



## **Backgrounder**

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## **Green Maps – A Timely Vehicle for Social Change**

Utilizing community mapmaking as its call to action, Green Map® System promotes inclusive participation in sustainable community development worldwide. This New York-based nonprofit has supported over 600 locally-led projects in 55 countries as they created perspective-changing Green Maps that chart local green living sites, ecological, social and cultural resources. These Green Maps are guiding millions to make climate-smart everyday decisions that promote the uniqueness of home and protect the species that share it with us.

As seen at <http://GreenMap.org>, there are over 400 uniquely designed Green Maps in use worldwide and a new interactive mapmaking website that makes many more maps instantly accessible and open to public viewpoints, images and impact assessments. The Open Green Map (OGM) platform reduces barriers to participation and significantly increases the usefulness of the maps and their locally-sourced data to users around the neighborhood or around the world. Launched in June 2009, thousands of sites can be explored at <http://OpenGreenMap.org/home>. Mobile phone and data sharing applications that make the Open Green Map's rich array of sites accessible on the go are in development.

Whether created by NGOs, city agencies, social entrepreneurs, universities, CRS programs, grassroots or youth groups, local and Open Green Maps have meaningful impacts that expand the demand for healthier, greener choices, expand networks and help successful model initiatives spread to even more communities. Download a new book about the outcomes of these efforts at <http://GreenMap.org/impacts>. Each Green

Map project uses globally designed Green Map Icons to highlight and link the sites, along with guidance from locally adaptable collaboratively created Green Mapmaking tools that build communications, leadership and organizing skills that extend the value of participation. The movement is growing faster than ever – more than 100 new Green Map projects have registered in 2009, an indicator of the program's ability to transform local information into global interaction.

The Green Map organization continues to create new maps of New York City at the same time, benefiting the city's environment and climate while engaging diverse schools, universities and community groups in the mapmaking process. "The tools and methodologies piloted in our own backyard have effectively helped a diversity of communities successfully express local progress toward sustainability while promoting 'go local', ecotourism and social justice movements," stated Wendy E. Brawer, Founding Director of Green Map System. Find out more about the New York project at <http://GreenAppleMap.org> and interact with the map at <http://OpenGreenMap.org/nyc>.

Green Map System is a recipient of the US National Sustainability Award in New Communications Tools, winner of a Municipal Art Society Merit Award, a Technology Benefiting Humanity Laureate, an Index Award finalist and listed among the United Nations Best Practices 100, among other local and international honors.

Green Map System invites you follow its ongoing development of participation and local leadership in both emerging regions and capital cities. Explore its innovative approach and find out how the organization uses 'web 2.0', social innovation and traditional mapping tools to effectively engage people of all ages and backgrounds in climate-smart, healthy local activities. Explore <http://GreenMap.org> or contact the office at +1 212 674 1631 (or [info@greenmap.org](mailto:info@greenmap.org)). Get involved and Think Global, Map Local!