



ENVISIONING A SUSTAINABLE BOSTON Workshop Description

What? A workshop to explore a shared vision of Boston's future

Who? A select and diverse group from the Boston area working on a broad range of sustainability issues

When? Thursday, June 2, 2005; 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Where? Tellus Institute, 11 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116

Why? Many individuals and organizations in the Boston area, troubled by trends of rising social inequality and environmental degradation, are working to create a just and sustainable future. In this era of rapid globalization and increasing interconnectedness, these actors recognize that their local actions have global impacts just as global conditions have local consequences. Yet, even as activity proliferates, many of us lack a sense of how our work forms part of a common project. To overcome this fragmentation, we need a shared vision of an alternative, appealing future.

Tellus Institute, a 25-year-old non-profit dedicated to global sustainability and transformational change, has initiated a visioning process for the future of the Boston region based on the values of sustainability, pluralism, justice, and global responsibility. Working with other stakeholders, we hope to create an inspiring vision that will motivate positive change toward such an alternative future.

How? The focal point of the workshop will be a set of narrative and quantitative scenarios that Tellus is developing to illustrate possible long-term futures for the Boston region. Through a variety of indicators related to land use, natural resource use, housing, transportation, environmental quality, health and equity, the scenarios help us explore alternative futures ranging from business-as-usual to sustainability and global responsibility. We hope workshop participants will help us answer such questions as:

- Would a coherent vision be useful in moving toward a just and sustainable Boston in an equitable world?
- Are the scenarios consistent with your own visions for the Boston area?
- How might we begin to realize such a vision?

We will incorporate feedback from workshop participants into further development of the scenarios. Once refined, the scenarios will be shared with the MetroFuture regional planning process (www.metrofuture.org), an ongoing effort coordinated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to plan for the long-term future of the 101 communities in the region. In addition, we hope the scenarios will serve as inspiration for continued activity and collaboration among participants in the workshop and the wider Boston community as we all work to create a just and sustainable future.