



**43rd INTERNATIONAL ISoCaRP CONGRESS
KEYNOTE SPEECH – OPENING DAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2007
ANTWERP, Belgium**



**KEYNOTE SPEECH
WENDY SARKISSIAN**

Dr Wendy Sarkissian is passionate about our future: the future of work, of housing, of communities and of citizen participation. She is committed to finding spirited ways to nurture and support an engaged citizenry. Her successful career as consultant and academic has provided firsthand knowledge of many contexts, from developers' boardrooms to low-income housing estates.

A qualified educator, she holds a Masters of Arts in literature, a Master of Town Planning and a PhD in environmental ethics. She has taught widely in schools of planning, landscape architecture and architecture, including positions at the University of British Columbia, the University of South Australia and the University of California at Berkeley. Building a career in Australia as a social planning consultant when there was no such discipline, she has pioneered innovative planning and development approaches in an astonishing variety of contexts. This work has earned her forty professional awards.

Wendy has worked with senior managers and advisors to government departments and private enterprise, primarily in the urban, community, housing and development sectors. She is a Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia and a Member of the International Board of Global Urban Development. She has served on Boards in South Australia and Queensland and is the author of several award-winning books on housing and community engagement.

She is currently writing a book entitled *Kitchen Table Sustainability*, which joins the sustainability discourse with wider discourses on community engagement, empowerment and community capacity building, to which she has contributed for nearly forty years.

She lives with her husband in an intentional ecological community in northern New South Wales, Australia.



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***Kitchen Table Sustainability:
Tested recipes for bringing the sustainability debate down to Earth***

**Wendy Sarkissian PhD
Australia**

A critical step in creating a sustainable society is the adoption of a participatory, community-driven approach. That's what *Kitchen Table Sustainability (KTS)* is all about. It aims to open the door so that the theory and practice of sustainability can enter the experience of the "everyday" and be released from the exclusive provinces of experts: planners, bureaucrats, scientists, intergovernmental panels, roundtables, cabinet tables and board tables. The alarming popular response in the UK to the 2007 documentary, *The Great Global Warming Swindle*, confirms that top-down approaches close the door to ordinary people, who, sitting at their kitchen tables, feel unable to have the informed conversations about sustaining our futures that every household needs to have. Proposing the **GENUINE** model for participatory community education, development and engagement, this presentation provides conceptual and practical tools for those working for and with communities who want to build a knowledgeable and truly sustainable society.