



Regular backcasting exercise



Project phase

Experimentation and pathways definition.



When (Transition Lab Steps)

Backcasting.



Purpose

The purpose of backcasting analyses is to assess feasibility and desirability of future scenarios. It starts by defining a desired future (e.g. vision) and then looks back to assess what would be required to get there. It envisions the roadmap needed to arrive at our intended destination.



Suggested session duration

Time frame: 2-4 hours



How

GUIDELINES:

The major distinguish characteristics of backcasting analysis is the concern, not with likely energy futures, but with how desirable futures can be attained. It is thus explicitly normative involving working backwards from a particular future end-point to the present to determine what steps and policy measures would be required to reach that future.

- Regular backcasting exercises start with one or multiple visions that results from the visioning exercise.

STEP 1

Start with the visioning output. Each subgroup of about four participants chooses one vision of the future to work with. When this vision is constructed by other people, it is recommended to first have a group of discussion about the legitimacy and relevance of it.

STEP 2

Formulate actions. The next step is to formulate adaptations measures, interventions, strategies or actions that are perceived as essential by participants to achieve their vision.

STEP 3

Label and order actions. To structure actions on their importance to make participants realize that some actions are truly essential while others are not absolutely necessary to reach their vision.

STEP 4

Create a timeframe. Participants should also think about whether actions need implementation on the short, medium or long-term. Actions can be labelled with different colors. Collect insights over difficulties that might be encountered, steps that need to be taken and resources needed to achieve the goal. Recommended use of a **Timeline** tool to support this step.

STEP 5

Discover storylines. Now we have all important actions ordered in sequence of time. The last step is to seek storylines or themes. When all actions are categorized in themes, participants can identify thematic pathways to their climate resilient future.

Additional Tools to support sessions:

- **Labelling:** The process of brainstorming about possible adaptation actions usually results in a large amount of ideas. Participants can make sense of these actions by labelling them on importance and time of implementation. How? They can develop a labelling scheme (for example one green dot means not important, two dots means a bit important and three dots means essential) and label actions that are written on post-its accordingly.
- **Timeline:** Thematic pathways of actions as well as the interaction between them can be clearly visualized on a timeline. How? When participants have decided whether actions require short, medium or long-term implementation, they can be placed in sequence of time: short-term (0-10 years), medium-term (20-30 years) and long-term (30-40 years). Online tool:
- **Art designs:** During participatory exercises, artistic designers can join the group discussions to translate the output of exercises in a graphic design. For participants it can be rewarding to see their input in a professional design. Art designs can also be used to clearly communicate the information to people that did not attend the exercise.



Remote advice

Visme: To create online timelines (step 4)
Miro: To support Labelling activities (step3)



Source

<https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/Foresight%20methods%20toolbox.pdf>