

## THIS WAY, PLEASE!

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The two scenarios are very different, which is obviously by design. Indeed, one of their primary purposes is to illustrate how two different mindsets could drive the future in wholly different directions.

But they share something important: they represent futures in which we successfully make the transition to a sustainable society, futures in which we are – to use the Brundtland formulation – meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations. They are, also by design, preferred futures that express an encouraging message: we can do it!

They share another very important feature: whether we go for ‘Man-made World’ or ‘Power of Nature’, we must realize a radical change of mindset to create the transformations ahead. Either way, our tomorrow will not be the same; we will not be the same – just as today’s world is far different than that of 1912. In fact, maybe even more different, given the challenges ahead and the ever-accelerating speed of change.

### ARCHETYPES

Although they describe ideas about the future, the scenarios are real at some level because they reflect discussions, themes and views shared by the participants in the In1000y seminars. Still, we believe their reach extends beyond the seminars. Also, the two mindsets represented in ‘Man-made World’ and ‘Power of Nature’ are present in our time, society and culture. They coexist today. We would even suggest they may represent archetypes of what it means to be human.

### THE URGE TO MERGE

After presenting the two mindsets at the seminars, one reaction was swift. Many participants spontaneously said: “we need both!” This ‘urge to merge’ often arise when two scenarios contain attractive and indispensable elements. Yet they are not necessarily easily merged elements. Further, reaching a sense of how you can think and act strategically in relation to two scenarios often requires working with them separately. New combinations, more scenarios and more strategic options may spring from such a process.

We believe you can benefit by being aware of both scenarios and mindsets. Each scenario could be seen as fundamental to the other. The mindset of ‘Man-made World’ is indispensable because we require practical action directed at challenges in the physical world. But we also believe we must have a more valuable agenda than one designed merely to overcome challenges in our present way of life. As described in ‘Power of Nature,’ we need a sense of greater purpose, belonging and fulfilment.

The two scenarios are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Perhaps they can both be realized at different times. Especially when working over a century, we open the possibility of having the near future – the next 20 to 40 years, say – characterized by ‘Man-made World’ initiatives and developments. In the meantime, people could increasingly express a desire for ‘Power of Nature’ and long for oneness (however perceived and expressed), bringing these to fruition in the second half of the 21st century.

### TO READ AND WORK WITH FUTURES

Scenarios are building blocks of futures thinking. They do not predict the future, but help you make decisions today. Let us look at how.

First, how you read them is important. You must be ready to inhabit them one at a time. Immerse yourself in the world, thinking and mindset of a scenario. Think with, not against, the scenario: do not reject it on the basis of individual improbabilities. Instead, go along with the spirit of the scenario. Feel secure in doing so – after all, the other scenario awaits! This is a valuable exercise in creative and synthetic thinking that often uncovers new ideas that can be applied strategically.

Try the scenarios on. Stretch your imagination by asking: How would our organization look in this scenario? Which visions would we work with? Which strategy would we pursue? How would we make decisions? What abilities would we need?

Note that the scenarios described here are largely based on qualitative information. We live in a world that often stresses quantification, measurability, data, and objectivity. These are important, and can often inform and strengthen qualitative scenarios. But the qualitative scenario method is not an analytical tool that produces a quantitative result.

It is a method that gives the decision-maker in all of us a choice of futures and is aimed at expanding the strategic space of opportunity.

### THANK YOU, DEAR TRAVELLER

'Man-made World' and 'Power of Nature,' the two mindset-driven scenarios presented here, are a result of a unique scenario process. The scenarios are inspired by the participants and discussions at the four In100Y seminars held in Copenhagen in 2011 and 2012. These gathered more than 150 visionaries and practitioners from a variety of fields and backgrounds within sustainability.

We warmly thank all the participants at the four seminars for their enormous enthusiasm and inspiration. In every sense, it was a great experience. And the resulting scenarios are so interesting and deep-rooted that they are will inspire and inform our work and thinking at House of Futures. We hope and believe you will feel the same way and will continue to join the effort along the way!

### THIS WAY, PLEASE!

This way, please! is an invitation to join us in creating the sustainable societies of the future. It is a way paved with the general assumptions originated in the In100Y project:

- To think "long term," because we are in the midst of a historic transformation on a scale corresponding to the transition to industrialization, urbanization and democratization.
- To think holistically, because the challenges encompass all aspects of society, our lives and our mindsets.
- To think in new ways, because we confront the unknown.

Finally, This way, please! is an invitation to develop and use the scenarios for a common understanding of two alpaths to sustainable societies.

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## HOW TO USE SCENARIOS

In general, scenario methods and processes can be used in several ways, including

**BROADENING THE OUTLOOK** – opening up to long-term, outside-in perspectives – for inspiration, consideration, and visualizing alternative developments and pathways to the future. Scenarios can be seen as horizons and thereby create awareness and new possibilities.

**STRATEGIC TOOL** – outlining choices with regard to barriers and opportunities, based on alternative futures. Part of this strategic work can be the formulation of a specific future that optimises the degrees of desirability and probability. On the basis of such a "focus scenario", a more detailed profile or specific strategy is drawn up.

**CATALYST FOR CREATING DEBATE** – internal or external to the organization. Scenarios can be a powerful tool for generating debate.

**CLARIFYING TOOL** – developing a common frame of reference or consensus. This may be applicable when an organization wants to start an internal discussion that possibly, but not necessarily, can lead to a reformulation of strategy, and needs a clarification of purposes and assumptions.