

Instructions for the 30 Day Challenge

Global Challenges and Sustainable Futures 2014

“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.”

*“You know that we are living in a material world
And I am a material girl”*

Two quotes by two of the greatest philosophers of the modern era (Gandhi & Madonna*). The first reflects how actions by individuals can change the world around them, the second talks about how the world has molded them into the person they are. This assignment is based on the first quotation.

Inspired by the [TED Talk by Matt Cutts](#) we want you to undertake your own 30 Day Challenge. We want you to change a personal habit or behavior that you believe has a negative impact on the environment, economy and/or society.

The Assignment

You are to come up with a behavioral change that you would like to see in yourself and are able to implement. At the end of the 30 days you will need to submit a creative contribution which could be comic strip, poster, video diary, recipe book, photo log, website or something else (please pass your idea by the course coordinators first).

This is an individual assignment. However, if you think your challenge would work better in a pair or a small group, for example a competitive challenge then you can include either your course mates or (even better) your friends outside the course. But, 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.

Examples of 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.

- 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.
- Change your diet for 30 days. Even if you are a carnivore, herbivore or omnivore, what you eat has a huge impact on the way we live our lives. Changing our diet could have the biggest impact on our environment. There are also huge economic and social impacts.

- 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.
- 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.

Interesting monitoring tools

Online you will find various tools which can help you to track your process and the impact of your 30 Day Challenge. These tools could help you to make your challenge measurable, although the use of them is not mandatory. For example you could have a look at:

- WWF's ecological footprint calculator: <http://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>
- Water footprint calculator: <http://www.waterfootprint.org/?page=cal/WaterFootprintCalculator>
- Made in a Free World's slavery calculator: <http://slaveryfootprint.org/>
- Carbon Footprint calculator: <http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>

Submissions

1. Submit a brief project plan (no more than 200 words) on Studentportalen by **Tuesday, the 9th of September at 17.00**. Include what your 30 Day Challenge is:
 - a. What is the behavioral change?
 - b. Why do you need to make this change?
 - c. How are you going to be able to make this change?
 - d. Why is it important for sustainable development?
 - e. How do you plan to document your progress?
2. Submit your outcome on Studentportalen by **Sunday, the 12th of October at 17.00**. Your final 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 (on Tuesday, the 14th of October) Please write a maximum of 200 words to clarify your contribution, for example include:
 - a. How can it be done on a larger scale?
 - b. Critically reflect on the 30 day experience
 - i. Do you feel that you have you altered your behavior/habit?
 - ii. Was it an easy change to make?
 - iii. Will you return to your old ways, and if so why?
 - iv. Will you encourage others to make a similar change/challenge?

Good luck with the challenge ahead of you!

Heleen & Ben

*maybe not Madonna, although she has her place in pop history