

Group Project

Back from the Future We Want

– Part III: Backcasting –

How do we get *Back from the Future We Want*?

Through Part I and Part II, you have researched background information of the region and explored your vision of a sustainable and desirable future for Managua 2056. Now it is time to think how we can get there.

We need imagination to create a vision of the future we want but we also need to have an agenda, an action plan for different actors in order to make our vision real. And in this process, we need to identify and analyse the barriers and challenges, and also the drivers and opportunities along the way.

Aims for Part III

For the third part of this project we are asking each group to explain and analyse what steps are needed to achieve the vision of a sustainable and desirable Managua for your topic field in 2056.

Aims:

- To construct steps and discuss what we could do at societal, sectorial, and individual levels in order to reach sustainable futures, using the visions that you have collectively formed
- To experience a specific future thinking method that you could apply in your future work to approach sustainability in different contexts and scales (e.g. organization, region, etc.)
- To empower yourself that things can actually change

This task requires a combination of analytical and creative skills. It will demand you to be imaginative and innovative to formulate the steps to be taken in the future, based on the information you have today and the visions you have agreed on. The backcasting analysis is to be concluded with a proposal for the present society. This will involve to face the challenges of today, and to suggest concrete actions to lead the region in a sustainable way. Finally, we ask you to summarize your outcome in a creative format.

We hope that this whole process is fun, challenging, and moreover useful in training your skills to become the innovators and creators of a sustainable future.

Guidelines for Backcasting Analysis

Follow these steps in your group together in order to create the paper for submission. It won't make sense if you try to split these steps up for different people to work on.

Note that at the end of the project, we will ask you to submit a short Individual Reflection that includes reflecting upon the group processes and peer assessment of the different member's contributions.

Step 1: Brainstorm necessary changes, drivers, and barriers

- What structural, institutional and regulatory changes are necessary for achieving the future vision of your topic?
...cultural and behavioural changes?
...technological changes?
- What are potential risks and challenges of those changes?
- What could be drivers for achieving your vision? ... barriers? ...conditions?



Step 2: Form Action Points

Using results of Step 1, form action points considering **who** will need to do **what**, and **when** it would need to happen to reach your topic's vision. Create a **timeline** between 2016-2056.

- Define milestones for the identified technological, cultural and structural changes when looking back from the vision. By which specific period do the specific changes need to happen (during 2016-2056)?
- Refer also to the Agenda 2030 and the action plans for achieving the targets, using the connections you made to the Sustainable Development Goals in Part 1
- What could different actors groups (research, government, companies, civil society, public interest) do and what should be on the action agenda?
- Which activities can be started now and who should do them?
- How are your artefacts from Part II included in this timeline?

Read through the Action Points and reflect. If society achieves everything on the action points and changes you suggest, will it reach the vision you formulated? Try to include what you may have missed.

Step 3: Develop a Proposal for today

Consider the background knowledge you have from Part 1 and the previous steps above, and develop a proposal that we could send and present to the actors of Managua to start implementing today.

Think about the role of the actors and the barriers/challenges that they face today in your topic, and suggest concrete actions that is convincing for the different groups. Include, at least, a proposal of actions for each of the following groups:

- Civil Society (individuals, organizations, academia, etc.)
- Governments (local, regional and national)
- Corporate and Industry

Step 4: Creative Presentation: *Back from the Managua We Want*

Present your outcome of the steps above in a creative format. Managua is in international news in 2056. The world wants to know why Managua was able to transition to a sustainable society in 40 years. How did they make it? Who did what in order to make such a radical change?

Create a piece reflecting why Managua was able to reach the vision you elaborated in Part 2. Incorporate your answers to the guiding questions from the above Steps in this narrative, that uses an engaging communicative format. This could be in the form of a newspaper article, video, podcast, blog post, etc. See Further Resources at the end of this document for inspirations. This could also serve as a base of your presentation on December 6th!

Structure of Submission

Your topic's 1-minute speech and the Common Vision of Managua'56 (200-500 words)

Include the Common Vision for Managua 2056 that was agreed on during Workshop 3 (Nov 15) and rewrite a version of your 1-minute speech for your topic based on this Common Vision.

Transition Plan and Proposal (2000-2500 words)

After following the steps above, create a coherent paper that includes the outcomes of your Backcasting Analysis. Include all the answers to the guiding questions, but make sure that it has a natural flow of an essay (narrative), rather than being it Q&A style. After mapping out the Transition Plan until 2056, conclude with the Action Proposal for today. The structure of the essay is up to your group to find a communicative way. Visual aids are encouraged.

Creative Summary (500-800 words and/or maximum 5 minutes video)

Submit your creative piece (article, blog post, video, podcast, etc.) as a separate file or include the link in your paper.

Formal Requirements

- Have a front page including title of this assignment (“Back from the Future We Want” Part III: Backcasting), 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.
- Use the first word of your topic to name the file: topic3 (example: food3.doc)
- Upload one file as a group on the Hand-In area titled *Group Project Part 3* on Studentportalen. Only one person in your group needs to upload it.
- **Deadline: Thursday, December 1st, at 17:00h.**

References

- Use at least **6 different references** of your choice. These could be in-text references as you normally do, **or** you could just list the resources that you used to research or get inspirations from. 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

On Backcasting

- Video: Sustainability plan: How might Einstein solve our problems? (backcasting) (5min11): <http://bit.ly/1Qfv1KA>
- Natural Step, ‘What is backcasting?’ <http://www.thenaturalstep.org/sustainability/backcasting/>
- The Guidelines in this paper are modified from Quist, J., Rammelt, C., Overschie, M., & de Werk, G. (2006). Backcasting for sustainability in engineering education: the case of Delft University of Technology. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 14(9–11), 868–876.

Creative Pieces

- A fun video of the future – Ali’s fair at the fair (1938) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LAFqAbrPKxQ>
- Porritt, J. (2013). *The World We Made*. London: Phaidon Press. (Videos in Lakin Anderson’s slides)
- Oreskes, N. & Conway, E.M. (2014) *The Collapse of the Western Civilization: A View from the Future*