



# HAKODATE

Green Mapmaking in Hokkaido Japan's Slow City



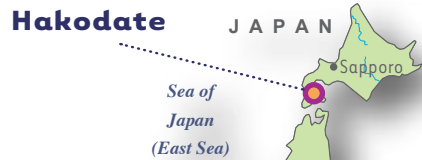
GREEN MAP®  
ATLAS

A project of the **Green Map System**: promoting sustainability and citizen action in communities around the world through locally created maps of the natural and cultural environment



# Introduction

Hakodate City · Hokkaido · Japan  
 Hakodate Slow Map  
 www.slowmap.org



Detail of the Hakodate Slow Map (2003)



Out of an interest in using information design to revitalize local communities, designer Yasushi Watanabe initiated an online group in 2000 to discuss possible activities. Making a Green Map seemed like it would be a useful way for Hakodate citizens to connect with their community, and open the way for developing many new projects in the process. Therefore, we set up a project team dedicated to creating Hakodate's Green Map.

We thought mapmaking would provide those concerned about community redevelopment with a good opportunity to share their knowledge and work together. Hakodate has many historic buildings, having had relatively early contact with foreign cultures during Japan's era of modernization. However, as residents have moved away from the city center, community ties have been lost. While there were many civic groups conducting ecological, community design and social welfare activities, they were not networked.

It took some time to organize people to create the Green Map. In 2002, the prefecture agreed to subsidize the project, and we began actual work on the map. We intended it to be used by citizens, tourists and people interested or engaged in community building, with the highest priority placed on citizens in terms of naming and designing the map.

## Map Data

- Language: Japanese
- Number of Map Editions: 1
- Published Map Formats: Print, Website
- Number of Sites Charted: 200
- Number of Global Icons Used: 53



Hakodate's four local icons

# Mapmaking

Hakodate City · Hokkaido · Japan  
Hakodate Slow Map  
www.slowmap.org



5,000 maps printed

Inspired by Green Map Japan's meeting in July 2002, we held our first workshop in Hakodate to display Green Maps to the public and begin data collection. In early 2003 we organized and edited the data, and designed the Green Map for print. We printed 5,000 copies, placing them at the Hakodate Tourist Information Center, museums, cafés and a community radio station. In March 2003 we launched the website [www.slowmap.org](http://www.slowmap.org) as Hakodate Green Map Version 1.0.

We use the term "slow" to make an impression on citizens and tourists. The worldwide "slow food" movement has focused many people on slower-paced living — and Hakodate provides a good environment for this. The process of mapmaking itself was intentionally slow, as we involved many people at different stages.

We tried to give the map the warmth of a children's picture book with a hand-drawn logo and bright colors. The character of Hakodate's old sector is illustrated



(left to right)  
**Hakodate Slow Map** printed edition (2003)  
Hakodate Slow Map homepage (2003)  
Drawing inspiration from other Green Maps at a "slow" workshop



afresh through the map. We included natural places such as Mt. Hakodate — rich in biodiversity — and a wildlife sanctuary for migratory birds. Also featured are revitalized buildings in the historic district. A leader in this trend, Hakodate began as early as the 1960s to concentrate on the effective use of local resources.

To announce the publication of the Green Map both in print and on our website, we invited citizens to a launch workshop. Participants discussed ways to use the map and offered critiques for future versions. Our next edition, Version 2.0, is planned for publication as a Japanese-language website in 2004.

## Technical Data

### Software:

Adobe Illustrator  
Adobe Photoshop  
Macromedia Flash MX  
Macromedia Dreamweaver  
Microsoft Excel

### Hardware:

Macintosh and PC workstations  
Digital camera  
Instant camera

### Paper:

Recycled paper with soy-based ink

### Map Structure:

Folding  
· A2 (59.4 X 42 cm / 23.4 X 16.5 in),  
folded into CD jacket size  
· Website  
Naview, Flash-based map information  
system for PC users

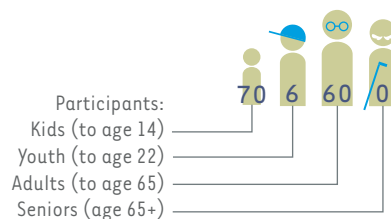


# Teamwork

Hakodate City · Hokkaido · Japan  
Hakodate Slow Map  
www.slowmap.org



Partners, Advisors and Board members: 6



Core members of the project included a planner, publishing consultant, website design director, event producer/desktop publishing executive and a graphic designer. Initially, all knew Yasushi Watanabe, the primary mapmaker. However, we undertook a participatory design approach, and many others took part in workshops held at different stages of the mapmaking process. To promote the workshop, we listed it in the local newspaper, gave out fliers, and made use of our group's mailing list.

Participants ranged from primary schoolchildren to senior citizens in their 60s, and they included university students, professors, city employees, NGO staff members and volunteers. Although no environmental experts were involved, we did obtain information from city environmental officers and active citizens. In conducting the fieldwork and conceptualizing this map, people in Hakodate have developed a fresh eye for their own town.

Among the contributors was a group of 70 third grade pupils in a primary school class studying pictograms. In the process of designing local icons, we approached them to help us create an icon for "Hot Spa and Public Bath House." From sketches drawn by the children, core members extracted common elements and designed the icon. University students majoring in information design also volunteered to help us sort the collected data and check the draft map.

Enjoying a Slow >>  
Map walking tour  
of Hakodate held  
in August 2003



<< Making friends and  
exploring the city during  
fieldwork for the Slow Map



Schoolchildren helped design new icons for the map by sketching their ideas



Adults and children work together to review sites during a Slow Map workshop

# Economics

Hakodate City · Hokkaido · Japan  
**Hakodate Slow Map**  
[www.slowmap.org](http://www.slowmap.org)

Our project was selected for the Hokkaido Prefecture Small Office/Home Office (SOHO) Support Scheme in 2002, and this subsidy covered half of the project expense. For the rest, we successfully obtained funding from a private foundation in Hokkaido and a council of local multimedia corporations. The budget for the project included funds for both the printed map and website, although we spent more on the print version. We paid fees to a graphic designer and website system engineer. The four core members, primary school contributors and university students were not paid.

In order to make new versions of Hakodate's Green Map, we need to prepare a plan for continued activities as well as fundraising. We are exploring possible sources of governmental and private financial support. Fundraising for the printed version (to be published as a booklet) is a headache; however, prospects for the upgraded version of our website are bright.



Approximately **14,400** website visitors per year



(upper, lower) Hakodate Slow Map web homepage  
 Detail of Hakodate's interactive Slow Map with pop-up features



Green Map Icons, as shown on Hakodate's Slow Map. Below, youth designing new local icons



These icons are the common currency of all Green Maps

## Economic Data

**Type of Organization:** Non-profit design network

**Support:**  
 Grants

**Major Project Supporters:**  
 Hakodate Multimedia Promotion Council  
 Hokkaido Regional Promotion Organization  
 Hokkaido Prefectural Government

**Number of Paid or Volunteer Jobs Created:** 2

**Cost of Map:** Free

**Spin Off Projects:** Tours, magazine column, digital photo collage, workshops

# Assessment

Hakodate City · Hokkaido · Japan  
Hakodate Slow Map  
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(left to right)  
An article in the *Hokkaido Shimbun* (March 03) announced the completion of the printed map. An article in the *Asahi newspaper* (October 02) reported on the first workshop



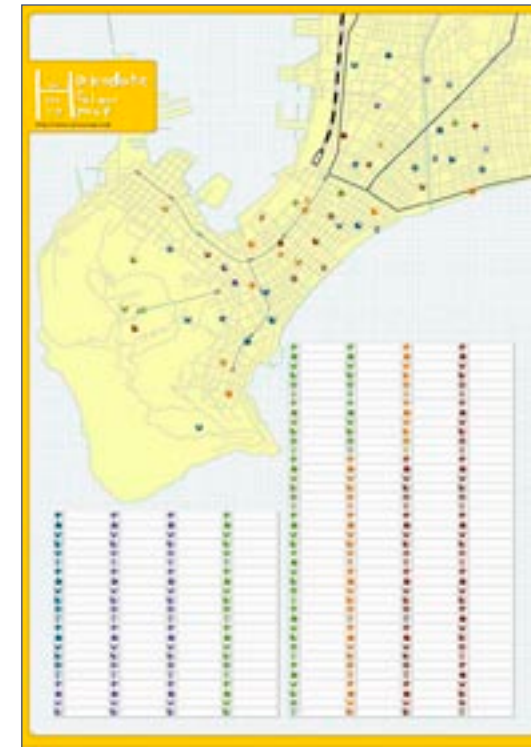
The Green Map released in 2003 on the website is a trial version. It covers only the historic district of Hakodate, the original core of the city, which is visited by five million tourists a year. NaviView, an easy kind of GIS, is the mapping system used for the website.

From the beginning, we planned to develop a system through which users' contributions would be reflected on the Hakodate Slow Map website in real time. However, budgetary and technical constraints prevented us from realizing this concept on the initial website. Insufficient information and shortcomings in data structure made usability difficult for this version.

However, we have been working to solve these problems, and should be able to implement the system in early 2004. The new Slow Map website will be updated by citizens' and tourists' contributions, enabling inputs from PCs and mobile phones with a digital camera. Before long, a real "Map in Progress" will emerge. The

core team plus volunteers well versed in local culture and environment will edit data contributed by the public through the "Recommendation" page. We also plan to link points on the map with other related websites. For non-computer users, we will organize more rounds of fieldwork. These approaches will bring us closer to our purpose — to involve people in sharing their discoveries with others, and to build up the data.

Our map story was taken up by three local newspapers, two free newspapers, one industrial paper, two radio stations and two TV stations. It was also introduced in a few computer magazines.



(upper, lower) Information to be included on the Slow Map was selected and edited on a draft map. Example of design exploration for the map



## Conclusion

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While following the Green Map System principles, the Hakodate Green Map added the additional concept of “slowness,” encouraging people to walk and discover the charms and hidden treasures of this historic city. We employed the term “slow” to express the character of the city, and consciously used the mapmaking process as an interface to connect many people.

Response from the public has generally been more favorable than expected. Workshop participants who collected data said that they had discovered Hakodate anew, and users were pleased with the different perspective on Hakodate offered by the map.

**“While looking at the Slow Map, I feel as if I can hear voices of many people from various spots on the map.”**

—Miki Aota, housewife, Hakodate

**“One year has passed since I moved to Hakodate. I tend to forget the slow and favorable atmosphere that I first found here.”**

**“I can add my discoveries onto the map, or create a map of my own. I will buy a plain map of my neighborhood, go out for a walk and fill it in.”**


— Hiroshi Masuyama, media producer, Tokyo

**With this map I feel like taking a leisurely walk around the city.”**


—Mihoko Nakai, broadcaster, NHK Hakodate

We plan to expand our activities into a partnership to revitalize the local economy and rehabilitate historic elements of the city. The core team from Hakodate Slow Map will collaborate with a construction consulting company and the municipal office on redeveloping Hakodate to make the most of the city’s historic assets.



 Panoramic view of Hakodate City from the top of Mt. Hakodate. Tourists from all over Japan come to see the view at night



 This cemetery for foreign residents, located at the foot of Mt. Hakodate, is a famous spot to see the sunset on a clear day



 Street cars, an ecologically efficient mode of travel, connect the major downtown areas



<< This hundred year old building, once a department store and city office, will be renovated for non-profit offices and community group use



Hakodate Slow Map (2003)



At this site, salted cuttlefish are processed in barrels using a traditional method

## Credits

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<< A flea market held several times a year helps make reuse more fashionable. Antique brick storehouses are in the background



## Want This Map?

email: [info@slowmap.org](mailto:info@slowmap.org)  
or visit the online store at  
[www.greenatlas.org](http://www.greenatlas.org)

[www.greenmap.org](http://www.greenmap.org) is your global link to every local Green Map project, multilingual Icon posters, an invitation to participate, and more.



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