

# Sustainability Creation

2017 & 2018

A collaboration between;

- Information Design programme, Mälardalen University.
- The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.
- The Swedish Ministry of the Environment and Energy.
- Green UMEÅ, the City of Umeå.
- 10 YFP – One Planet.





# About the project

- The project was initiated in October 2017 by Andrea Hvistendahl; lecturer at the program Spatial Design, Information Design Department in the School of Innovation, Design, and Engineering at Mälardalen University, Sweden.
- This project was part of the BA course "Creativity and Idea" for 3rd year spatial design students. 17 students took part.
- The design brief was inspired by 10 YFP program, SDG12, Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) with focus on lifestyle.
- The students worked in groups and individually.
- The design concepts and outcomes were exhibited at the Green Umeå Conference, November 2017.
- A selection of the exhibition was shown in New York at the Swedish and Norwegian Events as part of UNEP's High Level Political Forum Conference 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018.



# Student objectives

- To gain an understanding of sustainable consumption and production with the focus on lifestyle.
- To use creative methods from art and design to develop new ideas and inform a public on SCP.
- To participate in the systematic implementation of sustainable development at various levels of academia, with a focus on SCP information.



# The process

- Lecture with Eva Ahlner from Naturvårdsverket
- Creativity lecture and workshop with Leo Sandberg
- Lectures, workshops & tutoring with Andrea Hvistendahl
- Trip to Retuna Recycling Gallery
- Creative process, model building, tutoring & iteration
- Presentations
- Umeå Conference
- New York Conference



# Lecture and Workshop

Eva Ahlner is a Senior Adviser and Project Manager at The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket). Her expertise is in the field of sustainable consumption / production, Ahlner introduced students to the topic and shared practical examples of SCP. This was followed by a workshop where students explored topics for their own individual projects.





# ReTuna & ReUse



ReTuna Recycling Gallery is Sweden's, and perhaps the world's, first mall that deals with recyclable materials. Through renovation, repair and creative recycling, items are upcycled and sold. Students used recyclable products from Retuna to inspire the making of their own artefacts and for the groups' model building.

# Work-in-progress

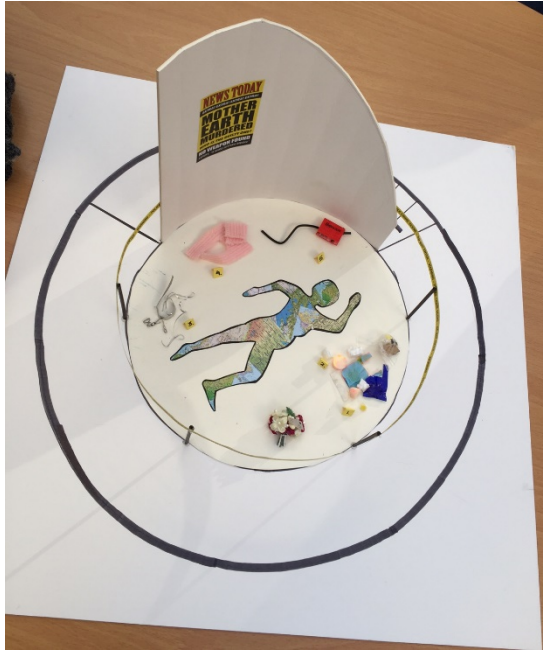
- Group projects: create models of room installations.





# Work-in-progress

- Presentations.







# Group outcomes



# Group outcomes





# Winner

- One group was crowned the winner and the model was realized in actual size at the sustainability conference in UMEÅ, Sweden.





# CON'ACT

Emma Olsson,  
Silje Vara-Mittermaier &  
Linda Svensson

“To achieve our sustainable development goals, we must work and act together for the environment: from the individual to major public companies and law enforcement. Cables lead energy, in our installation they represent humans, with all their abilities and possibilities. The white cable that goes through the construction shows how weak the impact is when we try to work alone to reach a big change. The small gap between all the black cords in the middle is an indication of how close we are to reaching each other and collectively moving towards our goal. Act Together!”





# Conference in Umeå 2017

Students presented and exhibited their work at The National Laboratory on Sustainable Lifestyles Conference in November 2017 in Umeå.

From the left: Andrea Hvistendahl, Eva Ahlner, Lizette Yago (student) & Henriette Söderberg (Swedish Consumer Agency).





# Winner

- One artifact was chosen and bought.

The piece “Off the Menu”, by Lizette Yago, was selected by a jury and handed over to the organizers of the next LAB SCP-conference 2018 the Swedish Consumer Agency . Each shape in the sculpture represents the 17 sustainability goals. The bee shows our need for the eco-services nature provides us with.



# Sustainability Creation Individual work



Title: Earth is Calling  
Name: Michaela Myhrvold Lind



Title: The Hanger  
Name: Pauline Hultström

# Sustainability Creation Individual work



Title: Save Me  
Name: Tone Hessen



Title: Turning a deaf ear to...  
Name: Cathrine Jungmarker



# Sustainability Creation Individual work



Title: ReFlower  
Name: Emma Olsson



Title: This planet needs to cool down  
Name: Malin Liberg



Title: The Transparent Wallet  
Name: Lydia Stengård

# Sustainability Creation Individual work



Title: LEGO Transformers  
Name: Jennie Frisk



Title: Behind the Bar(code)  
Name: Emma Rydfjäll

# Sustainability Creation Individual work



Title: Who's Blood Is On Your Hands  
Name: Anni Tunér



Title: Enjoy Your Meal  
Name: Therese Augustsson



Title: Do You Want Your Receipt?  
Name: Malin Kjelledal

# Sustainability Creation Individual work



Title: Growing New Habits  
Name: Linda Svensson



Title: Through the Walls  
of Habit  
Name: Anne Sandahl



Title: The Oceans' Appeal  
Name: Lisa Lord



Title: The Cost of Your  
Bag  
Name: Silje Vara-  
Mittermaier



# Student perspectives

The students felt that they could grasp the notion of SCP, that it was challenging at first to implement this in their creative practice. Students describe the process as fun and interesting, particularly having to work with artistic methods alongside the topic of sustainability. Although the students were already familiar with the topic of sustainability and SCP, the “Sustainability Creation” project made a large impression and many believe that this will follow them in their future work. One student even decided to have a consumption-free year!



# Quotes:

Students in the project answer the question: "In what way can you make a difference in the context of sustainability?"

- *"As creators, we can make issues more visible, concrete and memorable, instilling feelings and emotions with the viewer. Often, a designed object or a work of art can be more inspiring than reading long texts. We all can contribute." Emma Olsson*
- *"An information designer can make a difference in the context of sustainability by choosing to include the environmental perspective in every future work project." Lisa Lord*
- *"We can make a difference by combining cold, hard facts with visual design. This benefits especially those who can't or don't want to read. In addition, design can go where laws and regulations can't." Silje Vara-Mittermaier*
- *"At first the idea felt abstract and challenging but since there was an opportunity to work in a more artistic way with this project I felt more free to experiment. I chose to try to bring forward positive aspects instead of repeating all the negatives." Lisette Yago*
- *"As creators we can make a difference by illustrating invisible problems. With invisible problems I mean the kind that we never experience with our own eyes like the waste and pollution in our oceans for example." Therese Augustsson*



# Course leader's perspectives

- Andrea Hvistendahl, project and course leader, answered the following questions:

In your work as an artist you have examined different aspects of our major contemporary challenges, globalization, environment and social injustice, through interactive pieces, objects, installations, images and dialogs. Now as course leader you are introducing the subject sustainable consumption and production to the students through the project "Sustainability Creation". Why is this so important to you?

I saw the opportunity to use my abilities, position, experiences, and network to make a difference and put together the Sustainability Creation project. My aim in this project has been to build a triangle between higher education, sustainability and creativity, and support the different spin off effects it has created.

The tremendous consequences that today's global consumption and production has on the environment and our planet makes it one of the most important sustainability issues to be involved in. Our current unsustainable way of life destroys our eco systems, depletes our scarce resources and negatively affects our climate. Everybody is part of this and can thus also be part in changing the situation.



**In what way do you think the ideas and the principles regarding the subject Sustainable consumption and production will stay with the students after completing the course?**

The seed has been planted! I find it extremely important to pass on not just information on the issue but also a sense of urgency and a spark of commitment with the students. Many students asked themselves the question how they could contribute to a sustainability conference. They felt that investigating and visualizing their own relationship and part of the consumption system, as 20–35-year-old students in a privileged part of the world, was an honest and relevant angle. And what they discovered was not pretty. This has created an internal discussion as a starting point for a change of mindset and behaviour. So, in many of the artefact the students have taken a personal stand and acknowledged their own consumption habits. The students are now better equipped to decide for themselves how they are planning to incorporate sustainability in their private and professional lives. The fact that their work in addition was in a later stage exposed at the UN Conference Events in New York was naturally an extra bonus.

**What are your thoughts on the level of performance of the students?**

Considering the short period of time (3 weeks) that they had to understand, research and deal with the project I am happy and impressed. They responded to the challenge, finding strong concepts both for the individual part (creating artefacts) and group work (room installation suggestions) efficiently. The students were encouraged to use exploratory creative methods that has its origin in artistic experience, to develop their own understanding and deliver not just hard-core facts but also, emotions, thoughts, humor and curiosity. I want to point out that the students also put a lot of effort in using recyclable materials to build their pieces (from Retuna and their own homes).





**In your opinion is there space at the university and within the curriculum for this type of initiatives?**

All three parts of the triangle, higher education, sustainability and creativity, are extremely important to the Sustainability Creation project. The learning goals in the course were to develop individual process-based approaches, and to understand creative methods and tools in relation to design thinking, both addressed through the topic of sustainability. It is about being able to see the possibilities, build and follow through the project.

Academia is an important place to spread sustainability ideas and plant them not just with the students but in all levels at the University. Mälardalen University has been supportive to my initiative and this course can function as a pilot, with inspiration to work more structurally within the Academia on the issue of sustainable consumption and production.



A selection of the show was transported to New York



# High Level Political Forum

## UN Conference in New York





The Exhibition was on display at 2 events at Scandinavian House, July 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> in connection to the High Level Political Forum Conference. Andrea Hvistendahl organized and presented the Sustainability Creation project to an interested audience.





# Acknowledgments

- Collaboration

Sustainability Creation is a collaboration between: Mälardalen University (Andrea Hvistendahl; Artist and Lecturer in Spatial Design, Information Design), the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Eva Ahlner; National Focal Point leader 10YFP) and City of Umeå (Albert Edman; Strategic Development Coordinator). Part of the implementation of the UN 10-year framework of programmes (10YFP). The project was presented at the third annual national 10YFP laboratory on sustainable lifestyles, hosted by the City of Umeå on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> November.

- Contributing Spatial Design students:

Therese Augustsson, Jennie Frisk, Tone Hessen, Pauline Hultström, Cathrine Jungmarker, Malin Kjelledal, Malin Liberg, Lisa Lord, Michaela Myrvold Lind, Emma Olsson, Emma Rydfjäll, Anne Sandahl, Lydia Stengård, Linda Svensson, Anni Turnér, Silje Vara-Mittermaier, Lizette Yago.

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