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## Millennium Message from Wendy Brawer

*This article appeared in the February 2000 newsletter of **Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility**. [ADPSR](#) has been very supportive of Green Map System since Day One!*

The Year 2000. This is the point in time when half of humanity will be urban-dwellers. Three billion of us packed into cities -- how long will they still be livable? A diminished existence is not enough, so how can urban environments become better places to thrive? This is the thought that pierced my complacent bubble a decade ago.

Out of my wake-up call came the concept of creating locally produced, globally connected Green Maps as a way to help all those cosmopolitans become rooted in nature near home. This didn't happen overnight, rather, over years, but I'm happy to say our collaborative effort has pretty much reached a point I'd dreamed of: that by the millennium, there would be dozens and dozens of Green Maps. Actually, today, there are 29 cities, towns and regions that have completed their first Green Map. Several of these have both printed and web-based versions; moreover, the first handful of neighborhood-scale youth green maps have been completed. Each tells the urban ecology story in a powerful and beautiful way, using our globally designed Icons to share the news of successful local initiatives with the world. The hundredth Green Map project milestone was reached on July 19, 1999 when Rio de Janeiro, Brazil joined our global network, bringing the concept full circle (the original Green Map for NYC was inspired by preparations for the Earth Summit, held in Rio in 1992). As I write this on 11/11/99, email arrives from Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, and our 108th project is registered! Closer to home, it looks like our own Green Apple Map will be updated and re-published for Earth Day 2000, and that several close-up views by young New Yorkers will be completed as well!

1999 has been amazing, as you can see for yourself at our website. With 33 countries participating and a myriad of individuals from all walks of life leading the efforts, developing useful guidance tools has been exciting. Together, we updated the Green Map Icons and launched Version 2 in the spring, incorporating many locally designed symbols into the shared set. Many presentations were given to introduce a wider audience to our work, including one that could not have been accomplished without the support of ADPSR, both locally and nationally, our exhibit at the National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America in Detroit in May. In addition to showing every completed Green Map, Ann Arbor's brand new county-wide Green Map made its debut and young Detroiters from my high school (Cass Tech) demonstrated Green Mapping with GIS. Our program was recognized by the President and Renew America, and given the National Award for Sustainability in New Communications Tools. It has also been named an EXPO 2000 Project Around the World, so next summer, expect to see Green Maps at the World's Fair in Hannover or visit our virtual Green Map Pavilion online.

Today, Green Map System is preparing for the next century by becoming a not-for-profit organization on its own, moving out from under the "umbrella" graciously provided by ADPSR. As we build an organizational structure for the whole, we expect challenges ahead, and hope to have the continued support of all our friends and partners around the world. If you would like to know more about creating Green Maps, how to get copies or about helping us in any way, please email ([web@greenmap.org](mailto:web@greenmap.org)) or call (212 674 1631). As the founding director, I wish all ADPSR members a wonderfully fulfilling and socially responsible new century!

Wendy Brawer



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