



THE DIVERSITY NETWORK PROJECT

November 2002

To the Reader:

In December 1999, the Diversity Network Project released *Common Ground: Building Collaborations for Sustainable Communities in the San Francisco Bay Area*. The purpose of the report was to tap the rich vein of multi-issue coalition work taking place among urban environmental, environmental justice, and community development organizations in the region. Through interviews with coalition and organizational leaders, members of the Diversity Network Project hoped to find answers to key questions that could inform future collaborative work:

- ❖ Who are these groups and what issues bring them together?
- ❖ What lessons have leaders in the community learned about building effective coalitions?
- ❖ What are the emerging trends and issues shaping the way in which people are working across these different fields?

While some names and faces may have changed in the three years since the report was released, there continues to be strong interest in building sustainable communities in the Bay Area. But the opportunities and challenges that have arisen in recent times—including evolving or devolving government and corporate policies, the economic downturn, and shifting public priorities—call for an increased emphasis on coordination, collaboration, and concentration. Now more than ever, non-profit organizations, community groups, and leaders across movements must work together in order to ensure the future viability of communities and the environment.

It is timely, therefore, to re-release *Common Ground* as a reminder of the lessons that have already been learned through coalition work in the Bay Area. Current leaders can build upon the insights contained in this report to advance and enhance on-going efforts toward sustainable communities.

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