

Milestones Report: May 1999

Hello again, I hope Spring has become a season of renewal and refreshment for you. It's time for an update on the activities of the Green Map System (GMS), from which so much has blossomed. Here is the latest news, as of mid May 1999:

Currently, 21 Green Maps of (mostly) urban settings have been published. These include twelve published on paper and ten on the internet or in kiosks (two are multi-media). Each provides a fresh perspective that helps hometown residents discover great ways to get involved with the urban environment and guides tourists (even virtual ones) to special places and successful greening initiatives they can experience, and then replicate back home. As of May 99, Green Mapmakers in 10 countries have produced the following:

Printed Green Maps: New York, San Francisco, the State of Rhode Island, Montreal (Canada), Kyoto (Japan), Copenhagen (Denmark), Adelaide (Australia), Liverpool (England), Malmo (Sweden), Berkeley (CA), Washtenaw County/Ann Arbor (MI), Athens (GA) and the Chenango Bioregion (NY).

Online or Kiosk Green Maps: New York, Montreal, Wellington (New Zealand), Gouda and Utrecht (Netherlands), Prescott (AZ), and the Argentine cities of Buenos Aires, La Plata, Mar Chiquita and Capilla de Monte.

Children's Neighborhood Green Maps: Calgary (Canada), Brooklyn (NY) and Holguin (Cuba).

Coming Soon: Barcelona, Toronto, Copenhagen (Version II), St. Petersburg/Clearwater (Pinellas County, FL) and Milwaukee.

Each of these Maps presents a richly detailed, beautiful image of a city where places, projects and people are making progress toward sustainability. Wonderful things are happening and Green Maps comprehensively chart them all!

Every Green Map project is further detailed and linked to our freshly re-designed website, <http://www.greenmap.org>. Please visit and find out about each of the 94 Green Map projects currently underway in 28 countries / 26 US states / 16 world capital cities / numerous smaller towns / bioregions / neighborhoods. Mapmakers in each locale are sharing their experiences through GMS's website and our collaborative guidance tools, ultimately benefiting everyone who makes or uses a Green Map. With gratitude to everyone involved in this eco-cultural collaboration, I'm pleased to tell you about these recent honors for GMS (all are linked to the News page at our website):

1999: National Award for Sustainability for "Telecommunications and New Communications Tools" by President's Council on Sustainable Development and Renew America (more on this below).

1999: on exhibit as an "Action for the Future" by The Earth Centre, the UK's new environmental theme park in Yorkshire.

1998: listed on "Global Best Practices 100 List" by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and named a "Success Story" by the UN's Commission on Sustainable Development.

2000: selected as a "Project Around the World" by EXPO 2000, the upcoming World's Fair on Nature, Humankind and Technology in Hannover, Germany.

Many other important accomplishments have come about as a result of our participatory organizational strategy: ~ Dozens of Mapmakers contributed concepts and images to Version 2 of the global Green Map Icons. In fact, several Icons originally designed for local use have been adopted into the universally-shared symbol set. Released in spring 1999, the update includes 125 lively Icons that draw attention to significant interconnections between nature and urban culture (we designated a smaller set for use by young people). See them all on our newly published Icon Poster!! This beautiful, stand-alone poster has Icon descriptions in English, Spanish, French and Japanese, and was designed for us by World Studio with major funding provided by Citigroup Foundation (complete credits are online/on the poster). Help us get GMS's Icon Poster displayed wherever eco-oriented people gather in your town – just e-mail your address and the quantity of copies desired to info@greenmap.com. (The Poster is complementary, but we ask you to defray postage/handling costs of \$1 per copy after you receive them (foreign mail is extra).)

~ A great opportunity to see all the published Green Maps together took place at the National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America in Detroit (May 2-5, 1999, during which GMS received the National Award for Sustainability). Each Map's regional flavor and unique features were on full display, allowing exhibit viewers to appreciate all of the thoughtfulness, love and commitment to sustainable communities designed into them. The Green Map story, as told on our exhibit panels, was rounded out with photos of Mapmaking teams, our new Icon Poster, and colorful collages about Maps-in-progress by their makers around the world. Consisting of a dozen double-sided, lightweight displays, the entire GMS exhibit fits into a bicycle box for travel. Watch our website for announcements of future showings!

~ Our Kids Green Map program is experiencing its own growth spurt, with pilot projects all around New York City and in Cuba, Canada, Brazil, New Mexico, Maryland and other settings. With the input of participating educators and young people, we are developing a Youth Activity Guide in both Spanish and English to encourage young people to showcase their observations of the local environment. Download the Neighborhood Green Map materials from our website and initiate the project with kids in your community.

~ We're continually improving our Guide to Green Mapmaking— it now reflects four years of experience in the field, and presents a variety of creative, effective methodologies. Currently available by email/on disk to registered participants and supplemented by our list-server, we're sharing our experiences directly, using great examples from around the world to inspire and expedite local efforts. In the future, we'll adding more collaborative guidance tools and services for Green Mapmaking to our website. Designed on eco-systematic, open-source principles, GMS is becoming more universally useful/understood each day.

~The world's third most spoken language, Spanish, is the "second language" at GMS. Recently, we posted an introduction to the Mapas Verdes projects underway in Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Chile and Spain at our website and Spanish-language materials on paper/disk are also available. We hope to encourage the movement of innovative urban greening initiatives from the south to the north, reaching throughout the Americas and beyond. Given that GMS is already being utilized by native speakers of nearly 20 languages, we will do more to bridge eco-cultural gaps, starting with our Icons, the heart of GMS.

~ In addition to the honors mentioned above, GMS has been getting great press coverage. The Ecological Economics Bulletin is featuring GMS on the cover of the current issue, our story is in May's Landscape Architecture magazine and the next issue of Green Teacher will include our Youth Activity Guide. Local Green Map activities have recently appeared in the Providence Journal, Newsday, Montreal Gazette, The Daily Post (Liverpool, UK), and elsewhere. In the NYC area, Metro Guide (Channel 70) is currently running a fun spot on the Green Apple Map several times a day. (Watch for news on the "close-up" Green Apple Map of Lower Manhattan later this year, investigated and co-designed by NYC's young people and supported by New York City Environment Fund. It will be the fifth edition of the original Green Map that sparked the global program! Until then, we encourage all of you to suggest sites for our online Green Apple Map – www.greenmap.org/nyc – which is becoming a trusted resource for greener living in New York City.)

With all that has been going on, it is hard to imagine that the global Green Map System was started by Modern World Design just four years ago! GMS has been evolving rapidly as together, we put the power of maps and the information web to work in service of the web-of-life. As founder and director, it has been an amazing experience to watch our resource-efficient, local/global strategy be examined, adapted and nurtured by such a diversity of creative, caring hands, then take root to the benefit of so many communities.

If you wish, you can read more "About Us" at our website. From an organizational standpoint, the big news is that GMS has become a ".org," signaling the beginning of the process of becoming a not-for-profit organization, which we feel is more in keeping with the collaborative nature of GMS's development. In significant ways, GMS is already creating "social profit" with the help of our fiscal sponsor, ADPSR (Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility). Thanks so much to ADPSR for their assistance, and to our wonderful funders: Graham Foundation, Dunn Foundation, Christopher Reynolds Foundation, New York City Environment Fund, Citigroup Foundation, and the Sustainability Education Center. Many thanks, also, to our terrific staff and volunteers, mentors and advisors, as well as to our broad-based, global network of Mapmakers and Green Map users sending support and encouragement from around the globe! Please contact us anytime if you would like more information/our press packet/our Icon Poster/Green Maps. With your help, GMS can grow into an even more valuable resource for healthier, more sustainable communities.

Now that you have read through this entire e-mail, its time to go out and appreciate the ecological and cultural resources in your home environment! Best regards, Wendy Brawer director, Green Map System