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This paper critically assesses a series of scenario planning exercises in the Washington Metropolitan region and the State of Maryland within a broad and evolving framework of participatory planning. Reality Check, as the exercises were called, were a daylong set of activities using tools that encouraged stakeholder participation to develop scenarios focused on long-term regional sustainability. The paper draws upon planning theory, participant reactions, media reports, post-exercise outcomes and author's experiences of shaping the process. It illustrates how the model was adapted to multiple scales and contexts, and variations in desired technical complexity. The paper concludes that such processes have...

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