

Instructions

How to play?



To start:

- ✿ Each group shall be formed by 6–8 players.
- ✿ Each participant (player) will pick up a card (role) blindly.
- ✿ They will read their card, not showing it to others.
- ✿ The facilitator will present the “What If” Case again, to remind players of their context for discussion.

During the game:

- ✿ Players will have time for discussion. The objective is to see if they can make a final decision based on the “What If” question and their conflicting perspectives (roles).
- ✿ The moderator will announce the end of the discussion. Then, players will have a final moment to write down their final decision (e.g., 3 bullet points) in the “What If” card.
- ✿ Players within each group will reveal each other’s roles. If there is time, they will first try to guess what everyone was representing based on their performance.

At the end:

- ✿ Each group will share their final decision, invited by the facilitator.
- ✿ Players will become participants again, and leaving their role aside, they will engage in a feedback round moderated by the facilitator. They will be invited to share their contributions to improve the future versions of the game concept and implementation.



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“What if...?”
Scenario 1 – EUtopia



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What if international cooperation eliminates the need for domestic mining?

Decision:

Can international cooperation eliminate the need for domestic mining?

This case study will explore the implications of a world where strong global partnerships and circular economy practices make domestic mining in protected areas unnecessary.

This may be brought to any of the communities, regardless of their connection with environmentally protected areas and environmental views, given that the scenario would not require mining there.

Nevertheless, participants will have to consider the potential benefits and challenges of this paradigm, including whether it is realistic enough, and acknowledging consequent factors, such as the continued dependency on international supply chains, and the environmental impact in other external producing countries.

They may also compare their current local economic development with the potential prospects for growth or negative impacts brought by this scenario.

“What if...?”
Scenario 3- Steady state



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What if we maintained the Status Quo for the next 10+ years?

Decision:

Can the Status Quo be maintained for the next +10 years in our community / region?

Under this scenario, communities will examine the potential outcomes for their region (and, consequently, for Europe) of continued reliance on existing and somehow insecure CRM supply chains.

Participants will be invited to consider whether limited technological innovation is a realistic framework for the future of their community.

Discussions will address the risks of stagnation versus the benefits of predictable stability, with minimal pressure for new mining initiatives.

“What if...?”
Scenario 2 - Insular innovation



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What if domestic mining became the only option for resource security?

Decision:

Can domestic mining become the only option for resource security in our community/region, or in Europe?

This case study addresses a future where protectionist policies necessitate mining in environmentally protected areas.

Community members will debate the trade-offs between resource independence and environmental preservation, focusing on the societal and ecological impacts of domestic resource extraction.

Local communities' responses to this case study may vary based on factors such as, but not limited to, their perspectives on the importance of environmental protection versus market development and economic growth, the technological and innovation potential of the region (which implies more use of CRMs), and the social and historical dynamics in relation to mining and other employment opportunities connected to the industry.

“What if...?”

Scenario 4 – Barren fortress



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What if resource scarcity necessitated mining in protected areas despite fragmented governance?

Decision:

Can we allow mining in protected areas in our community / region justified by resource scarcity?

This case study explores a challenging future where protectionism, resource scarcity, and weak governance facilitate mining activities into protected areas with inadequate mitigation measures. Participants will evaluate how these pressures might affect environmental standards, community resilience, and regional autonomy.

They will carefully consider whether this is a realistic scenario for them based on the level of environmental protection and occurrences of environmentally protected areas in their region, including surrounding areas.

They will contrast these aspects against their perspectives on present and future needs of CRMs and mining/extraction activities in their area.

“What if...?” Character Card



Tourism Operator



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Background:

Owner of a small locally owned eco-tourism business that brings visitors to the protected area, with georoutes and sport activities to consciously explore the site.

Role:

Advocate for eco-tourism, with a high respect for nature over economic profit.

Viewpoint:

Opposes extraction, as it could harm the area's natural beauty and biodiversity, which is the foundation of their business. Advocates for sustainable tourism to generate income (without unnecessary capital accumulation) without harming the environment.

Personality Traits:



Optimistic



Community-Focused



Entrepreneurial

“What if...?” Character Card



**Local/regional Government
Official, Office for the Environment
and Sustainable Agenda**



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Background:

The town's third advisor to the mayor, responsible for making or influencing the final decision based on the environmental perspective.

Role:

Mediator and decision-maker, with a master's in environmental sciences from a prestigious foreign university. Part of a network of European municipalities advocating for sustainability.

Viewpoint:

Sees both sides. Wants to balance economic growth with protecting the natural heritage of the area, much more leaning towards the latter given their position in the local/regional government. Interested in a sustainable solution that benefits the community in the long term.

Personality Traits:



Diplomatic



Pragmatic



Good Communicator

“What if...?” Character Card



Environmental Scientist



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Background:

A leading environmental scientist specializing in ecosystems and biodiversity.

Role:

Advocate for environmental preservation in the local/regional branch of a European/international NGO.

Personality Traits:



Logical



Detail-oriented



Passionate about
conservation

Viewpoint:

Opposes extraction in or near the protected area, citing the potential damage to local wildlife and ecosystems. Believes the area is too valuable to sacrifice for short-term economic gain.

“What if...?” Character Card



Local Farmer



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Background:

A local farmer whose land borders the protected area.

Role:

Concerned local landowner.

Personality Traits:



Practical



Community-Focused



Independent

Viewpoint:

Undecided but leaning against mineral extraction. Worried about the potential disruption to the land, water sources, and the local climate, but also sees economic potential if done responsibly, although would need to see how this affects the land they're working with and their current economic activity – which is, nevertheless, decreasing and generating less income than ever.

“What if...?” Character Card



**Local/regional Government Official,
Office for Markets, Economy, and
Technological Growth**



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Background:

The town's second advisor to the mayor, responsible for making or influencing the final decision based on the economic and technological perspective.

Role:

Profit driven, tech geek, convinced decision-maker, member of a network of international municipalities advocating for technological progress, AI, and smart cities and tech hubs.

Viewpoint:

Driven by technological development. Observes what is happening in other countries, mainly outside of Europe, and wants the same for the municipality/region. Prioritises economic growth over the natural protection of the area, arguing that this will not bring economic benefits to the population and the local businesses in the long-term. Yet, technology labs and innovation hubs will.

Personality Traits:



Proactive



Intellectual



Convincing
Communicator

“What if...?” Character Card



Mining Company CEO



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Background:

CEO of a mining company looking to expand operations.

Role:

Advocate for resource extraction.

Personality Traits:



Confident



Results-Driven



Persuasive

Viewpoint:

Supports extraction, arguing that it will boost the economy, create jobs, and provide critical resources for the community. Believes modern technology can minimize environmental impact.

“What if...?” Character Card



**Multinational Electronic Store
Worker**



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Background:

Works in the local store of a multinational electronic brand, whose products mainly depend on resource extraction and global supply chains.

Role:

Worker in the resource extraction industry.

Personality Traits:



Practical



Flexible and Empathic



Pragmatic

Viewpoint:

Supports extraction in general, as it provides the resources currently needed for the technologies and products that have become “basic” for our daily lives, which people from all ages and groups come to buy at the store they work at, searching for the cheapest offer. Defends that extraction provides job opportunities, however, thinks that most products are currently produced outside of Europe, and we should be concerned about the long-term effects on the environment and the local/regional economy.

“What if...?” Character Card



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**Local Community
Association Leader**

Background:

Leader of the local community association who believes in the societal spiritual and ancestral connection to the land.

Role:

Advocate for the importance of spiritual and cultural heritage connected to nature.

Personality Traits:



Wise



Connected
to nature



Cultural
traditions



Calm and
Patient

Viewpoint:

Opposes current extraction methods and philosophy (for profit). Believes the land is sacred and must be preserved for future generations. To them, nature and humans are at the same level and, hence, destructive extractive techniques are exploiting nature and disrespectful to society. Defends ancestral knowledge and practices prior to “green-washing” and technologically driven techniques.