HELP US DESIGN THE FUTURE

MAXIMUM IMPACT
Heritage and change in future landscapes
MANIFESTO: MAXIMUM IMPACT

A series of large transformations are necessary in order to meet the challenges we face today. Converting to a sustainable society means not only changing the manner in which we produce, distribute and utilize energy, food and commodities, but even the way we organize urban and natural environments. These are well known facts. This in turn will have an impact on the landscape that surrounds us and feeds us.

The usual response to these issues is to find solutions that minimize impact, both ecologically and visually, on the surrounding environment. At its best, this strategy creates an illusion of status quo; as if nothing has changed and things have continued as they always have. However, reality teaches us something quite different. Everything changes. The measures needed for a realistic and accurate response are all too important and sizable to simply sweep under the carpet. Such responses seldom generate satisfactory results.

Instead of considering the inevitable transformations as threats, we propose seeing them as opportunities to actively affect and improve our future landscapes. We should not be content with merely minimizing impact, but instead make sure that the traces we leave behind generate positive effects for ecosystems and humans alike. By means of deliberate design, new interventions can improve biological diversity, create new potentials for plants and wildlife, bring degenerated spaces back into play and define spatial relationships within the landscape. Furthermore, these interventions could be attractive and inspiring. We call it maximum impact.

为了应对我们今天所面临的挑战，我们必须做出一系列重大的变革。向可持续社会转变，不仅意味着我们生产、分配和使用能源、食物以及商品的模式发生改变，而且甚至我们组织城市和自然环境的方式也会发生变革。这些都是人尽皆知的事实。这将会影响到围绕并且供给我们的城市地景。

通常应对这些论题所寻找的途径是使得周围环境的影响最小化，这既是生态意义上的，也是视觉意义上的影响最小化。这种策略运用到极致时，会制造出一个假象：即保持原状，似乎任何变化都不曾发生，并且事物继续按照以往的方式运行。然而，现实告诉我们很不一样的事实：任何事物都在变化。一个现实的、准确的应对所采取的所有措施都是如此重要和宏大，令人无法视而不见。这样的应对很少能产生令人满意的结果。

我们不是将这些无法避免的变革看作是威胁，而是建议将其看成一些积极地改善和影响未来城市地景的机遇。我们不能仅仅满足于影响最小化，而是应该确信我们完成的工作将会对生态系统和人类这二者产生积极的影响。通过精心的设计，新的介入方式可以改善生物多样性，为植物和野生动物创造出新的生存机会，将退化的空间恢复同时限定城市地景内部的空间关系。而且，这些介入方式可以即吸引人又具有令人振奋。

我们称之为——影响最大化！
Maximum impact is a collaboration between the Swedish National Heritage Board and the School of Architecture at the Royal University College of Fine Arts in Stockholm, Sweden conducted during World Urban Forum 4. It explores the future landscapes developed by emerging driving forces, such as altered means of energy production, continuing urbanization and the threat of climate change. The aim is to initiate a dialogue on transformations in the landscape due to the impact of climate change, urbanization and the growing demand for land area dedicated to the production of renewable energy.

BACKGROUND: A COLLABORATION PROJECT

The Swedish National Heritage Board is a governmental agency responsible for heritage and historic environment issues. The Board has a coordinating role on national level, promoting heritage as a resource in societal development and ensuring that the historic environment is preserved in the most effective manner possible. The activities include religious heritage, archaeological finds, modern heritage, rural and urban landscape and monuments. The Board is under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture.

The School of Architecture at Royal University College of Fine Arts, Stockholm is a forum for post-graduate education in architecture and urban studies. The school concerns itself with current issues relevant for the general public and investigates how these are connected to an architectural and urban discourse. It provides one-year courses in three disciplines; Architecture, Architectural Restoration and Art and Architecture, the latter conducted in conjunction with the Fine Arts department. The goal of the School is to engage society through the generation of relevant and tangible projects as well as new working networks that continue outside the academic realm.
The World Urban Forum was established by the United Nations to examine one of the most pressing issues facing the world today: rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies and policies. Some of the major challenges identified are to minimize burgeoning poverty in cities, improve the urban poor’s access to basic facilities such as shelter, clean water and sanitation and achieve environment-friendly, sustainable urban growth and development.

The Fourth session of the World Urban Forum was hosted by the Government of China and held in the city of Nanjing in November 2008.

Since The Forum does not follow the formal rules of procedure that usually govern official UN meetings, the working arrangements of the Forum are simple and relatively informal in order to generate an inclusive debate on urban and environmental issues.
This is not the first time we have faced challenges that force us to change both behaviour and production methods. The landscapes we consider valuable common heritage today are negotiations between conditions, legislation and desires as well as results of construction and production methods. In order to adapt to changing circumstances they have been altered many times before reaching their current state. What were the driving forces for these transformations? Who were the main actors and what were their incentives? Much can be learned from studying previous moments of change.

What is considered cultural heritage is subjective and not written in stone. It fluctuates over time, depending on shifts in influence, power and fashions. Which elements in contemporary environments will be considered of cultural significance tomorrow? Will it be art museums and airports or will our grandchildren fight for the preservation external shopping centres and residential suburbs, the restoration of highway flyovers and knowledge on how to manufacture skateboard ramps?

What role can cultural heritage play when forming our future? Will it become restricted to conserved enclaves of the past or can it be given increased relevance by letting everyone become a subject, contributing in a more dynamic way to urban and rural living environments?

**THEME: HERITAGE & DYNAMICS**

**WHY**
Discuss how history and cultural heritage relate to future and change.

**HOW**
By using an everyday amusement as the use of magnetic fridge poetry to illustrate that values are something we ascribe to a certain environment and not inherent qualities of that specific place. The two landscape photos used are from Forsbacka estate in Bergslagen and Backaplan shopping mall in Göteborg.
What if keeping everything it used to be is the biggest break with history?

What if one could read the future and form the history?

What if nothing ever changed?
The border between town and countryside has changed throughout history. Cities have always been dependent on their hinterland for food and fuel supply, but the physical relation between them has transformed. In medieval times rulers erected walls around their cities not only to protect them against other cities, but also to protect against rebellious farmers from the countryside and to charge them tolls when they came into town to sell and trade their goods. The mobility of people was low, and to travel to the city from the countryside was often a considerable venture. As new modes of transport developed and people and goods became more mobile the urban-rural relationship also transformed. The development of the railroad made it possible to live outside the city while still working within it. The city was no longer as reliant on its immediate surroundings for food and goods and the border between city and hinterland began to blur. Still, growth was fairly controlled – new areas developed primarily around train stops. With the car and the highway came more freedom. For the first time, you could get almost anywhere in your own personal vehicle and commuting, suburbanization and urban sprawl took off. This continued for most of the 20th century and goes on still today, even though we are now well aware of its drawbacks. Large areas of land previously used for food cultivation and energy supply are today swallowed up by purely residential areas. With the onset of peak oil and global warming we are now questioning the way we transport food and goods across the globe and how we produce energy to supply our growing cities. The loss of the productive hinterland is beginning to be felt and voices are raised for densification instead of sprawl. Maybe we need to bring back those city walls? Not to protect the city, as before, but rather the countryside from our ever swelling metropolises. Or perhaps we should introduce more productive ecosystem-functions within the city limits? Is urban agriculture the way to go for our future cities? Can we clean our dirty grey water within our own neighbourhoods? With high tech-methods, could this be applicable, not only for developing country townships, but even for global metropolitan areas like London, Los Angeles, Tokyo and Shanghai?

**THEME: CITY/COUNTRYSIDE**

**WHY**
Shed light on shifts in the evolving relationship between rural and urban areas.

**HOW**
By comparing rural-urban landscape relations from four different time periods and analyzing the dependence of the urban area on its hinterland. The analysis of dependence is based upon the geography of four different aspects; the origin of the urban workforce and the production of energy, food and goods respectively. The two underlying questions are: where are these activities taking place – in the city itself, in the nearby region, in a national context or at a global scale? and how does this affect the overall landscape?

**OUTCOME**
On suggestion we asked the visitors to pinpoint their idea of the future production. From this limited selection some conclusions could nevertheless be drawn. In general people seemed to think that production will be more local, but that the workforce will become much more globalized than we had suggested. Of course, there might be a conflict between what people think and what they want to have happen and, at a later stage, what we actually do.
What if the division between city and countryside faded away in favour of an endless field of production?

What if we were to erect city walls to protect the countryside from urban sprawl?

What if the food we eat need to be produced within the city?
There is an ongoing battle for land. Already the planet has a hard time supporting its growing population with food and other resources. Global warming means additional pressure is being put on the land to produce fuel and building materials as well. When oil finally runs out we will need to produce plastics from cellulose. This puts further productive demands on the earth.

What happens if we have to make use of every available piece of land? If even the smallest plot of land must serve a necessary productive purpose and no left-over spaces remain? Do we need these back sides, impediments and degenerated areas once in a while as respites from the constant stress of production? We run an obvious risk that all our surroundings will become shaped by financial models, optimized by productivity calculations and rationalized to fit harvesting technologies. Will economists, scientists and engineers take total control on the design of the landscape? Or can artists serve a complementary role in this development? With its alternative approach - not based on results, payoffs or logical explanation - can art bring back imagination, thoughtfulness and playfulness to the landscape?

**THEME: METHODS/ART**

**WHY**
Study the possibilities of art and artistic methods as tools to transform the landscape.

**HOW**
By presenting a sample of artworks from a contemporary Swedish setting that engage with their surrounding urban or rural landscape. What can we learn from these examples and can they inspire us to use artistic methods in new settings?
What if energy plants were playful?

What if there were no more left-over spaces left?

What if beauty is useful?
The cultural landscapes we once knew seem destined to soon be nothing but a memory. Smaller farms continue to merge into larger ones and the varied crops, pastures and trees increasingly give way to large-scale monocultures, energy crop cultivation and other methods that are rational and profitable. However, embracing older landscapes is more than just nostalgia. These old, small-scale landscapes were actually more biologically diverse and resilient. Could it be that the scale and diversity of these landscapes is attractive to the human eye in fact because they are biologically rich and suitable living environments for a wide variety of plants and wildlife? But these issues also have economic consequences with large socio-economic impact. We can find beautiful, cultivated pastures in certain regions of the world, but often due to old-fashioned and inefficient production methods and coupled with great poverty and despair.

Consequently, is there a way to make small-scale solutions and diversity attractive again, not just for our eyes but also for our wallets? Shall we develop new production methods and machinery to achieve this or shall we switch to new ways of cultivation that better utilise the synergy-effects gained by diversity. Or is it more a question of economic incentives and how we value things? If ecosystem-services were given an appropriate economic value, the net value of large monocultures would suddenly be quite different.

**THEME: SCALE/PRODUCTIVITY**

**WHY**
Explore if the future may promise landscapes where biodiversity, productivity and perceived beauty can be combined and not seen as conflicting interests.

**HOW**
By comparing qualities in three different landscape typologies. A large-scale monoculture, a small-scale agriculture combined with small pockets of woodlands and an imagined scenario with alley cropping – long strips of grain and vegetable production bordered by energy crops and recreation possibilities. The comparison is made through the methodology of a value-rose (see p 24).
What if rabbits and ladybugs were considered land-use-stakeholders?

What if “smart agriculture” could make customized crops productive at all scales?

What if complex land use patterns were created as tourist attractions in remote areas?
Previously, new development has always occurred at the expense of biodiversity and ecosystems - partly because we didn’t know better and partly because we didn’t care. Now we are aware that the way we are living is not only jeopardizing the conditions for plants and animals but also for ourselves. But this doesn’t mean that we shall give up and stop all development. We just need to rethink the way we do things. Instead of posing a threat, new development can bring positive effects for ecosystems and wildlife. We shouldn’t merely settle with doing less damage but rather make sure that the footprint we leave in the landscape has maximum positive impact for both human beings and the environment. With deliberate design new constructions can be formed so that they improve biological diversity and ecosystem services, create new living environments for plants and animals, reclaim degenerated landscapes, make connections and rooms in the landscape legible, as well as being beautiful and stimulate people’s imagination.

A lot of knowledge exists in this area but few examples. For this to truly take place these issues will have to be considered in all projects from the very beginning. People in the construction business will need to be educated in these matters and people with other competences will need to be given more prominent roles, not just as secondary consultants. How can we turn the present development patterns around to include these issues? And what would a development like this look like?

**THEME: DEVELOPMENT/ECOSYSTEMS**

**WHY**
Investigate the possibilities of combining socio-economic development with increased liveability, biodiversity and higher aesthetic values in a future marked by altered energy production, climate change and continuing urbanization.

**HOW**
By illustrating two future scenarios - a constructed vertical wetland intended for urban water treatment and a power line corridor designed to improve living qualities for wildlife.
What if golf courses were built as nurseries for endangered plants?

What if algae for fuel production grew on the chimneys of our industries?

What if water treatment plants were urban, bird-attracting, wetlands?
The aim of the fifth Dialogue at the World Urban Forum was to examine ways of preserving urban heritage in a globalizing world. How can we allocate new investments for regeneration, increased productivity and improved welfare while simultaneously preserving our heritage as part of a sustainable and harmonious development?

Let’s look at three main aspects of urban heritage:
- urban heritage is complex and conflicting
- urban settings are arenas for a multitude of interpretations
- urban history is characterized by change - without change no urban heritage

Without understanding how we managed our society in the past, how will we know how to manage it now and in the future?

Urbanization and global migration are greatly affecting the social and the physical appearance of our steadily growing cities. More than half of mankind is now living in urban settings. Many of these new urban dwellers are likely to be poor. How can they be welcomed to the city? How can the structure of the City enhance sustainable livability that includes the poor?

A sustainable society needs a functioning infrastructure, such as roads for transport, education for knowledge and heritage for collective experiences. A sustainable urban development is dependent on diversity that includes several aspects;
social, economical and cultural. This diversity provides a multitude of options to solve problems. Heritage, bringing experiences and memories, functions as a driving force for sustainable development. Heritage is an aspect in every kind of political decision-making process - those explicit as well as by implicit. Using heritage in urban planning is a part of being creative. It brings historical dimensions and contributes to a sustainable development in ways that are environmentally, economically and socially beneficial.

What always needs to be stressed is that heritage has to do with people’s relations to one another and the social dimension of life. Heritage gives us the opportunity to tell about how society changes and develops. Heritage may:
- Deliver historical perspectives, enabling people a more diversified interpretation of society.
- Encourage citizen involvement in the planning processes.
- Contribute to local and regional development and economic growth.
- Promote social equity and inclusiveness.

The concept of heritage should be broadly conceived. When we talk about urban heritage, we can never limit ourselves to talk about single objects or a single aspect. We are talking about movement, trading, boundaries, foundation, protection, destruction, power and subordination. We are talking about streets, squares, places, walls, residents, public buildings and religious buildings. We talk about the totality of the urban landscape; about the overlaying mixture of tangible and intangible heritage. A City is a social fabric as well as a physical fabric. Cities are made up of conflicting interests; the stories from the inhabitants coincide and contradict each other. A harmonious and sustainable development can only be realized if this multitude of interests can be admitted to influence the narrative of the urban heritage. Our historical roots are numerous.

Working with urban heritage means tackling a very broad spectrum of material remnants. A historically harmonious city appears if all of its different parts acts jointly as stewards for its history. A historically harmonious city is a city where heritage is reflected in the entire complicated and conflicting narrative of the city, from its core to its periphery.

How can an urban area be preserved? How can we know what to preserve? Is there such a thing as a soul of the city? Can this soul be preserved? To know how to preserve an urban fabric, and to keep the soul of the City, you must find out for whom you are preserving it.
- Who will have access to the heritage?
- Whose interpretations will set the standards?
- Who will be the beneficiary?
Any upgrading initiatives must be formulated from the standpoints of those who live and work in the area and will be directly affected by the outcome of the preservation processes.

It is indeed a challenge of its own to preserve the cities selected by UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee as World Heritage Sites. The World Heritage Convention is the most universal international legal instrument in heritage conservation. One third of the properties included on the list are urban sites. The present situation for these urban sites gives grounds for concern. Many properties are characterized by complex structures, systems and patterns and may have both natural and cultural values. Many sites face strong pressure from unsuitable new development. Ironically, they risk being trivialized because of their popularity and the resultant heavy pressure due to tourism. There is a need for improved comparative analyses of historic values in order to grasp the challenges we face when preserving urban world heritage sites. How can their cultural value contribute to development and economical growth? There is a need for a wider view which would include contemporary needs, landscape aspects, historic patterns and overall structural values. To solve a complex issue, cooperation through a participatory approach is essential. This approach requires good management, careful planning and time for evaluation during the process.

To conclude: We need to move beyond conventional conceptions of heritage. Heritage is relations and experiences, coinciding as well as contradicting each other. A multitude of interpretations lead to an increased capacity to understand our present society and its needs. We have to recognize heritage as an asset and an integral part of sustainable urban development. Clearly, a series of large transformations are necessary in order to meet the challenges we face today - climate change being most notable and topical. Instead of considering the inevitable transformations as threats we should consider them as opportunities to improve our present and future urban landscapes. We should also make sure that the traces we leave behind us today generate positive effects for ecosystem and humans alike. All interventions we make today should have maximum impact in order to achieve a truly sustainable development.
WORKSHOP: THE MAGNETOGRAPH

WHY
Initiate an open-minded dialogue on our shared responsibilities to create future landscapes and draw attention to the poster.

HOW
By encouraging visitors to build their own images of potential landscapes by placing picture objects on a magnetic scenery. Among the objects were animals, different means of transportation, vegetation, buildings, infrastructure, energy production, etc. By combing these objects the visitor could create a scenario in which urbanization had increased, or where nature had taken over the urban area or whatever else came to mind. This provided a hands-on way to let visitors articulate their visions without the use of a common spoken language. Furthermore, it functioned as an invitation to discuss these visions and how everyone has a role to play in the construction of our common future.

OUTCOME
The easy-access activity appealed to a broad public and drew a fair amount of media attention. Visitors enjoyed placing pictures on the board – adding a graphic comment to the joint work of others. Sometimes the fun of playing with the magnetic images outshined the discussions about paths and choices we face and how they will impact our surroundings. The help of an interpreter facilitated discussions.
HELP US DESIGN THE FUTURE!

We don't know how the future looks like, but we are interested in your vision. Place new picture magnets on the image to create your own landscape of the future. Comment by writing your thoughts on a speech bubble and place it on the image. Photos of the landscape are taken every 15 min.
WORKSHOP: VALUING LANDSCAPES

WHY
Develop an awareness of the subjectivity inherent in perception of landscape values and cultural heritage.

HOW
In the form of delimited workshops in which participants were invited to evaluate images of various landscapes. The evaluation was made in a value-rose with the possibility to add comments. Preferably, this work was done in pairs making it a deliberative collaboration. The value-rose is a six-headed arrow diagram pointing at the values productivity, biodiversity, socio-economic value, accessibility, energy efficiency and aesthetics. The participants estimated how the visualized landscape would perform in each of these categories and thus draw an overall graph of the value they assigned to the image. The process highlights not only the subjectivity of our values but also the relationship between different performance aspects of a landscape.

OUTCOME
The workshop provided a good starting point for dialogue and getting people to begin thinking about the issues. This was further improved when it was carried out in pairs and when participants were encouraged to share their opinions with the group. However, the manner in which the landscapes were depicted often seemed as important as what was actually depicted. If carried out in a larger scale, the material could provide valuable data for interesting comparisons. Even the small selection collected shows large differences, as illustrated in the example above. This highlights the subjectivity.
WORKSHOP: THE PINWHEEL

WHY
Spread our message in a playful manner and illustrate how small initiatives can make an impact on the landscape (at WUF).

HOW
The information leaflet with the Maximum Impact-manifesto was designed with a twist! Following a few easy steps everyone was invited to convert the sheet of paper into their own pinwheel. This symbol alludes in a playful way to both energy producing and landscape altering windmills and to flowers. Spread over the exhibition area, the pinwheel would constitute a clearly visible object promoting the exhibition. Sitting down at a table while working with their hands was intended as a way to halt the visitors and give them an opportunity to chat and engage in the exhibition.

OUTCOME
The pinwheel was highly appreciated. The workshop attracted both young and old, who folded an impressive number of wheels. While the hidden messages of the workshop – the spreading of the manifesto and the connotation to windmills – did not always get through, the intention to engage visitors in an intra-cultural activity was broadly achieved. And as they went away with their spinning paper toy on a stick, each visitor contributed to changing the WUF scenery.
Future landscapes? Isn’t the Heritage Board more into historical environments?