

SUSTAINABLE FUTURE INSTITUTE MEDIA RELEASE

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Local Institute links with International Futurist Organisations

Earlier this month in Boston, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Millennium Project and the Sustainable Future Institute which establishes the Institute as the New Zealand Node of the Millennium Project. The Millennium Project is an independent, not-for-profit futures think tank, contributed to by futurists, scholars, business planners and policymakers. It is known internationally for publishing the State of the Future report – the 2010 edition was launched in Boston earlier this month.

Chief executive and founder of the Sustainable Future Institute, Wendy McGuinness, stated that 'by establishing a Node for the Millennium Project in New Zealand, we will be able to contribute ideas and information to advance global foresight. We will also be able to use the global think tank's findings to explore and reflect on New Zealand's long-term future.'

McGuinness has been in Boston attending the World Future Society (WFS) conference, World Future 2010: Sustainable Futures, Strategies, and Technologies, where she presented a paper entitled Moving from Strategy to Foresight: Developing a National Strategy for New Zealand. At this time, the Sustainable Future Institute also became the New Zealand chapter for the World Future Society. The creation of a New Zealand chapter will enable local futurists to meet, share ideas and work together to build community awareness about future possibilities.

McGuinness will return to New Zealand after attending a course at Harvard Business School on driving corporate performance. She hopes to use this experience to help map a national sustainable development strategy for New Zealand. 'Although a country is not a company,' she says, 'there are benefits in learning how to map a strategy so that it can be easily understood, discussed, reflected upon and improved by a wide range of interested individuals and groups.'

In March 2011 the Sustainable Future Institute will hold a one-day forum, 'StrategyNZ: Mapping Our Future' at Te Papa in Wellington. McGuinness hopes this event will provide an opportunity to develop a strategy map to present to government. 'The forum will offer insights from local and international experts, outside of the boundaries and limitations of the three-year election cycle,' she says. McGuinness believes 'it is timely to reflect on the past, explore the future and look for the big ideas that will propel New Zealand towards a robust, sustainable and exciting future'.

Anyone considering attending this forum is invited to register their interest at register@strategynz.info

[ENDS]

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Background information:

A: Key Institutions

(i) Millennium Project

The Millennium Project is an independent, not-for-profit futures research think tank of futurists, scholars, business planners and policymakers. The Project was founded in 1996 by the United Nations University (UNU), Smithsonian Institution, Futures Group International, and the American Council for the UNU.

Nodes – Millennium Project Nodes are groups of individuals and institutions that connect global and local views. Nodes identify participants, translate questionnaires and reports, and conduct interviews, special research, workshops, symposiums and advanced training.

(ii) World Future Society

The World Future Society was founded in 1966 and is a non-profit, non-partisan scientific and educational association of people interested in how social and technological developments are shaping the future. The 2010 conference offered a large array of sessions covering, among other things, technology, health, governance, values, education, societal trends, business and the environment.

Chapters – Local futurist groups enable futurists in any given area to get to know each other, share ideas and work together to educate the community about future possibilities. A local group affiliated with the World Future Society is expected to support the objectives stated in the Society's charter:

1. To contribute to a reasoned awareness of the future and the importance of its study, without advocating particular ideologies or engaging in political activities.
2. To advance serious and responsible investigation of the future.
3. To promote the development of methods for the study of the future.
4. To increase public understanding of future-oriented studies.
5. To facilitate communication and cooperation among organizations and individuals interested in studying or planning for the future.

A local futurist group should focus its attention on the future but not become over-specialised in any one aspect of the future. It is also extremely important that the local group does not align itself with any particular political party, religious group, or other grouping so that potential members or participants will not feel that their viewpoints would not receive a fair hearing.

B: Relevant Links

Millennium Project Overview www.millennium-project.org

World Future Society www.wfs.org/

Sustainable Future Institute www.sustainablefuture.info

C: About the Sustainable Future Institute

The Sustainable Future Institute is an independent think tank specialising in research and policy analysis. Our purpose is to produce timely, complete and well-researched information relevant to New Zealand's long-term future.

D: Images

Note: please request larger resolution images from rs@sustainablefuture.info



Image 1: Jerome C. Glenn, executive director of the Millennium Project, and Wendy McGuinness signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Millennium Project and the Sustainable Future Institute.



Image 2: Tim Mack, president of the World Future Society, and Wendy McGuinness shake hands on a deal to establish the Sustainable Future Institute as the New Zealand chapter of the Society.