

# The 30 Days Challenge

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“If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change.  
As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him...  
We need not wait to see what others do.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

*What would a sustainable society look like?* This course is about trying to answer this question - or even better, trying to create *new* answers to this wicked question, collectively and creatively. But everything can start small, and a sustainable society can start from yourself.

*How do you want to live? What is a ‘sustainable’ life for you? Is a ‘good’ life and a ‘sustainable’ life conflicting for you, or do both go hand in hand – a life cannot be fulfilling and rich if not in harmony with nature and your surrounding environment?*

Push yourself to think about these questions. It is easy to criticize others. *But what about yourself?* Do *you* think your lifestyle is ‘sustainable’? It is challenging to reflect on yourself, and to *change* something in your daily-routine life. That is the challenge we pose to you. Push yourself out of your comfort zone. Choose something challenging, and “[Try it for 30 days](#)” (TED Talk by Matt Cutts).

## The Assignment

Choose something you will *change* in your daily life that contributes to a ‘sustainable’ lifestyle or society, according to you. Do it for 30 days. At the end of the 30 days, we will have a seminar to share your experiences, and thus we ask for you to visualize the outcome and your experience in a **creative way** (e.g. video, poster, photolog, slideshow, sculpture, an art piece, etc.). Moreover, you are to submit a written reflection.

This is an individual assignment. However, you could do things together with your course-mates or (even better) your friends outside the course, if you think your challenge would work better that way. *However, the final submission remains individual.*

We want this assignment to be interesting for all students and we think that sharing the experience will only benefit the challenge and provide ice-breaking material. Maybe you are new to Uppsala and have already made many changes to your lifestyle that has had both positive and negative effects. This is a chance for you to push yourself outside of your comfort zone and we encourage students to be creative, not only in their challenge, but also in the final submission.

The 30DC will start **September 14<sup>th</sup>**, after the Kick-off during Workshop 1 the day before, and it will end **October 14<sup>th</sup>**, for you to be able to present your work during Seminar 1.

There will be an exhibition of the creative outcomes of your 30DC during the Sustainability Winter Festival, Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, organized by a few of you (see **Student-led Session Instructions**), but more information will come during the course.



## Inspiration for 30 Day Challenges

To get your creative juices flowing, we've put our heads together and come up with a couple of examples that would fall within the boundaries set by this assignment.

- Change your diet for 30 days. Even if you are a carnivore, herbivore or omnivore, what you eat has a huge impact on our lives and on our environment, as well as economic and social impacts.
- Create no waste. (See *Zero Waste Home* in *Course Reader*)
- Avoid the use of certain materials, such as plastic or palm oil. Force yourself to read all the labels of all products, food, clothes, cosmetics, etc. and see how this will challenge you.
- Reduce your water usage. Check with one of the online monitors how big your water footprint is. Set a specific goal for yourself to reduce your water footprint and see which changes you need to implement.
- Other ideas for inspiration: don't shop at all, write one letter a day to a politician or a company, stop taking fossil-fueled transportation, etc.

Please note that this assignment is focused on a *personal behavioral change*, so *try to challenge yourself in your everyday life*. The purpose of this assignment is for you to act and to focus on the process. The purpose is not to write a detailed analysis of a specific situation. For example researching a specific sustainability challenge is not a suitable 30 Day Challenge.

## 'Q&A a day' and monitoring tools

The **Q&A a day** had been designed for you to think about your own everyday life but also to measure some of these behaviors to be able to track your changes and its impact. We included a few of these monitoring tools in the **Q&A a day**, but here you will find the link to other tools:

- Ecological footprint calculators:
  - <http://www.earthday.org/footprint-calculator>
  - [http://wwf.panda.org/how\\_you\\_can\\_help/live\\_green/footprint\\_calculator/](http://wwf.panda.org/how_you_can_help/live_green/footprint_calculator/)
    - Sweden: <http://www.wwf.se/vart-arbete/ekologiska-fotavtryck/1127697-ekologiska-fotavtryck>
- Water footprint calculator: <http://waterfootprint.org/en/water-footprint/>
- Made in a Free World's slavery calculator: <http://slaveryfootprint.org/>
- Carbon Footprint calculator: <http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>

## Submissions requirements

1. Submit a brief **Project Plan** (no more than 200 words) on Studentportalen by **Monday, the Friday, 9th of September 17:00h**, and bring a copy to the **Workshop 1** together with your **completed Q&A a day**.

Include what your 30 Day Challenge is:

- a. What will you do for your 30 Day Challenge? How are you going to be able to make this change?
  - b. Why do you need to make this change? Why do you think this will contribute to a sustainable lifestyle or society? Include briefly what you understand as sustainability (a definition in your own words).
  - c. Why do you think this would be challenging for you (or not)?
  - d. How do you plan to document your progress?
2. Submit your **Creative outcome** with a short explanation (no more than 200 words) on Studentportalen by **Monday, the 17<sup>th</sup> of October at 17.00h** and bring it to **Seminar I** (on Tuesday, the 18<sup>th</sup> of October) to present it during the class.

Your submission must be a creative contribution, which reflects upon your challenge and behavioral change. In case your creative contribution is a physical object, please submit a picture or pictures on Studentportalen and bring your object to Seminar I. Please write a maximum of 200 words to clarify your contribution and explain your experience. (Keep your creative outcome to present in December. See 4)

3. Submit your **Final reflection about the 30DC** (no more than 500 words) on Studentportalen by **Monday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of October at 17:00h**.

Your final submission is a personal reflection about your own experience with your 30 day challenge and the relation to sustainability. Use a minimum of **2 general references** in your reflection. Include:

- a. Critically reflect on the 30 day experience
  - i. Do you feel that you have altered your behavior/habit?
  - ii. Was it an easy change to make?
  - iii. Will you return to your old ways, and if so why (or why not)?
  - iv. Will you encourage others to make a similar change/challenge?
- v. Do you think a good life is compatible with a sustainable life? How?
- b. How can it be done on a larger scale?
  - i. What would be the potential impacts to society and sustainability?
  - ii. What are the constraints and barriers to its implementation (consider different levels: structural, personal, cultural, etc.)
  - iii. Imagine that... You are the president (or prime minister) of the day. How would you make society to include/benefit from your experience with the 30DC? Create 1 law to make your citizens have a more sustainable life. Describe the law and what impact that could have. How would the citizens react?

4. You will have to present your 30-Day Challenge at the CEMUS Festival on **Thursday, Dec 15<sup>th</sup>**, so save the date (more information will be provided)

Good luck with the challenge ahead of you!

Sachiko & Alejandro