

Group Project

Back from the Future We Want

– Part II: History and Transition
&
Part III: Recommendations –

Following Part I: Visions, the latter part of this group project consists of two further parts: **Part II: History & Transition** and **Part III: Recommendations**.

The aim of these parts is for you to create a *transition strategy* for your group's chosen region to become 'sustainable' as you envisioned it in *Part I*. We ask you to write this in the format of explaining the "*history*" of what happened in the region between 2015 and 2100. Furthermore, coming from the future perspective, offer a list of concrete *recommendations* ready to be applied in the region today to move in the direction to the sustainable and desirable future that you have envisioned.

This task requires a combination of creative, communicative, and analytical 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. At the same time, it will require careful examination of the present region to base your narrative on, using scientific and academic sources as references. Finally, the assignment is to be concluded with concrete recommendations for the present society. This will involve to face the challenges of today, and to suggest the first concrete actions that you will conduct now to set the region in the right direction.

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.

Good luck!
Sachiko and Alejandro

Inspirations and Resources

- Oreskes, N. & Conway, E.M. (2014) *The Collapse of the Western Civilization: A View from the Future*.
- Porritt, J. (2013) *The World We Made*.
- Video: Sustainability plan: How might Einstein solve our problems? (backcasting) (5min11): <http://bit.ly/1QfvIKA>
- Sustainable Development Goals - 17 Goals Study Edition (<http://bit.ly/1Htledb>)
- IPCC Predictions and Scenarios
- National and local planning strategy documents of your group's chosen region (e.g. *Uppsala 2030*)

Part II: History & Transition (3500 to 4000 words)

In *Part I*, you have defined and described in detail the visions and goals of how you want the region to be in year 2100. The next question is: how do we get there?

The aim of *Part II* is for you to create a *transition strategy* for your group's chosen region to reach the sustainable and desirable society as you have defined and described in *Part I*.

The structure of this entire project (*Part I – III*) is based on a method called Backcasting. Rather than starting from analysing the present and then thinking of the future based on the present, backcasting is a framework to define a goal first, and then to form a transition strategy starting from the goal back to the present situation. (See video here: <http://bit.ly/1QfvIKA>)

Use the guidelines on the next page to deepen your understanding of the present region, and to think of the necessary steps to be taken between 2015 and 2100 to fill in the gap between the current and the future vision.

Once you have gotten an idea of the necessary steps and mid-term goals at certain periods, we ask you to tell it as a story from the future. In similar fashion to the style of how *The Collapse of the Western Civilization* is written, **write a 'historical analysis' from the perspective of a historian**. What happened in between now and then? What events triggered the society to change? Who were the crucial actors? When did these different events, actions and changes happen?

We ask you to take this fictional format in order to be even more illustrative and communicative about your transition strategy. So be creative, but also imagine presenting it to the decision makers and actors in this region. Put emphasis on how you propose that change and transition can happen.

Structure

a. Timeline of events between 2015 and 2100:

Formulate a Timeline with key events that contributed in transitioning to the sustainable society.

Use the guideline on the next page to start this process. An example of a timeline is presented in the book *The World We Made* (available at CEMUS library and pdf here: <http://bit.ly/1PmhzWG>). Of course, the timeline will need an overarching perspective relating to all the topics you have been working with during *Part I*. We recommend for you to sit together and brainstorm what events are relevant for all topics to create the timeline (e.g. international meetings, such as United Nation's Meetings, Conference of Parties, G-20, IPCC, etc.), and to map out what needs to happen in order to reach your goal society (i.e. mid-term goals, specific actions, triggers for change).

Include a short text to present and explain the timeline (Minimum 200 words).

b. "Historical Analysis" – The story of the transition:

Start your "Historical Analysis" in 2015. Include a short description of the situation in 2015 about the different topics you have been envisioning in *Part I*.

The structure of this section is up to your group to decide. You can focus on the topic division in *Part I* (e.g. food, energy, etc.), and develop the history of transition in each theme (See *The World We Made* for an example). Alternatively, you can decide to adopt a more holistic and organic structure using different headings (like in *Collapse of the Western Civilization*). In any case, use headings and write the name of the members that wrote the section.

While in the Timeline we suggest you to work together, for this analysis you can work separately but be aware of the dates in your Timeline and how one event might affect more than one topic, etc.



Base your story of transition on scientific and academic sources and references them, like they do in *Collapse of Western Civilization* (e.g. if you create a law in the future based on an existing case for inspiration, refer to the existing one).

Answer the question:

How did the region reach the sustainable and desirable future you envisioned? And include some descriptions on:

- Mention the achievements and shortcomings of the Sustainable Development Goals. Pick 6 goals relevant to the region and your transition, and describe how they came about. What next steps were agreed upon and taken after 2030?
- Climate Change: what actions were taken at international, national government, local/corporate/individual level? The state of the climate and adaptation situation in region.
- Research and comment on International Meetings regarding the 6 topics you have researched in the *Part I* and imagine the achievements and necessary commitments to get to your Sustainable Future in 2100.

Guidelines for the writing process

The guideline* is intended to help you identify what needs to happen between 2015 and 2100 in order to reach the future you described. These steps are written to help your **process** and the outcome of the steps could be used as the basis of your essay, but they do not necessarily need to be included explicitly in the final document.

1. Understand the gap between the present (2015) and your future vision

Create a short description of the current reality:

- Make a list of 5-6 key **sustainability challenges** facing the region: What are the key challenges that hinder the ability to reach the vision that you have illustrated?
- What **assets** does the region already have that can be used to change the region towards your vision? (e.g. current initiatives, programs, relationships, policies, structures, other actions.) Assets may take the form of existing governance or management practices, infrastructure, resources, 'green' initiatives or actions, etc.
- Who are the **key stakeholders and actors** that are affected or can influence the probability of reaching your vision?

This step may require some research of the region. These sources that you find could be used as references in your paper to give scientific and academic backing to your story.

2. Identify actions that can bridge the gap

- Brainstorm a list of potential initiatives the region could take in order to bridge the gap between the present and the future vision.
- Allow for "wild ideas," but be cautious of techno-optimism (i.e. if there is new technology, what are the risks?).
- What can happen at the national level, or at the international level to help bridge the gap?

3. Create a timeline of events (2015-2100) and the historical analysis based on the inputs and outcomes of the above 2 steps.

*Inspired from Natural Step Canada (2009) *Integrated Community Sustainability Planning Guide*

Part III: Recommendations (1000 to 1500 words)

The aim of *Part III* is to conclude this project with concrete recommendation for the present society. Make a list of recommendations for the different actors in the region. Be concise!

Think about the role of the actors and the actions they could take to face the various challenges and create a transition. Imagine that you have responsibilities in the different institutions and organizations in your region, what would you do tomorrow to gear the society to the Future You Want?

Include, at least, the following groups:

- Civil Society (individuals, organizations)
- Governments (local, regional and national)
- International arenas
- Corporate World (lobbies, companies, etc.)

Structure

a. Introduction

Summarise very briefly the main challenges that your group's chosen region will face in the future according to you *Part I & II*, and specify the areas where they should focus *today* to start moving in the direction you explained.

b. Recommendations

Address the different actors, and make a "To Do List" with your recommendations with a brief text explaining your recommendations. See format of *20 pieces of Personal Advice* by Jorgen Randers presents in the book *2052*.

Formal Requirements

Final Presentation

Tuesday December 8th, during class (17:15 – 20:00).

More information of structure of the presentation would be available later.

Submission

- Have a front page including title of this assignment ("Back from the Future We Want"), a subtitle including your region, name of course, date and names of group members.
- The use of pictures, images, illustrations, etc. that may help communicate your "historical analysis and events" to the readers is highly recommended. Remember to clearly state your source if you use someone else's image.
- Name the file in the following way: **region.continent_2_3** (example: uppsala.europe2_3.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: December 1st 23:59.**



References

- Use at least **8 different references** of your choice in total throughout the whole paper. 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_style_guide.pdf