

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES BUILDING SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

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The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and IPCC reports make it clear that if human society doesn't change course rapidly, the global economy and human well-being could be dramatically compromised. Due to undue political influence by interests benefiting from the status quo, it has been a challenge to address climate change and other urgent sustainability issues. One asset typically overlooked in this quest to change the system is the geographically-rooted community: namely villages, apartment buildings, small towns, and urban and suburban neighborhoods. If mobilized, these communities could facilitate many solutions simultaneously, such as: adopting and modeling best practices; substituting social capital for physical or financial capital; localizing and greening their economic practices; mobilizing community members to stimulate broader regional and societal change; and serving as an important resource and insurance plan in the case of ecological or economic collapse. This presentation looks at the many roles that mobilized communities can play in helping to build a sustainable society.