



Sustainable development: From global concept to local projects

A new and innovative project: The Green Map[©]



SBM Conseil

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GENERAL PRESENTATION

Why a Green Map?

Several aspects of our society are compelling: the earth suffers from more and more pressures and spoiling (deforestation, biodiversity loss, climate change), life conditions for millions of people turn poor (poverty, malnutrition, poor drinking water access, little access to education and technology, housing conditions, working conditions, standard of living discrepancies etc.) and the economic models do not overcome anymore nowadays harms (households indebtedness, unemployment, unbalanced and unfair international trade, bad wealth distribution ...)

Sustainable development is a concept, a way of thinking and acting which tries to link a right and fair economic and a social model of development with preservation of our natural environment. This concept tries to conciliate Man with Nature.

However, with the weak implication of stakeholders in sustainable development and in its concrete implementation, several questions can be asked:

- How to introduce sustainable development in the citizens' daily life?
- How to inform large public to these issues?
- How to give clear and concrete information to people that incites them to act for sustainability ?
- How to restore this fundamental principle of sustainable development, which is the link of proximity between inhabitants and their territory, between nature and culture?

Green Map System tends to give an answer to these challenges.

What is Green Map? (Summary)

A Green map lists and emphasizes the local sustainable initiatives, the environmental services, the social services, the eco companies and products that could exist in a city or rural area.

The Green Map System (GMS) is a locally adaptable, globally shared framework for environmental and sustainable mapmaking. It invites design teams of all ages and backgrounds to illuminate the connections between natural and human environments by mapping their local urban or rural community. Using Green Map System's shared visual language-- a collaboratively designed set of icons representing the different kinds of green sites, social and cultural resources--Mapmakers are producing unique, regionally flavoured images that fulfil local needs, yet are globally connected (www.greenmap.org). The resulting Green Maps identify, promote and link eco and cultural resources.



Merging the ancient art of map making (paper map) with new media tools (web map), each of these maps creates a fresh perspective that helps residents (but also each person who spends time on the territory : students, workers, business men, etc ...) discover and get involved in their community's environment, and helps guide tourists (even virtual ones through the website) to special places and successful green initiatives they can replicate back home. Green Map constitutes a modern, participative and pedagogical communication tool, promoting a territory on a large scale.

The mission of the Green Map System (GMS) is to promote sustainability and community participation in the local natural and built environment. Created in 1995 in New York, our community media vehicle has expanded to chart not just cities but also rural villages, small towns and bioregions. Now active in more than 500 diverse locations in 53 countries, all Green Map projects help create and also benefit from our resourceful approach.

What is Green Map? (Detailed presentation)

Objectives

The global aims of Green Map are:

- Emphasise local initiatives related to sustainability and incite the creation of new ones
- Inform people about these initiatives (address, hours, contacts...), and encourage people to use them.
- Promote a territory and its local sustainable actions through a modern, useful and concrete communication tool, with great visibility.

Through the implementation of this tool, objectives are also to :

- ✓ make people more sensitive to concrete and local sustainable issues, even make Green Map a sustainable education tool.
- ✓ involve inhabitants in the community's life and environment, encourage people to meet each other, stimulate the share of information and experiences.
- ✓ incite people to adopt more responsible behaviour.
- ✓ provide to the commune a decision-making tool for sustainable policies

Targets

The Green Map priority target is the inhabitants but it also involves every person that spends time on the territory (workers, students, business men, tourists ...). It may implicate young people (students) and even other communities (elders, foreigners).



2 examples with different objectives: one office Green Map (Delta Electronics, Taiwan) and one Youth Green Map (Boston, USA)

International network

Green Map is a concept that has spread worldwide and now exists in about 53 countries.



This international network allows the circulation of information, the exchange of knowledge and experiences between Green Map makers of each country or area. It also enables a worldwide promotion of the already made Green Maps.



Icons examples :

Economic Development	Information	Renewable Resources	Mobility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers market Eco-agricultural site Organic produce / Natural food Vegetarian / Natural cafe Green business / Service Strictly green store 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eco-information center Info resources by phone Info resources online Environmental center Environmental school Community center Green tour available Eco-tourist destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar energy site Wind energy site Renewable technology site Water recycling system Bioremediation site Composting Reuse site Remediated / (cleaned up) site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bicycle site On road bike paths / Bridges Separate bike paths / Bridge Secure bike parking Wheelchair accessible Best walks Pedestrian zone Public square / Care-free zone Boat launch site (sail/human-powered)

Maps examples:



For more information: www.greenmap.org



HOW TO MAKE A GREEN MAP ?

Earth Focus Foundation and SBM Conseil became in 2006 the Swiss representatives of Green Map Systems Inc., association founded in 1995.

In 2007, we have created, in partnership with public and private organisations, associations, authorities, schools and firms, the first Green Map in Switzerland: the Grand Saconnex's one. Some more local and small Green Maps, with schools have been set up: Arboretum of Aubonne, down town of Neuchâtel, Les Coudriers (part of Vernier – Geneva). Moreover, we are currently working on the Green Map of United Nations Area (Geneva), Green Map of Meyrin (Geneva). See our website: www.greenmap.ch

Steps and content

The process to create a Green Map could be adapted according to the objectives. But, in general, and in the philosophy of the concept, all stakeholders should be involved in the Green Map creation, discovering local sustainable initiatives and meeting others stakeholders (students, associations, inhabitants, local companies and official services...). All their opinion might be required to get an innovative point of view on the project.

1st step: data collection and area visits.

The Green Map concept and a reminder on what is sustainable development are presented previously to any activity. Then, through meetings, workshops and area's visits, people identify and collect data they consider relevant and important to chart.



The data presented on the map should be defined according to the aims of the project.

Nevertheless, we could already specify the issues and elements that may be on the map:

- On road bike path, pedestrian zone, best walks
- Pedibus, mobility points, major public transportation station
- Organic produce/natural food shops or fair trade shops, markets
- Community gardens, special trees, public squares, bird and wildlife watching sites
- Landfill, recycling centre and reuse site, composting
- Green and social business/service
- Eco-information site, social/political resources, alternative health resource, community centers
- Renewable technology site, Eco building, Eco design resource
- Etc.....

2nd step: screening of the collected data.

Data gathered will be analysed for relevance. Participants will have to explain the link of their data with sustainability and the importance they give to them. The data deemed relevant will be integrated to the map and thus comply with the project’s objectives.

3rd step: creation of the map

The chosen initiatives will be reported on a paper map thanks to Green Map icons. If the information gathered doesn’t fit to any current icon, participants could create new ones. A web version si also created with the help of our design partner.



4th step: show / expose the creations (optional).

The map could be exposed in the hall of your organisation or distributed to your area’s inhabitants. Our team could organise an event around this map.

In order that all stakeholders could participate to the process, we could also do « a call for public participation » during an exhibition or an evening presentation. This call invites shops, associations, citizens, etc... to make known the places and initiatives they wanted to indicate on the map. Thus, the approach is opened to all propositions people could suggest. The process is thus based on a “participative democracy”.



Follow up:

The map is an on-going project: some other groups could check the information the year after or extend the map to the neighbourhoods.

Coordination and supervising:

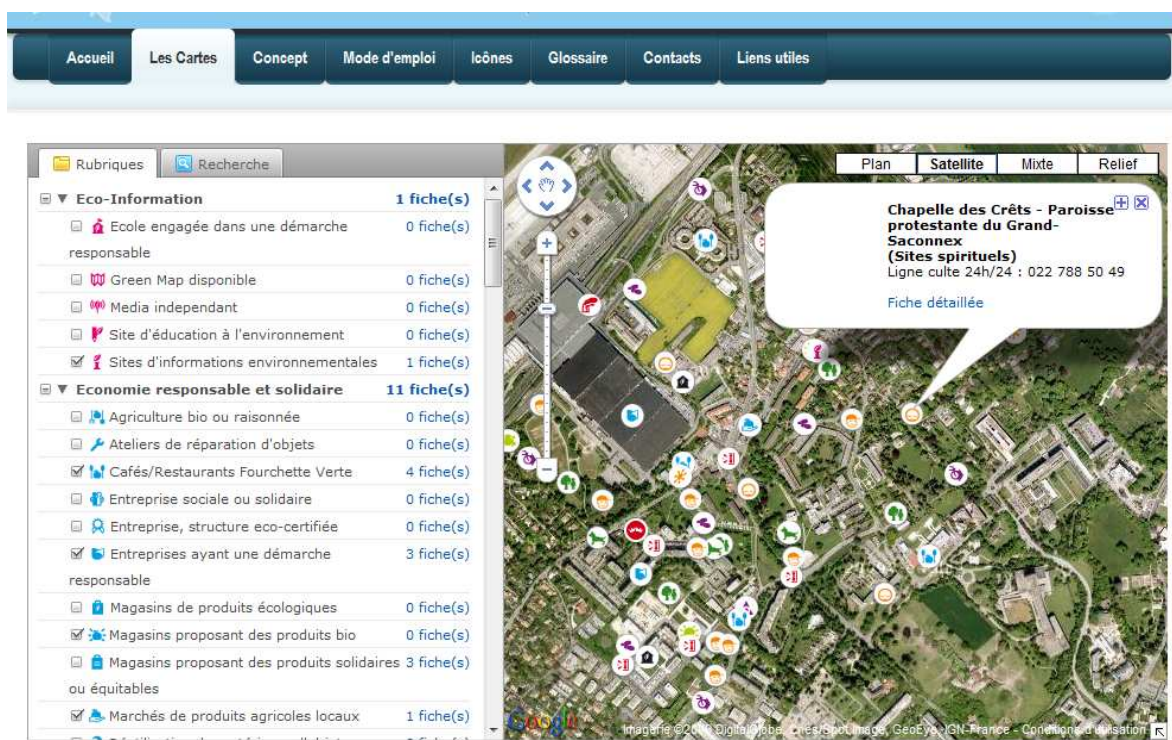
SBM Conseil and the Earth Focus foundation provide the presentations, tools, supervise the visits and workshops, and coordinate the project during the process. Our team could also help to organise exhibitions, create events; find partners for the communication of the results.

Communication

The Green Map could be printed on paper, with an attractive and specific design. It is also incorporated to our website (www.greenmap.ch) to get an interactive and funny tool, including links with Green Map Systems Inc or/ and with organisations present on the map (city hall, administrations, associations, shops, firms etc...).

The website welcomes the map and all relevant information. It gives more information on each initiative but also a greater visibility to the project than the paper map. It allows information exchange, data collection and opinion gathering from users through a specific page (a requisition form). This “citizen” page invites each website’s visitor to make comments, indicate changes or make known new initiatives...

Thus, the information presented on the webmap could be easily updated.





If the funds are enough, the map could be printed and distributed to all inhabitants, employees or at the city hall, to associations or even tourists and conventioners thanks to Tourism offices for example.

This concrete and interactive implementation of sustainable development has a strong image since it is an innovative communication tool. Moreover, the Green Map with its worldwide network will get a large visibility.

Contacts:

For more information, for a meeting, don't hesitate to contact us:

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