilion is a low-energy concept using solar cells to provide power, rainwater from the roof purified to provide drinking water and a natural ventilation and air conditioning principle."

Norway and Norwegian businesses will be on show at Expo 2010 through nature, activities and experiences. "We have designed a business centre, which will be the focal point for Norwegian businesses who want to establish themselves and build relationships in China. "We will also cater for traditions and rituals important to Chinese businesses," states Stangeland. "Hopefully, the Norwegian pavilion will contribute to the successful meeting of Norwegian and Chinese culture and business."

Contact information Team Helen & Hard:

Siv Helene Stangeland, Helen & Hard Arkitektkontor – shs@hha.no/+47 95225766/www.hha.no

Dag Terje Klarp Solvang, Melvær&Lien The Idea Entrepreneur – dagterje@m-l.no/+47 913 78 853/www.m-l.no

Ottar Skarstein, Sweco Norge AS – (Ottar.Skarstein@sweco.no)/+47 928 23 239/www.sweco.no