

Group Project

Back from the Future We Want

– Part II: Visions –

*As ecological, economic, and social crises deepen,
we desperately need new visions of a sustainable and desirable world.
- Robert Costanza and Ida Kubiszewski*

What is *The Future We Want*?

Often, we talk about 'sustainable futures' as avoiding crises. We are used to talking about a future that we *don't* want. Yet criticizing the current pathway we are heading is not enough to change the direction. What is more, society calls for a radical change in our imagination, for different visions of our society and our goals. That is why we need to start talking about the future we want. What could a sustainable future look like? Can you see it clearly you can almost touch it? Is it an attractive vision that others would be convinced with?

Depending on what we do today, there is a different tomorrow.

Creating a sustainable and desirable vision is the first step to get to a different world, so...

... **What is The Future You Want?**

Aims for Part II

For the second part of this project, each group will envision and describe a 'sustainable and desirable future' in the year 2056 in the region, especially elaborating on your group's topic.

Aims:

- To have a discussion about what kind of society and future is desirable for you, and for others
- To imagine different societies and futures than what is given

The aim and structure of the assignment is based on the belief that a radical change in our imagination is required in order to achieve the changes in the world needed for a sustainable present and future. The discussion of 'where we want to go' as a society (i.e. future visions) is often missing. Yet this is a key element in sustainability, as well as in true democracy in order to uncover possibilities in the present.

The challenge for you is to fully exercise your imagination and creativity, and *describe specifically* what kind of future would be a world worth living. *Try to articulate a future vision* that you think would be convincing for many people. *Write in language that is engaging*, like you had a 'sneak peek' to that future using a time machine. Agreeing on a future vision in your group may also be challenging, but use that as a learning process of finding common ground and creating a coherent societal vision that ties your ideas together.

- **Related readings and inspirations:**
 - Readings for Workshop 2 (Nov 8th, Whose futures?)
 - Readings for Workshop 3 (Nov 15th, Back from the future we want)
 - Porritt, J. (2013) *The World We Made*.

Structure

What is the 'sustainable and desirable future' in year 2056 in Managua to you?

- **Introduction and Vision of the future region of year 2056 (500-800 words)**

Use the outcomes from Workshop 2 (Nov 8th) to write the Introduction collectively as a group and explain why you think it is a part of your desirable future. Include:

- The leading values of Managua in 2056, according to your group
- How everyday life looks like in Managua 2056 for different people

Portray the holistic view of the future region. Convince the reader why your group has decided that this is your desirable society. The uses of visuals are encouraged (images, drawings, etc.) and be sure to explain briefly about what it is. Discuss your understanding of 'sustainability' in this region, and how this is translated into your vision.

- **Specific descriptions on the desirable future vision of the group's focus topic (i.e. Food, Energy, etc.) (1200-1500 words)**

Once you have an overview of a sustainable and desirable future in Managua 2056, explain how it looks for your group's specific topic. Use the following questions as a guide:

- What does your Vision mean for your group's topic field? What are the implications of the values for your topic field?
- How does daily life look like in relation to your topic field? Submit visuals and drawings from your group, inspired by your discussions and ideas from Workshop 2
- What are key characteristics and features in your topic? What are you/they proud about in the Managua society in 2056? What challenges have solved by year 2056?

Motivate and discuss why you feel that the future you describe is desirable, as well as how it is sustainable. Take into account dimensions of social, economic and environmental sustainability, and different stakeholders and actors in the region. Remember that different actors have different perspectives, and that the way we select and explain *what is important* have implications.

Describe in engaging language.

Keep in mind...

When you are brainstorming creatively about the future you want, try not to get your imagination restrained by how the region is *in the present* or how it is *likely to be* in the future. This assignment is an exercise to think about how 'the sustainable future you want' looks like and to discuss why this is important. It is of course useful to know about the current society, but don't let that restrict your ideas and ideals on how the society could be in the future. Imagine that you are living in Managua in year 2056, and ask yourself what kind of world you would like to live in.

At the same time, use the background information you have gained through your paper in Part 1 to help your imagination root back into reality.



Formal Requirements

- Have a front page including title of this assignment (“Back from the Future We Want” Part II: Visions), a subtitle including the region, the group’s topic, name of course, date and names of group members.
- Include visual aids (pictures, images, illustrations, etc.). Make a caption with a title and short description under each image. Remember to clearly state your source if you use someone else’s image.
- The whole group project (all parts) will be assessed based on the general grading criteria, available on the Course Website and Studentportalen.
- Name the file in the following way: topic2 (example: food2.doc)
- Upload one file as a group on the Hand-In area titled *Group Project Part 2* on Studentportalen. Only one person in your group needs to upload it.
- **Deadline: Monday, November 14, at 17:00h.**

References

- Use at least **6 different references** of your choice. You may of course reference the same book or article several times, but this will only count as one reference. Course readers and course books could be used for inspirations and references, but you are free to use other sources as well.
- To ensure the flow of the creative and engaging character of the essay, we ask you to use **Endnotes and Bibliography: Chicago citation style**. All notes should be compiled at the end of the essay, followed by a bibliography. The bibliography is a full list of sources cited in the text, sources consulted in preparing a paper and other sources thought to be of interest to the reader. It is ordered alphabetically according to the family name of the first-listed author.

For detailed structure of the citations style, please see:

<http://politics.ucsc.edu/undergraduate/chicago%20style%20guide.pdf>

Further Resources

Sustainia (2015) Cities 100. Available at: <http://www.sustainia.me/cities>

Good luck,

Sachiko and Alejandro