

somoz

somoz





**POLITECNICO**  
MILANO 1863

Politecnico di Milano, School of Design,  
PSSD, Innovation Studio PSS2, A. Y. 2021-2022

Team Lorem Ipsum

Anita Colombo, Marta Conte, Daria Kovaleva,  
Juliana Maines, Samuele Sala Veni

Professors: Valentina Auricchio, Stefana Broadent,  
Marta Corubolo, Fabio Di Liberto, Ilkka Suppanen

Tutors: Vanessa Monna, Sayali Bharambe

# Index

Research	4
Product	28
Service	58
Branding	90
Annex	112
Bibliography	134



Our team



# Research

Context	6
Humans and nature	12
Scenario	20



context

# Definition of nature

“All the animals, plants and other things in the world that are not made by people, and all the events and processes that are not caused by people.”

Giving a definition of the word “nature” is not simple. The concept of nature is still a source of scientific and philosophical debate as to what it may or may not include within its definition. One of the most common occidental meanings of “nature”, currently used in public policies, conservation science, or environmental ethics, describes it as what is opposed to humans, in contradiction with other former European representations and contemporary foreign ones.

Starting from the etymology of this word, the Greeks used the term “*phusis*” (φύσις), based on the verbal root for “growing, producing”, while in latin the used word “natura” derives from “natus” and it literally means “what is about to be born”.

In a Christian vision nature is more perceived as a simple initial state, a decoration, in which the only power and force for change is man, under the grace of God.

If we look at the modern definition in some of the major dictionaries as Collins English Dictionary and Cambridge English Dictionary, we can see how they do not include man directly, or just mention him partially or indirectly in the concept of nature.

When mentioning animals, some definitions include humans, while others do not. This vision highlights the fact that nature and man are perceived in everyday thinking as two separate entities. It is precisely from this way of perceiving things that is deriving the thought that man is superior to nature and has the freedom to shape and use it in his own way.



# The current situation

Since 1975, the total area of urban settlements has grown by approximately 2.5 times, accounting for 7.6% of the total land area and housing 3.5 billion people in 2015. Most of the world's population is projected to live in urban areas in the future and the share of people living in cities is projected to increase from 55% in 2018 to 78% in 2050. By 2050, urban areas are expected to be home to about 7 billion people, 90% of which will live in low-income countries, mainly in small and medium-sized cities in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Trends in urbanization are directly linked to environmental degradation: the increasing of urban areas is associated with rising energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, air and water pollution and waste such as plastic.

Most environmental problems have often a global scope, and they can only be achieved effectively through a coordinated international approach. The environmental international agreements address a variety of topics, as climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, air pollution and chemicals in the biosphere.

In October 2021, the G20 leaders adopted a G20 leader's declaration, agreeing to limit global warming, take action to halt and reverse biodiversity, ensure preservation of land and ocean and plant 1 trillion trees, all by 2030.

In 2015, 196 Parties adopted the Paris Agreement, which set the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees compared to preindustrial levels, to avoid devastating effects such as heatwaves and floods. Therefore, countries should accelerate effective actions towards achieving the Paris Agreement aspiration and many of them have already announced different strategies to tackle the climate crisis and environmental degradation. The actions require rapid implementation and strengthening of existing national commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To meet the target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees with a probability of about 50 percent, net carbon dioxide emissions must be 45 percent lower by 2030 compared to 2010 levels and reach zero by 2050. There is evidence that achieving the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees would also lead to limiting harmful ocean acidification, tackling ocean pollution from chemicals, plastics and wastewater and protecting marine life.

All the agreements made between countries will hopefully be useful and help us in changing the course of future events, but are all based on a single, misleading fact: humans are superior beings and can use nature as they wish to fulfil their needs and desires. Even if we actually got to stop and reverse the effects of our behaviours on the ecosystem, the reason behind it would still be wrong: we're trying to change because, in this specific moment, it's convenient for us as species, not because we deeply and truly care for Earth. Until we will keep looking at our world through the lenses of anthropocentrism, we will miss one of the key points of our existence and all the work we are doing now will be wasted. We need to change our mindset and start - or restart - to look at ourselves as part of nature, as beings made of the same material of plants, dirt, animals, stars.

We want to contribute to redefining the concept of nature, making it an integral part of our existence. Man has spent 99.9% of his time in natural environments and this explains why the human body has adapted to nature and is made to be part of it. Despite all the data showing the increase of urbanization since the nineteenth century and the fact that more and more people will live in cities in the future, we are fully aware that our genes don't change in such a short time, so we live in a urban and modern society with a body designed for a natural environment. Therefore, considering us humans as nature is the first step towards changing our mentality and getting back to living more in touch with what is natural around us. This way, nature becomes a term to define the whole complex system made up of plants, animals, bacteria, mosses, fungi and all the other beings part of our ecosystem, including human beings.



context

## Our definition of nature

“The whole complex system made up of plants, animals, bacteria, mosses, fungi and all the other beings part of our ecosystem, including human beings.”



# What about plants?

*humans and nature*

If we think in terms of biomass, mankind's weight in relation to the total weight of living beings is almost zero. The total biomass of living beings on Earth is 550 gigatons (Gt) of carbon, of which more than 80% is plants, while only 0.01% is humans. Despite that, the impact of human beings is enormous, causing the loss of more than half of the plants and about 85 % of the mammals since the start of hurbanization.

Despite the extraordinary importance of plants in our ecosystem in terms of quantity and functions, human beings still find very hard to consider them as living beings. They are around us every day, but since they don't seem to be animated - not in a way we can easily perceive - we keep seeing them as things. So we buy them and take them in our homes to use them as decorations, we shape them to achieve pleasing aesthetics, we don't hesitate to cut them when we need it. Some of us try to take care of them, often without really knowing what we're doing. For all these reasons, we chose plants as the main characters of our project, as carriers of our message: we, the humans, are nature just as much as plants are. We depend on them for surviving and must start respecting and caring for them, just as we would care for a friend, a family member or even a pet. By creating a deeper connection with them, we can learn new things about ourselves and gain a deeper understanding of our own nature, to finally stop considering ourselves as superior and feel part of our ecosystem again.





# Plants' rights on Earth

Starting from the assumption that without plants the earth would not and could not exist, we wanted to dedicate some space during our research to exploring the topic of plant rights. While we are all aware today of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights written in 1948, still few are actively questioning and debating how to protect the rights of plants. At national level, there is no official document on the subject, only regulations and laws for the protection and preservation of old trees and forests. Internationally known and approved studies and researches show that plants are sensitive living beings with intelligence, able to communicate with each other and with other living organisms. However, they are still perceived as 'objects' or simple resources that can be exploited and used at will by humans. In most international legal systems, plants are considered the property of the owner of the land in which they are rooted.

As Alessandra Viola points out in her book "Flower Power", all living beings today possess at least basic rights, including the right to life and security. Plants, however, have been left out. It is difficult for a journalist to find a reason for this, other than the fact that they probably do not have rights because no one has yet taken to the streets to demand them. Viola goes on to say that "Italy and Europe are still lagging behind, but a real green revolution is within our reach, simple and free of charge: promoting a Universal Declaration of Plant Rights will give life to a second Renaissance and launch us into the future. Today, as then, it is a question of rethinking human relations with nature and of rediscovering our place in the middle of the living community (not on top of it or outside of it)". Representing more than 80% of the living species on our planet, it is easy to understand the impact it would have on the system to recognize the rights of plants, thus forcing humans to change their approach. An exception is Switzerland, which in 2008 included in its legislation a law stating that 'plants have a dignity and a moral value', meaning that no one is morally allowed, without valid justification, to damage a plant, hinder its growth or compromise its chances of reproduction.

Stefano Mancuso, a plant neurobiologist, also stressed the importance of considering us humans not as the best species but as part of the system, since the concept of best requires a goal and since the goal of life is the survival of the species, humans are not the best. According to him, it is the 'plant nation', which, born hundreds of millions of years before any human nation, grants all living beings sovereignty over the earth. For this reason, in his book 'The Plant Nation', he wanted to give voice to their reign and draw up a constitution based on eight fundamental articles. His aim is to look at plants in a new way, to use them not only for what they have to offer us, but for what they can teach us. Given the current context, we also wanted to take up this cause in our own small way to change people's perspectives on plants by drawing up a series of points to underline the rights of plants, inspired by the work of experts and human rights charters.

# Plants' rights



1. All the living beings part of Earth's ecosystem must be treated with equal dignity and respect.
2. Every plant has the right to life, freedom and safety.
3. Every plant has the right to be born, grow and die according to their natural life cycle.
4. Every plant has the right to grow and spread freely in the surrounding environment, in a relationship of mutual cooperation with all other living beings.
5. Every plant has the right to live in environmental conditions promoting safety and healthy growth.
6. Every external intervention on plants and their life cycle, other than aimed at one's personal survival, must be for the sole purpose of improving the living conditions of the plant.





In a similar context, we find really interesting to investigate the relationship between nature and education, which we think can be experienced through three different approaches.

In our society, when we think about this topic the first thing that comes to mind is learning *about* nature. We do it mainly in school, where we're taught everything about our ecosystem from a scientific point of view. Later on, some of us may continue learning for personal interest, but it often remains a one-way relationship: it's us, human beings, studying nature to deeply understand it and, most of the times, learn how to use and shape it for our own profit. A different approach is the one focusing on learning *in* nature, increasingly popular today and concerns mainly plants. Examples of this can be all those initiatives aiming at creating greener spaces – indoors and outdoors – for studying and working. Thanks to all the studies done on nature, in fact, we know it has many benefits on our mental and physical well being, increasing productivity and

making us feel good, more rested and relaxed. So, in this case, we actively seek a deeper connection with nature to benefit from it, but the relationship remains unilateral and the point of view is still the same: us, superior beings, trying to find ways to fit in as much as possible in the human society we created, taking advantage of nature to do so. When bringing plants indoors or decide to plant them in our cities to make them greener, we think about ourselves and the benefits we can get from it. But do we ever think about the consequences on plants?

This is where the third approach comes into play: learning *from* nature. This kind of relationship is completely different from the two mentioned before: learning from someone requires that we understand and accept that our role is just as important as the one of our “teacher”, that we are equal and must trust and respect each other. If we don't do that and keep considering ourselves as superior, we'll get defensive and will never be able to learn anything. So, learning from nature means recognizing that we are, in fact, part of it and that we can and should listen to it to deeply and truly understand ourselves. We believe this kind of relationship is the only one which can really allow us to change our mindset and connect with the ecosystem we are part of, because it's based on respect and openness towards all that surrounds us. In this way, simple everyday action can reveal themselves as much more powerful than what we thought, capable of teaching us new ways of living and treating other living beings.

# The first step of our transition

We decided to choose as scenario a future in which our definition and perception of nature is shared by the Earth's human population. We imagine a society living in complete symbiosis with the rest of nature, in which technology has developed more and more, learning from nature and helping humans to fulfil their needs in the respect of other beings. To get there, we think the first and fundamental step would be changing the way we think about ourselves and our relation with nature. We decided to position ourselves in a city in 2037, when we imagine some practical changes will have already happened but we will still need to face the real mindshift. In our 2037 city, we think the presence of plants in public and private spaces will drastically increase, as we will try to bring them indoors and to place them wherever there are space and the right conditions for them to grow and stay healthy. We also think the structure of cities will change: each neighbourhood will have green areas and, to minimize the need of using cars, will be designed so that people can easily find everything they need within a 10-minutes walk or a short bike trip.

In a similar setting, we imagine people will have some food for thought to build and maintain a healthier relationship with nature, but will still be in need of a deep change of perspective, leading them to perceive themselves as nature. To achieve that, we find essential to design everyday solutions that will help find this new connection through practical actions, whose powerfulness lies in simplicity and in building connections with natural elements.



Humans  
against  
nature

Humans  
as  
nature



scenario

# Our design goals

## Main goal

To offer people simple ways to interact with plants on a daily basis, so that they can learn to see them as living beings, subject to change and worthy of care and attention.

## Cultural transition and mindshift

Our goal is to help people learn how to live, collaborate with and take care of plants. We want to generate critical thinking, with the aim of changing the idea that humans are superior to other living beings part of nature, so that we can find the right balance again.

## Challenges

- Stimulating critical reflection on plants and their nature
- Finding a balance between man and nature
- Make a mindshift towards a more symbiotic life with what surrounds us every day.





# Product

What is Somos	30
Interaction	38
Product specifications	42
Somos contextualized	54



# Somos

Somos is an alternative pot to understand nature's balance and learn to perceive plants in a different way.





what is somos

# About Somos

Somos is an alternative pot which allows you to create a new type of relationship with your plants by rethinking the interaction you have with them. Through a few simple everyday gestures, our tool aims at encouraging an initial reflection on our perception of plants and our relationship with them, to learn that they are living beings that communicate and perceive the world around them. More specifically, the tool is designed for understanding when plants need to be watered through a balancing mechanism based on the weight of the plant and on the one of a counterweight. Symbolically with our tool we are giving voice to the plants by allowing them to let us understand when they need attention and care. Somos also features a simple design, minimizing the parts and components needed for its function, as the real focus of the user should be on the connection with the plant and the reflection that emerges from it rather than being distracted by superfluous elements.





what is somos

# Main components

counterweight

holes to fit plants





# What can you learn using Somos?

## Practical aspects

### Plant needs

- Using Somos allows you to discover the world of plants and how to take care of them.
- Somos is giving voice to plants, allowing them to communicate with humans when they need their attention.
- Somos allows you to understand when a plant is changing its condition and needs care and attention, in particular it promotes a simple understanding of when to water the plant.

### Plant growth

- Somos is a tool that follows the plant in its overall growth.
- Each user is led to discover what the plant needs for healthy and flourishing growth.
- The user learns to take care of the plant from when it's small throughout its whole lifecycle.
- After using Somos with different plants it's easy to understand that each plant is different.

## Mindshift

### Plants as living beings

- Through the use of Somos, the user is led to discover plants from a new perspective, as living beings that communicate and change over time.
- Through the secondary activities related to the use of the object, the user receives new stimuli and knowledge about plants and the environment.
- Changing one's perception of the world of plants means seeing the world and one's surroundings in a different way.

### Relationship

- Connecting and creating a different relationship with plants is a first step in changing our perception of the world around us.
- The user learns to appreciate the beauty and complexity of a world in which he/she is not at the centre but only a small part of the system.
- Through the relationship with plants the user can learn collaboration, how to live together and understand others in a deeper way.

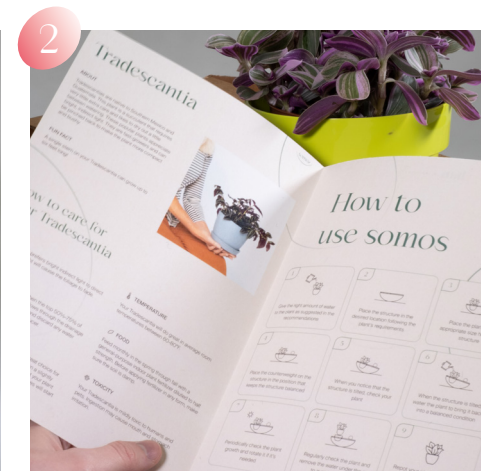
# How to use Somos

interaction

This section contains a brief explanation of how to interact with the product in order to use it correctly, guaranteeing the plant a healthy and optimal life and the user a conscious and engaging experience. Through simple gestures, users are led to take care of the plant, performing various actions that lead them to reflect and learn what the plant is telling them. With the use and interaction of the product, the perception that users have with plants will therefore change, learning to know them, take care of them, and connect with them, understanding that they are a living being subject to change.



The packaging is opened and all elements are removed from the inside: the plant, the structure, the counterweight and the instructions.



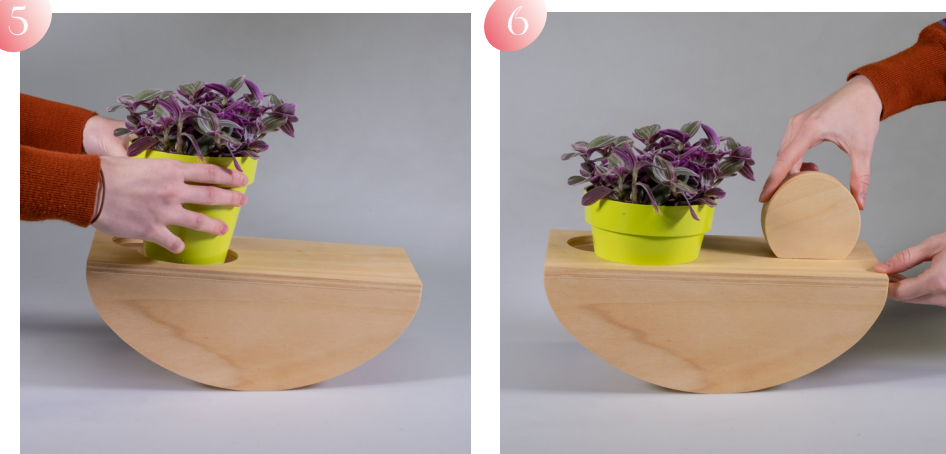
It is necessary to read the flyer containing the information about the type of plant received and the instructions for use given on it.



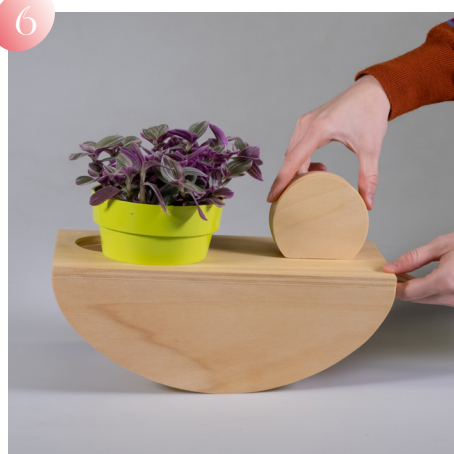
The structure is placed in the best location to ensure the right conditions for the plant, as described in the instructions.



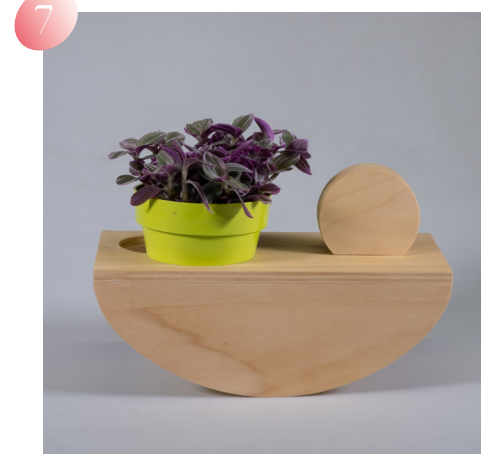
The plant must be watered to ensure optimum condition of the soil.



The plant is placed in the hole of the structure. Depending on the size of the pot the plant could be fitted in the bigger or in the smaller hole.



The counterweight is placed on the structure in the position that keeps the structure balanced.



The structure is balanced and the plant is in the right conditions.



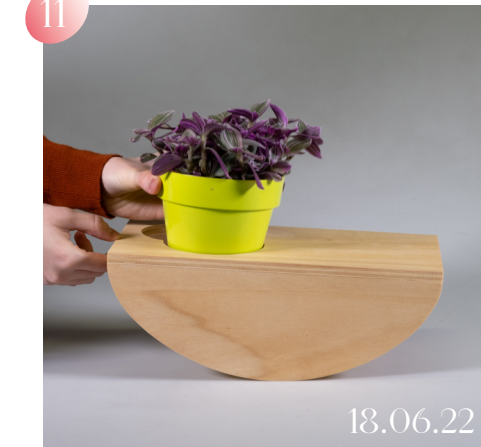
When the structure is tilted, it means that the plant needs user attention and to be watered to bring it back into a balanced condition.



Once the plant has been watered, it will return to a balanced situation.



After a few times, it is recommended to remove the plant from the additional pot and empty the excess water to avoid stagnation.



When reinserting the plant into the structure, it is best to rotate it slightly to ensure more uniform growth and development.



Once the plant has grown, the pot needs to be changed and the structure can be used to start a new cycle. User can order a new plant from our website.



# Different configurations



We designed Somos so that it could be purchased in different configurations, thus adapting to different types and sizes of plants and pots. At the moment of the purchase, the user can choose which type of plant to receive by supporting one of the partner associations. Also, Somos is characterised by its small size so that it can be placed comfortably in different places in the house, especially on tables, bedside tables, or other positions that ensure a healthy and ideal environment for the development of the plant. Based on the dimensions, the pot is intended for use with small to medium-sized plants, as the main purpose of the product is to help the user learn the needs of a plant and how to take care of it from a very young age. Once the user has used the pot for some months and the plant has grown he will no longer need to use it with the same grown plant and you can replace it with a new little plant.

One of our requirements was to give the user more flexibility to use the product also with his own pots and plants, and not only by the one provided in the moment of the purchase, thus extending its life cycle. Since our product is based on certain principles of physics, especially the change of weight when a plant is watered or dry, and the related change of inclination of the structure, for the object to tilt it is necessary to have a counterweight that balances the plant with a specific weight based on the one of the plant and the pot itself and the amount of water that is needed. For this reason, we have developed a number of different weights and it is our care to include in the purchase the one that suits the need of the plant.







product specifications

# The material

## Why plywood?

As far as plywood is concerned, our selection is based on our vision and the intrinsic values of our brand. Plywood is environmentally sustainable material because wood raw-material stores carbon. PEFC and FSC certificates guarantee that the wood raw material is from sustainably managed forests with legal logging operations. In addition, plywood manufacturing consumes less energy compared to e.g. aluminium, plastic or steel because the waste part can be reused making the lifecycle longer.





# The packaging

We developed the packaging for the product that can be used to transport all the components and the plant from the place where it is physically purchased to the end user's home. When designing the packaging we took into account a number of necessary requirements, including the fact that it should be easily transportable, space-saving, structurally sound for the plants during transport but at the same time allow them the air they need to survive. We also thought of a solution in which the plant could be added to the rest of the components when the product is collected by the user. We came up with a solution that develops vertically, guaranteeing useful space for the plant, which is embedded in a pre-cut piece of cardboard and has a handle from which it can be held and carried. In terms of the choice of materials, we chose FSC-certified recycled corrugated cardboard from a sustainable life cycle which is itself recyclable. As for the graphics, the idea is to have a few simple graphic elements in line with the style of the product, aimed at publicising the product itself, our mission and the partnership with the associations. In this case too, we opted for a soy ink, which is more sustainable than traditional ones.









product specifications

# Instructions

A fundamental part of the product are the instructions, extremely important to understand the needs of the plant with which the user will share his space and time. As each plant is different from the others, it will have particular needs in terms of positioning, watering, humidity and so on. In addition, the first time the user needs to understand our object and the properties that allow it to function, which is why it is useful to have a series of illustrated steps for the user to consult initially when opening the product. This is why we have included a flyer in the packaging, specific for the type of pot ordered and the plant received with it.





somos contextualized

# Somos in home setting









# Service

About han	60
Service and system	66
Personas and cjs	82



# Han

Han is a start-up which connects local producers of sustainable materials and environmental associations.







# Our manifesto

about han

## Humans as nature

Human beings are part of Nature, made with the same material of Plants, Animals, Fungi and all the other components on the Earth's ecosystem. We strongly encourage a genuine connection between humans and the other species living on Earth.

## We must respect plants' rights

All humans must respect and protect plants' rights through their everyday actions. We encourage a proactive behaviour to change our society's mindset and believe that small individual efforts can lead to a big change and help us feel part of nature.

## Learning from nature

We believe learning can happen not just in a traditional way but also understanding and being open to gathering knowledge from what other living creatures can teach us.

## Design with nature

We are aware of the global challenges we face as humankind and strive to accelerate our transition towards a better future for our planet. We value natural diversity and technological progress and believe they can work together and benefit from each other for a better future.

## Understand nature

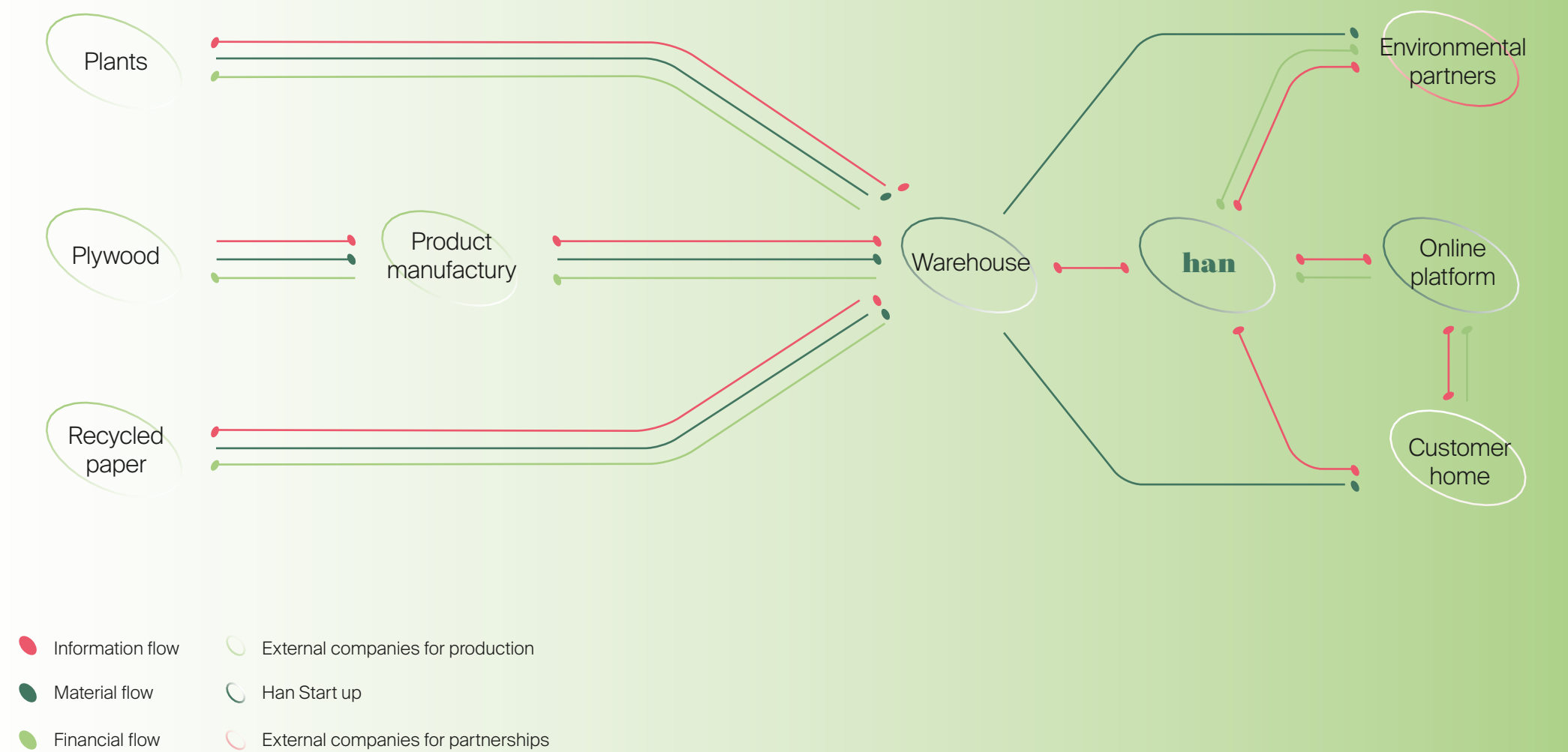
We believe in the importance of learning to recognise and respect natural processes by listening and observing them. We think a deeper understanding of nature's balances is one of the keys to a real and durable change in our approach.

## Bring nature back

We want to rewild and re-green the cities where we live. We strive to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to develop socially and environmentally sustainable cities.



# System map



# Stakeholder map

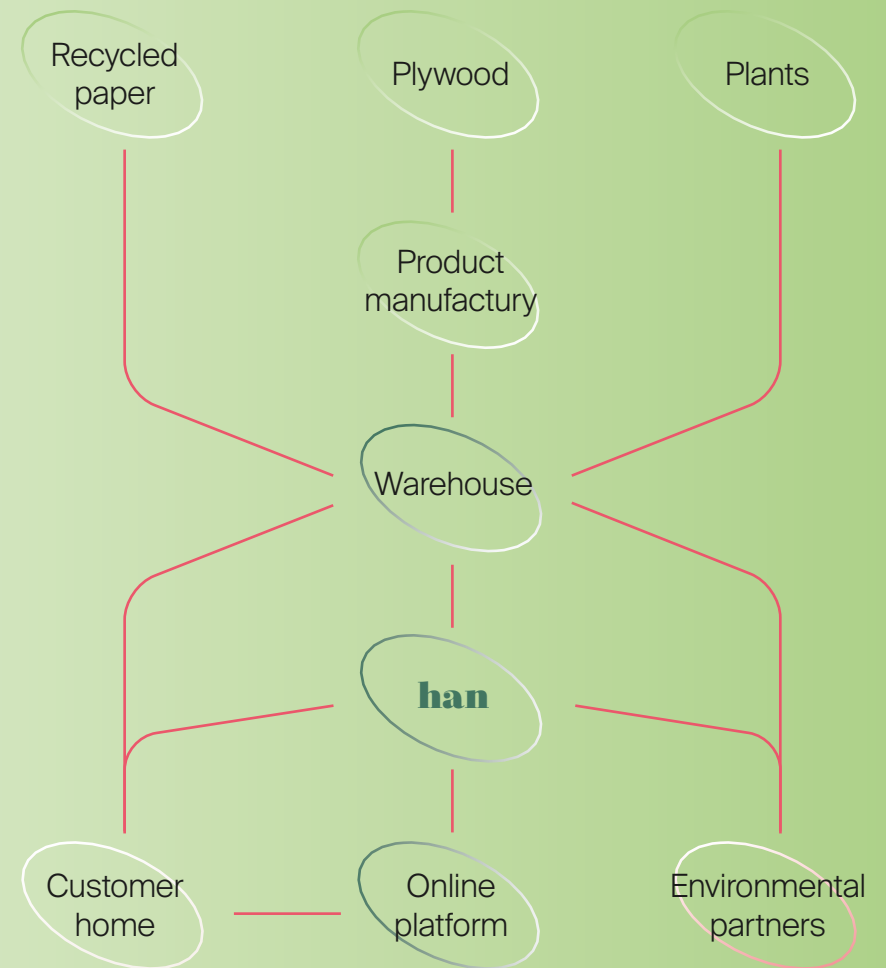
Suppliers provide all the materials to build Somos: paper for the packaging, plywood for the product itself and plants coming from a shared garden.

In the warehouse all materials are collected and managed by the logistic clerk, the delivery clerk and specialized workers.

The start-up includes entrepreneurs, investors and many departments as accounting, marketing, customer care and product design.

The online platform requires developers, customer care, a hosting service and content management.

The environmental partners are bigger organizations collaborating with Han by selling Somos. Parts of the revenues will be donated to these organizations to support them.





## Production partnerships

service and system



## Production chain

We partner with the organizations related to the production of our product: we have suppliers of recycled materials, manufacturers for the construction of the product's components and plant suppliers, which are produced by local shared gardens. We provide to the manufactory the design projects and they come back to us with all the parts, that they deliver to our warehouse in which it's assembled in the packaging. A similar thing happens with plants, we ask our supplier for the type of plants we need, based on partnerships with the associations that will resell them.

## Material supplier

In our company we incorporate environmentally friendly production processes into our operations at multiple steps throughout the process. As a start-up company, we take personal responsibility for the selection of our partners and material supplier, in fact our product and packaging are made from sustainable materials. We only select producers with a clear and defined environmental mission, who have greater ecological awareness and certifications that guarantee the origin of the material from responsibly managed forests according to strict environmental, social and economic standards. In addition, we rely on local producers who collaborate with the territory and the community that inhabits it, valuing and protecting every aspect of its improvement. With our eco-conscious partner suppliers we go towards being responsible for a minimized output of waste.

## Plywood - Panguaneta

Panguaneta is an Italian family-run business, now in its third generation of producers based in Sabbioneta, along the banks of the river Po. It is the Italian and world leader in the production of poplar plywood, which comes from a short supply chain. Poplar has a faster growth cycle than other broadleaf trees and can be grown on marginal land, which is why it has historically been cultivated on the banks of the Po, as the company continues to do, creating a close relationship with the territory. Different thicknesses of PEFC and FSC certified poplar plywood are available in the catalogue, including PureGlue™, made of 100% Italian poplar with no formaldehyde, through an innovative non-toxic gluing system.



service and system

## Production partnerships

Plants supplier

For the production of the plants we rely on a shared garden in the interland of Milan, called *Il giardino degli aromi* that is a shared garden, with large outdoor spaces, greenhouses and indoor spaces for cultural initiatives and events of various kinds. They take care of the planting and initial maintenance of the plants that we later sell in our product. This type of collaboration was chosen to help small local realities built by people who believe in a new concept of living with nature on a daily basis and who are socially engaged in creating a community. Han and *Il giardino degli aromi* share many values, both environmentally and socially, for this reason we support these realities economically by buying their products. At the same time it is possible for us to advertise Somos within the garden itself, for example with the volunteers who work there, who may want to buy it or give it to someone.

Packaging

For the production of packaging we rely on a cooperative that deals with the creation of cardboard boxes, packaging and other advertising tools. Besides, offering the possibility to use recycled cardboard for the creation of our packaging, this kind of company has an important social impact. In fact, the cooperative aims at promoting social integration by hiring people with disabilities and placing them in a common working environment. Our choice was made following criteria of environmental sustainability and inclusiveness, just like the choice of relying on shared gardens.



# Han's main components

service and system



## Han start-up

We are a company that has its own values, mission and vision, and communicates and promotes them through the design, and the collaboration with environmental associations. Our start-up acts as a mediator between companies producing eco-friendly materials and associations that promote initiatives, projects and activities related to sustainability. In this context han's main objective is to design products that help the customers of our partners to get closer and closer to a new vision of nature. The aim in fact is to teach a new kind of environmental awareness that sees the total collaboration between human and nature.

## Warehouse

It is the place where we store the products before the shipping. Here we put together the components of the product, structure, plant and packaging, preparing it for the delivery.

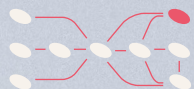
## Online platform

On the online platform people can do different things. They can buy our product, that is always the same but the type of plant changes according to the association with which it is sold. There is also a section for selling only plants and weights, without the pot, so that a customer who has already bought Somos can reuse it with different plants. They can also discover the information about our startup and its partnerships, their events and activities. It's possible to get all necessary information and knowledge on nature topics including taking care of plants, plants rights, etc. in the part dedicated to the blog.



# Our environmental partnerships

service and system



## Commercial chain

Our environmental partners include associations and initiative projects that believe in our product and find it in line with their mission. A sales collaboration is created, in which they insert our product within their spaces or events, that we promote on our website. The physical touchpoints between our product and customers are therefore through our partners, who are in charge of selling *Somos*. Customers know our product mainly through our partners, but also through shared gardens or our social platforms.

## Environmental partners

As a start-up, we understand that our success depends on our relationship with society and the environment and that's why we actively collaborate with relevant parties, such as industry organizations, sustainable production companies and environmentally responsible initiatives, if our product and values are aligned with their mission.

We believe that one of the most effective ways to sustain the realization of a more environmentally sustainable future is to support environmental organizations. These organizations are usually equipped with the background research and the action plan to fully serve their goals. By cooperating with them we are able to tackle mutual challenges and have a positive impact on people perception of nature. We've grouped them into three different categories - the local communal gardens, associations and initiative projects. We see these collaborations as a great way to fulfil our company's mission towards making mind shift in perception of nature, and in particular plants. They then take care of selling and advertising *Somos* on their platforms and at their events, and we do the same through our networks, creating a return not only economically but also in terms of image.



# Main partners

Arbolia is a benefit company created to develop new green areas in Italy. By contributing to Arbolia, we support its afforestation and reforestation initiatives thereby showing our desire to make a positive impact on society and the planet and sharing this choice with our customers. This partnership also gives us the opportunity to sell our product and gain visibility through the communication activities, spaces and events promoted and organised by Arbolia.

Arbolia

Eliante is a non-profit social cooperative in the field of environmental sustainability focused on the issues of education, the protection of biodiversity, the promotion of energy efficiency and other topics. We support Eliante by contributing and donating a percentage of the revenue of our product to a specific initiative and obtaining a return in terms of image and reputation.

Eliante

One Tree Planted is an environmentally conscious non-profit organization that provides individuals, businesses and organizations the ability to easily support tree planting. As part of the ongoing contribution to this organization we donate a percentage of our sales, set up a recurring donation, and plant one tree for each product sold.

One Tree Planted

By buying our product customers support one of our environmental partners. They do something good for themselves, nature and the ecosystem.



Han x Arbolia

Plant: Tradescantia  
Weight: 250 gr



Han x Eliante

Plant: Begonia Indian Summer  
Weight: 400 gr



Han x One Tree Planted

Plant: Primrose  
Weight: 150 gr

# How we sell Somos

During educational initiatives

Indirect sale

Association's stand

It will be possible to find Somos in the stands of our partners during events organized by them or by other entities, so that they can sell our product as an additional gadget to the donations they receive for their initiatives or projects.

Association's platforms

Also on their websites, in the appropriate sections related to products / gadgets / donations will be present Somos, sold as the product of a collaboration between them and han, aimed at a new perception of the plants that we keep at home with us every day.

Direct sale

On our online shop

Somos

The product can be purchased directly on Han's website, which customers can discover through advertising, word of mouth and seeing the product in shared gardens or in partners stands. Moreover, on the online platform clients will be able to buy Somos paired with three different plants, depending on which organization they decide to donate to.

Somos refill

Obviously it will be possible to reuse Somos after the plant we bought with it has grown and needs to be transplanted. In fact, Han dedicates a part of its online shop to the sale of replacement kits, consisting of a new plant and a weight associated with it, in order to reuse Somos and start a new learning path with a new plant.



personas and cjs

# Dasha

“I love the trasformation of the city, I wish I could be part of it contributing with my positive attitude and passions”

## Bio

Dasha is a 28 y.o girl, who moves to Milan 8 years ago to start the university. During these last few years, she has been able to perceive all the changes that have taken place in the city and has been amazed and surprised by them. She would like to have the opportunity to be part of this change. One of her most frequent habits is to escape to the mountains as soon as she has a spare moment, as she loves climbing and skiing as well as spending light-hearted and enjoyable moments in nature with her friends.

## Behaviours and habits

- She likes camping and fires
- Loves to do outdoor trips
- She doesn't spend a lot of time at home, cause she lives alone but she always wants to be surrounded by people.

## Pain points

- She isn't satisfied of her job so she's looking for another one
- Listening to the news, she is afraid about the future
- Keeps killing her house plants

## Needs and motivations

- She wants to bring all the positive vibes of spending time in mountain in the city, living this same sensation daily.
- Being more connected with nature
- To get involved in new activities, she needs to receive new stimuli and get knowledge

## Dimensions

Time spent in the nature

Sociality

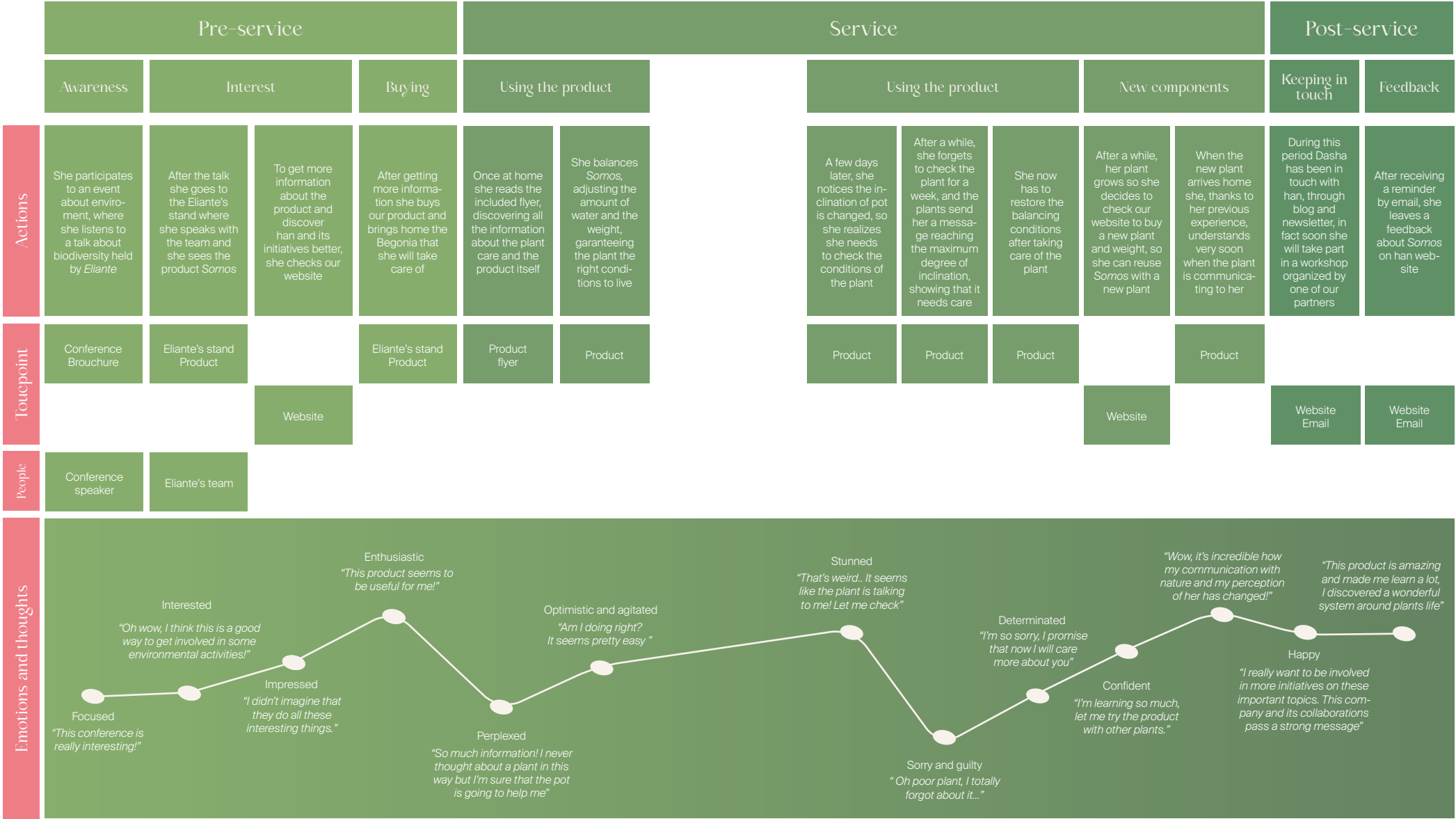
Ecofriendly lifestyle

Knowledge about plants' care

Open-mindedness



# Customer journey





personas and cjs

## Riccardo

"I discovered the beauty of taking care of a common space, for a community that loves nature and wants to live with it."

### Bio

Riccardo is 25 years old student of law and he always lived in Milan with his family. In the light of recent green transformation of cities, he decided to take an active part in this by enrolling in the shared garden *Il giardino degli aromi*, which he attends twice a week since about 3 months. He loves animals very much, in fact he is a part-time dog sitter and thanks to them he has become accustomed to frequent the green areas of the city.

### Behaviours and habits

- He walks in the city garden a lot thanks to his work
- He likes spending time alone to dedicate to his passions
- He likes to do DIY objects as decoration

### Pain points

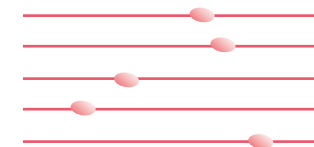
- During the exam session hasn't much time for his passions
- He hates bad weather when he needs to go outside with his dogs

### Needs and motivations

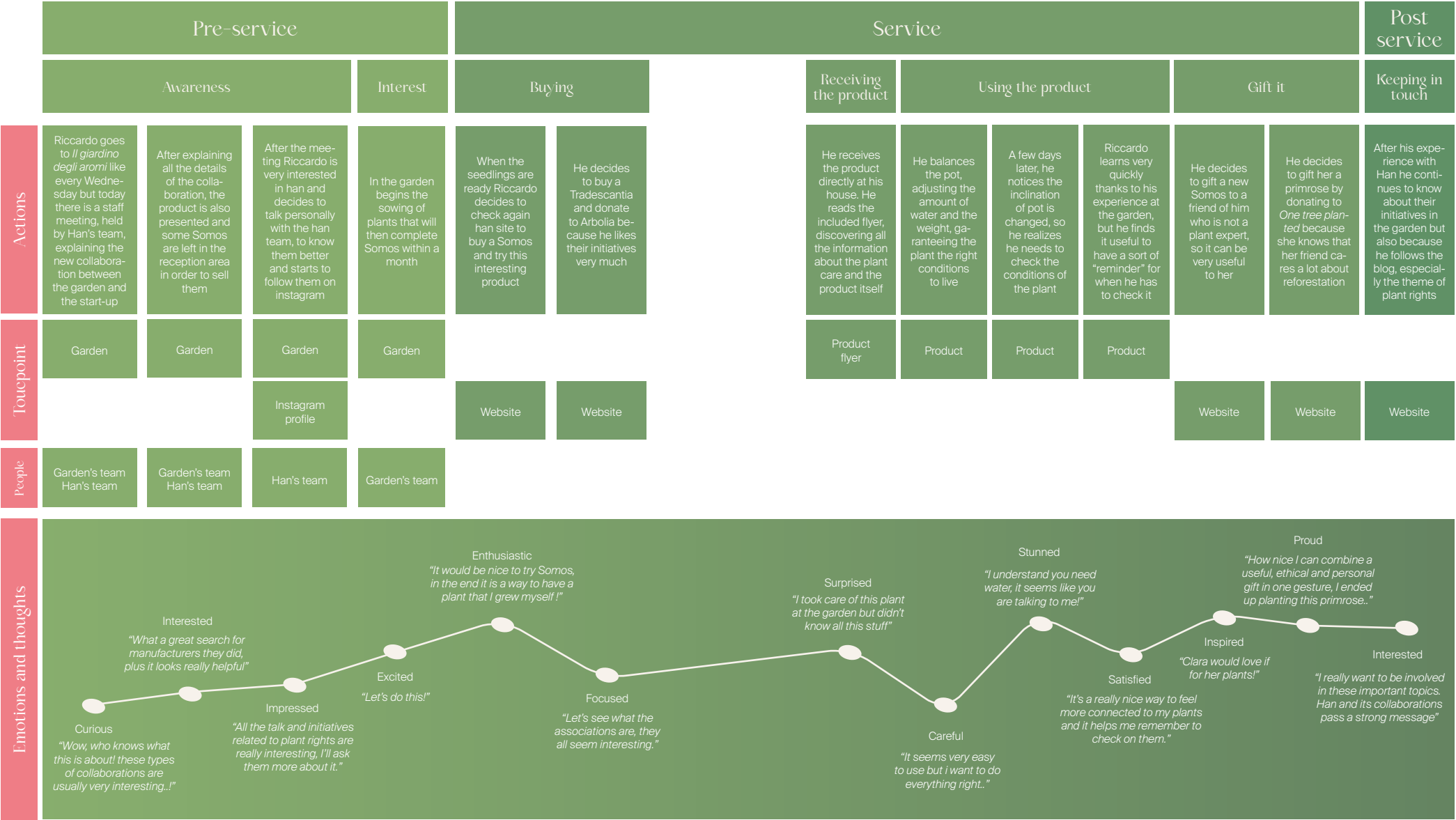
- Having a healthy and active lifestyle
- He wants to be more eco-friendly
- He wants to improve his knowledge about the plants

### Dimensions

Time spent in the nature  
 Sociality  
 Ecofriendly lifestyle  
 Knowledge about plants' care  
 Open-mindedness



# Customer journey





# Branding

About Somos	92
Visual identity	98
Advertising	102



about somos

# Creating Somos

## Somos' storytelling

*For a long time she gave us the opportunity of an incredible journey. She gifted us our home. She gifted joy, moments, stability, connections.*

*Then, we met power and took advantage out of it. We took control from something that wasn't meant to be ours, and with great powers, you know, great responsibilities, right?*

*Now it's time to open our eyes to this moment and embrace change. A new era might start with a single idea, a single intention, a small and significant action.*

*We are now totally out of balance with her. Our part didn't respect its place and then we've put too much weight.*

*We've put one, thinking it wasn't enough. We've put two without caring, having no clue. We kept going, forgot about knowing.*

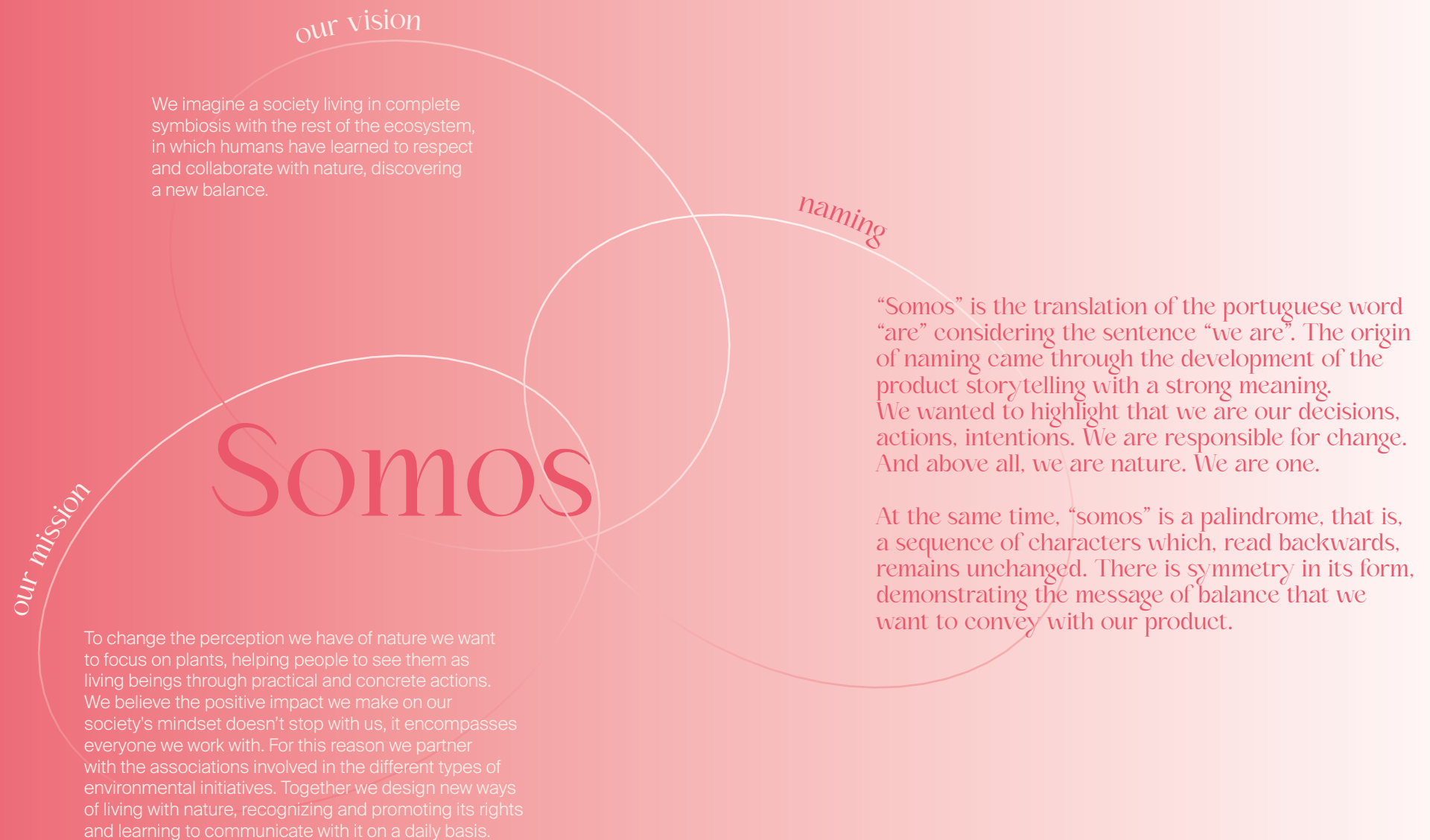
*We can't decide for others but for ourselves. We can't control the world, but our intentions, our decisions, our actions.*

*What path do we want to take?  
Should we take out some weight?*

*We need to relearn, reinvent.  
Know our place and balance our home again.*

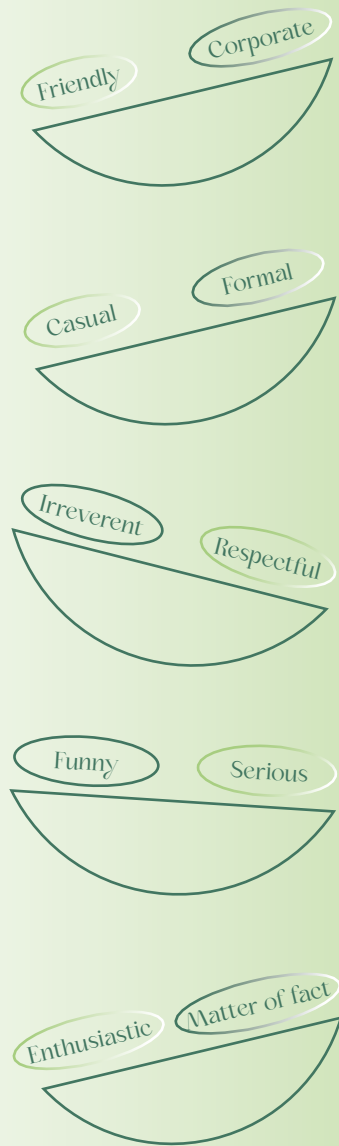
*There is no she and us. We are one.*







We strive to highlight how the product allows people to change their perception of plants and develop a true relationship with them. Our voice is impactful, resilient, and friendly. We do not intend to make people feel guilty or promote a romantic and naive view of our relationships with nature but, on the contrary, make them think about and be aware of possible ways of change and actions they can take on a daily basis. Our tone of voice is reflected in the slogans associated with the product advertising, in the typography of posts on social media and in the aesthetics of our website. All these touchpoints are characterized by simple phrases and graphics that intrigue users as they want to lead to a reflection on the issues we care about. Advertising through posters, flyers, etc. is more focused on raising awareness of Han and Somos, while social media are used primarily to promote collaborations and initiatives.





# Logo and palette

We opted to keep the logo simple, going along with the proposal of the service. We used the standard logo for branding titles, applying details to further characterize the product: the use of the curved line identifying the shape and balance, the rotation of the “o”’s counter and the inversion of the last letter to highlight the naming symmetry. The logo was designed starting from the font Kaftan, which has then been modified in kerning and in specific traits and shapes to obtain a simple yet balanced result.

The primary color of our palette is a dark green, while the secondary ones are a lighter green, a bold pink and a neutral tone. The two shades of green are a classical reference to nature and, when used with pink, they create a strong contrast, representing and suggesting nature’s habit of finding a balance even between very different elements.

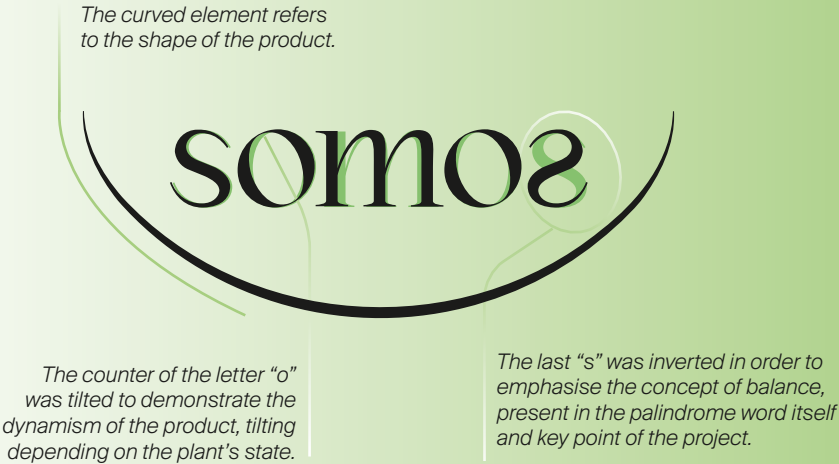
## Palette

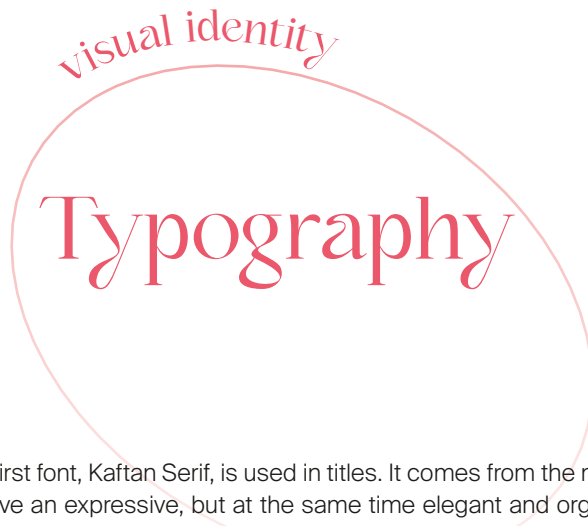
Hex: 417661	Hex: A7CD80	Hex: EB576B	Hex: F2F2EC
C: 75 M: 33 Y: 63 K: 20	C: 42 M: 0 Y: 62 K: 0	C: 0 M: 78 Y: 43 K: 0	C: 4 M: 5 Y: 8 K: 0
R: 66 G: 118 B: 97	R: 167 G: 205 B: 128	R: 235 G: 87 B: 107	R: 247 G: 242 B: 236

## Logo variations



## Logo construction





The first font, Kaftan Serif, is used in titles. It comes from the need to have an expressive, but at the same time elegant and organic font to evoke the forms of nature. On the other hand, the choice of Suisse Intl Light, a sans-serif font, for the main body of text stems from the desire to maintain a minimal and clean approach in line with the design choices of the product and to ensure high readability of the texts.

### Kaftan Serif Regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
 0123456789  
 !"£\$%&/'()=?^°+àèìòù

### Suisse Intl Light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
 0123456789  
 !"£\$%&/'()=?^°+àèìòù

We are  
nature

We are  
balance



# Advertising

somos







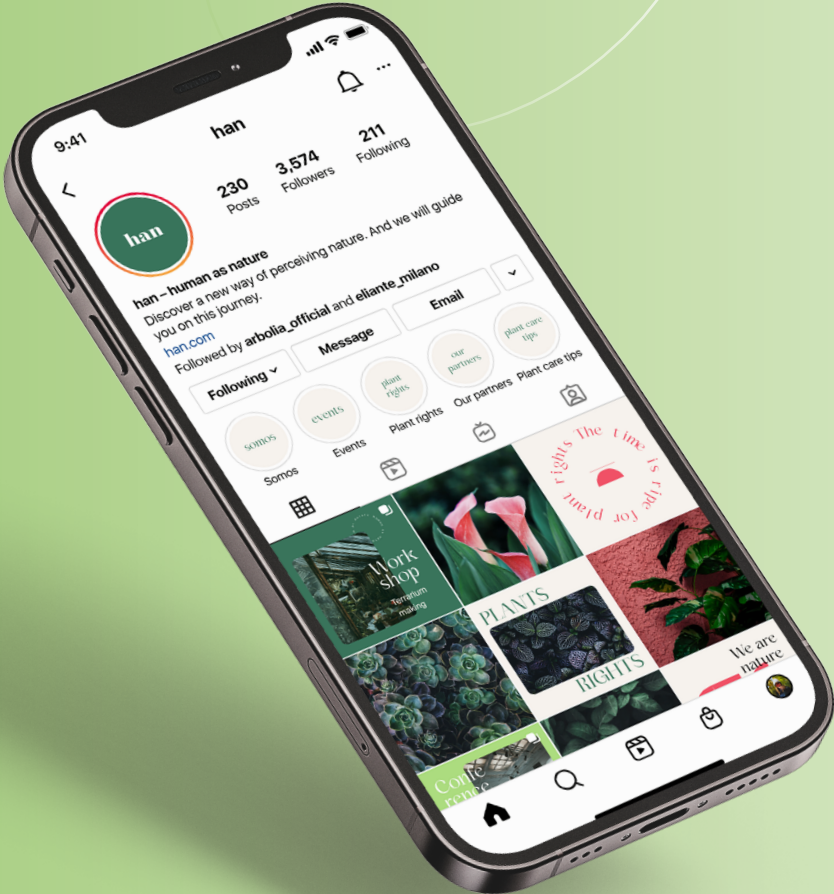






advertising

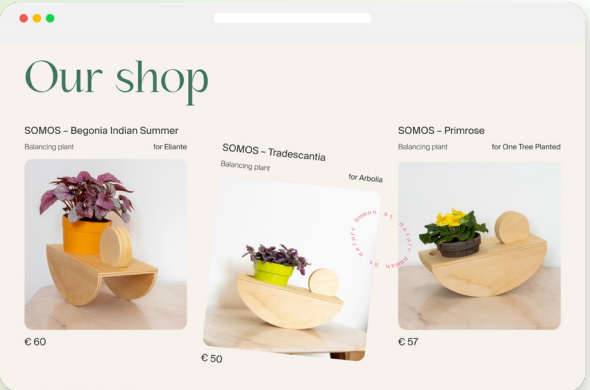
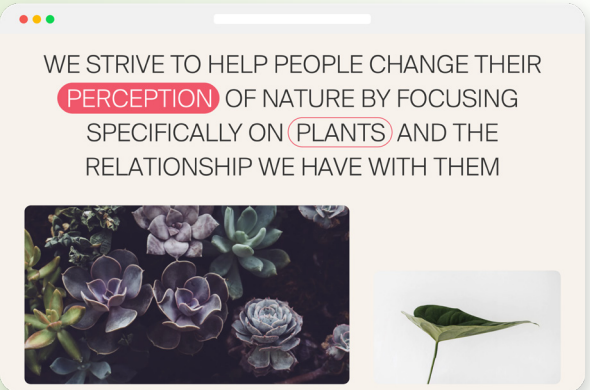
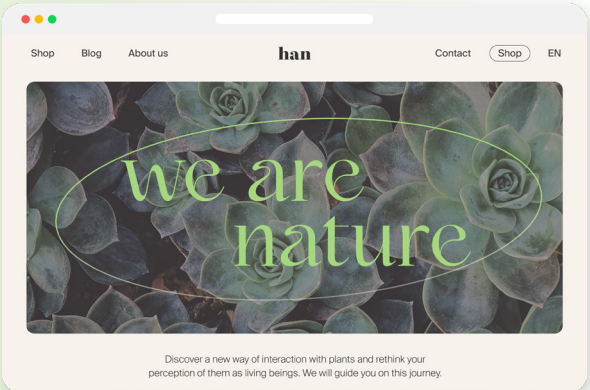
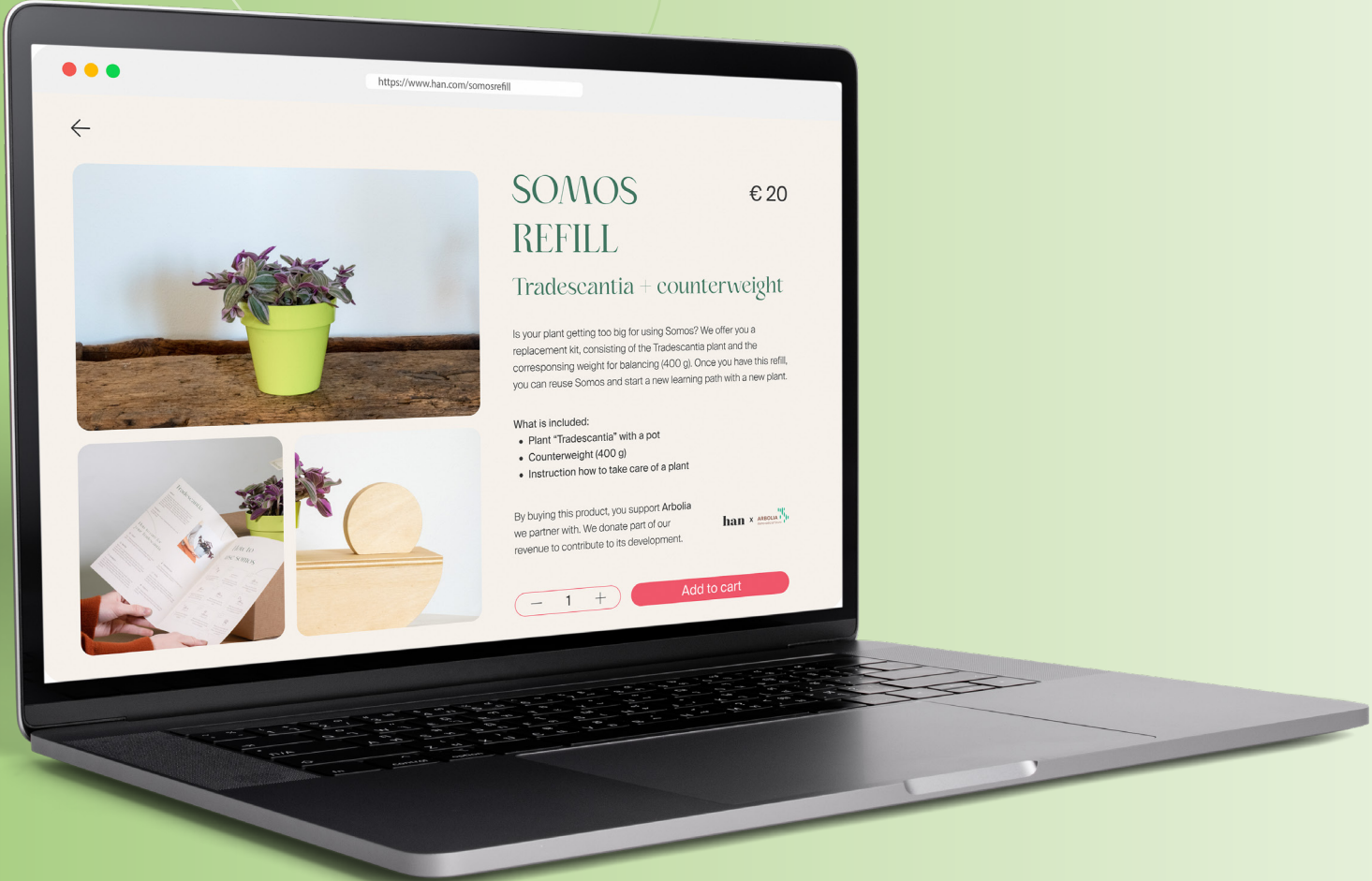
# Social media contents





advertising

# Online platform





# Annex

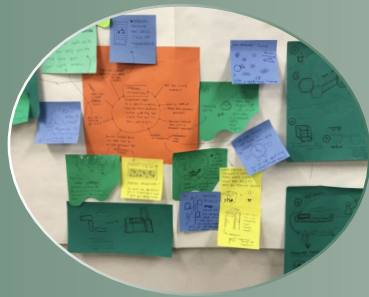
Ideation process	114
Prototyping	120
Technical drawings	128
About plants	130



# Ideation process

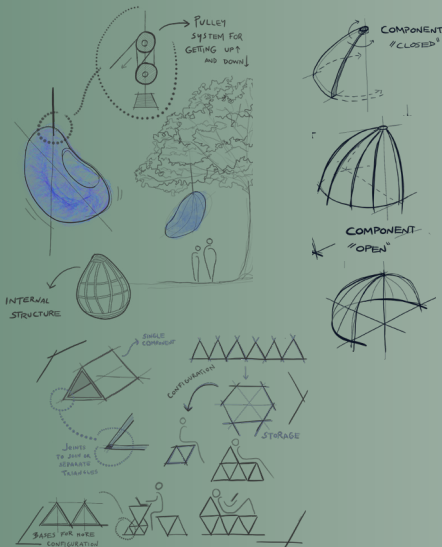
## 1. Ideation

At the beginning of our process we brainstormed the ideas about learning in the future. We used the “How Might We...” tool that helped us to come up with our first raw concepts - Emotional reader, Time zone productivity enhancer and Fluid knowledge exchanger inside the Universal University scenario



## 2. First concept generation

At this step we focused on outdoor spaces and developed three concepts that were presented to other students during the first exhibition - Cocoon, Sound shell and Trianglearn. Taking in consideration all the feedbacks, the best option seemed to be to focus on the relaxation and privacy aspects of Cocoon and the focus and concentration aspects of Sound Shell, creating a new concept that would combine both studying and relaxing.



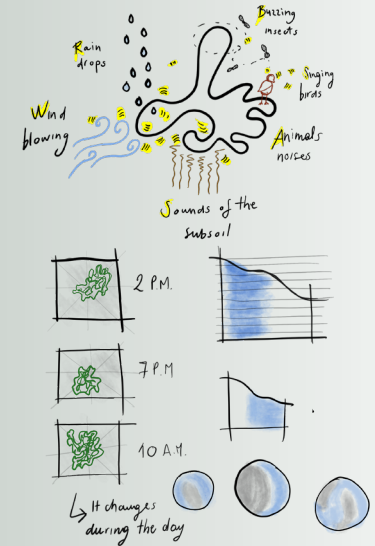
## 3. Research

We realized that our concepts were too human-centric and that it is necessary to take into account the context of the environment to generate solutions. This brought us to the research about green cities and the relationship between nature and learning process. As the foundation of our vision we decided to focus on the mind shift to propose the idea of humans as nature by seeing themselves as part of nature and learning from nature.



## 4. Brainstorming

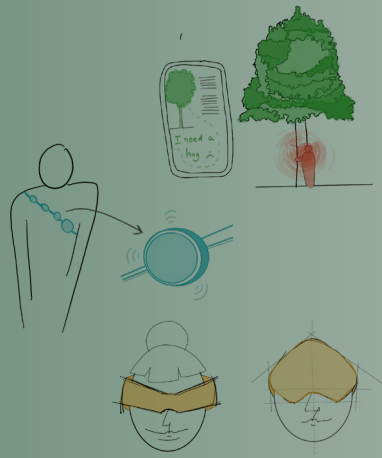
We generated new concepts focusing on bringing educational benefits from nature's systems and the behaviours it adopts on a daily basis, specifically “slowness and cyclicity” and “adaptation and collaboration”. We proposed a Calendar based on nature cycle and a Collector of sounds of nature. According to the feedback, our ideas were too general and we needed to focus on specific solutions and find case studies of the relationship between humans and nature.



# Ideation process

## 5. Brainstorming

By focusing on the connection with trees we proposed a concept about hugging trees. Also, we brainstormed on how human can perceive the world from a different point of view, inspired by snails' perception. This is how our Snail eyewear concept was created. After feedback, we realized that we need to focus on something practical, not exploitation but regeneration, that we could manage to do in a short amount of time.



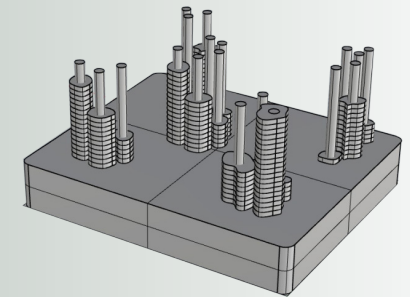
## 6. Brainstorming

We came up with ideas about a conversational tree object, a tree time capsule, a 3D map for forest preservation and connection and an object to listen and spend time in nature. According to the feedback, we needed to eliminate the tree time capsule and Tree light ideas, choose one of other good ideas and develop it better.



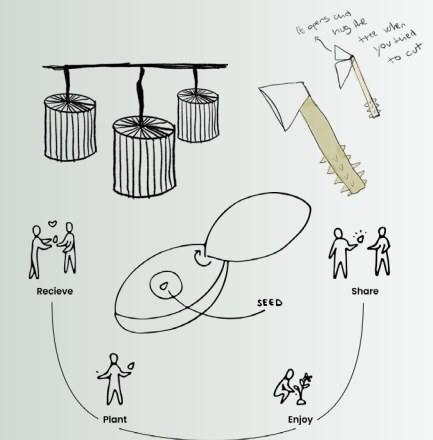
## 7. Development

We developed the ideas about an Interaction map with trees and created a prototype of the model. Our product looked nice from an aesthetic point of view, but there was no big value of it and again it was too human-centric.



## 8. Brainstorming

At this stage we decided to focus on plants and developed plants' rights. This new idea to change humans' perception of plants brought us to creating the following concepts - Symbolic flower, Feel it and Tool kit. The first and the third ideas had success, but still both of them needed to be developed better. We decided to go for the third one.

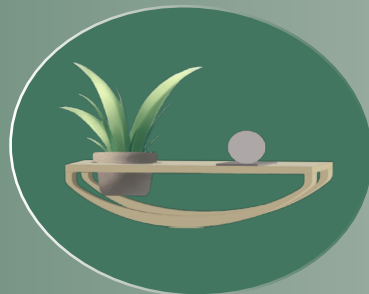
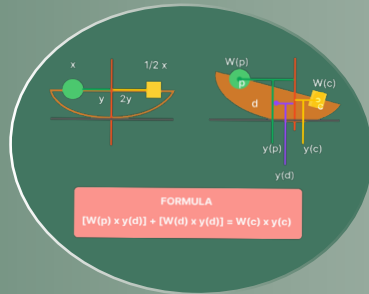




# Ideation process

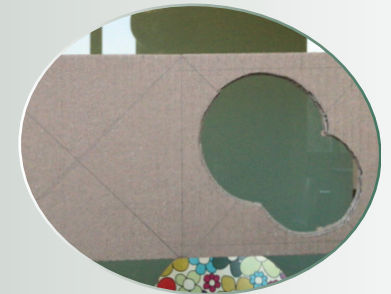
## 9. Somos ideation

We dropped the idea of the tool kit because we wanted to find an object that was more common and immediately reminding of plants. So we decided to focus on the world of pots and on how they could teach something to its user. We thought this would be possible through movement and balancing mechanisms that depend on the plant's needs. First we tested with a prototype and researched all the necessary things about physics and plants. Then we developed the form and service around the product.



## 10. Somos development

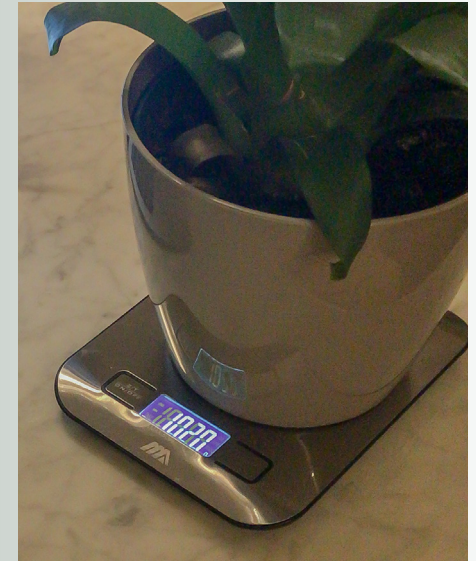
We presented Somos product and the service behind it. According to the feedback, we needed to develop the shape better and make the object more flexible for different sizes of plants and different objects as counterweights. We had two options: 1. let people use different things in their house as counterweights for balancing the plant by adding gamification part to our product; 2. give people only one specific counterweight and thereby make them focus on the plant and on taking care of it. We decided to go for the latter. As for the service, we changed our idea from Han as an association to a start-up that partners with other associations.



# Calculations and testing

prototyping

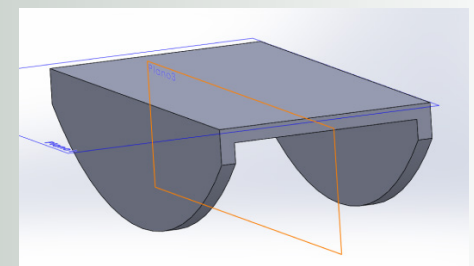
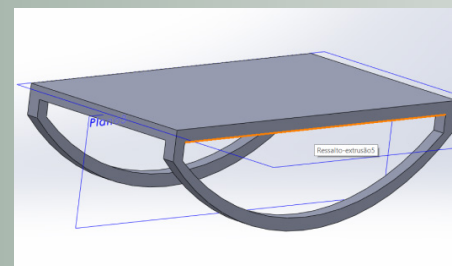
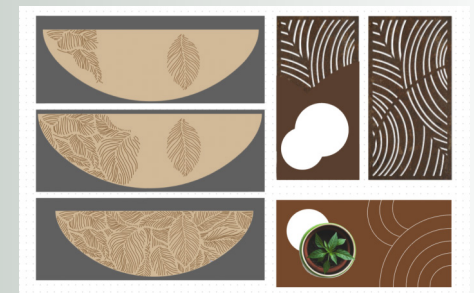
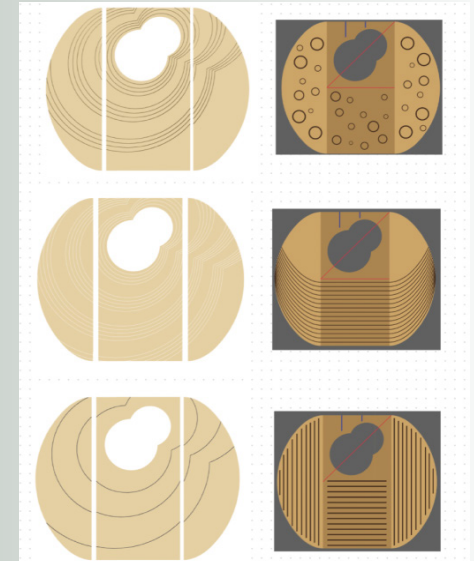
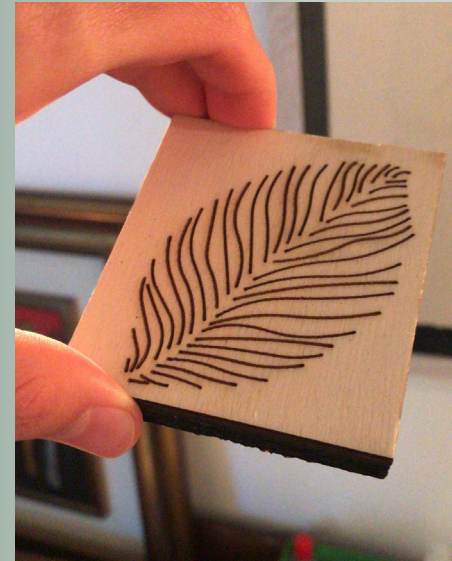
First we studied the physics of the finished product and possible solutions in maximum detail in order to better understand the requirements for the specifications such as dimensions, weight, distance, angle, etc. to use the product's parts correctly and efficiently. Then we built a prototype to test and understand how our product can work with the plant as well as to identify inconsistencies with the requirements as soon as possible. It also allowed to understand what kind of counterweight was needed to develop further. We have studied the principles of physics related to the change of weight when a plant is watered or dry and tested different counterweights with a specific weight. We developed a number of counterweights - for small to medium-sized plants of about 150 g and 250 g is sufficient, up to larger plants for which about 400 g of counterweight are needed.





# Identifying aesthetics

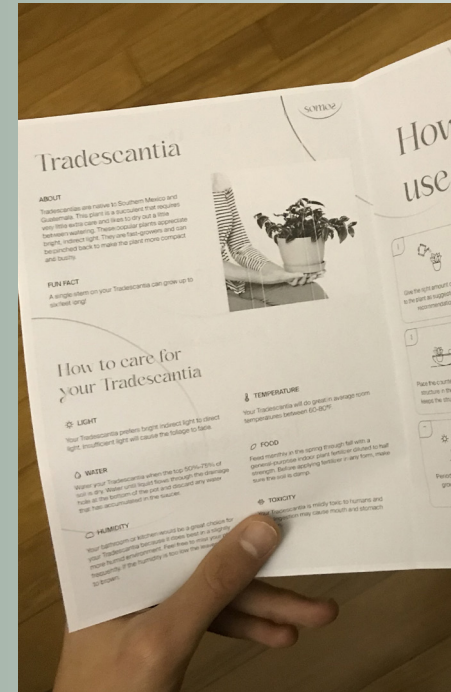
After studying the more technical aspects, we began to think about how to treat the surface of *Somos*. We initially thought of creating holes in the semicircular faces, but we realized that they would create a visual imbalance. Then we thought about laser engravings, but the risk was to distract attention from the main function of the object, which is to look at the plant. In the end we opted to leave the object as simple as possible, so that the inclination would be clear and the attention would fall only on the plant, without creating patterns that could look like measuring scales that were not useful to the object itself.



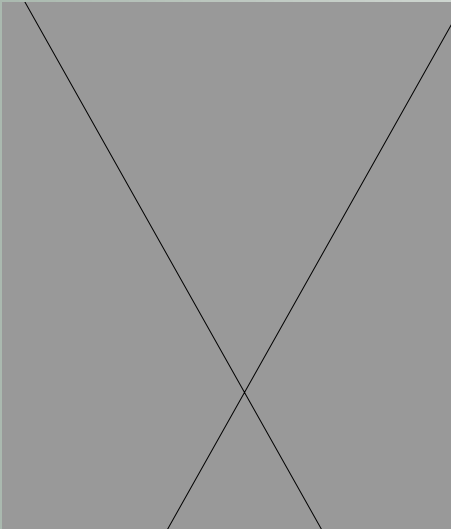
# prototyping

## Final development

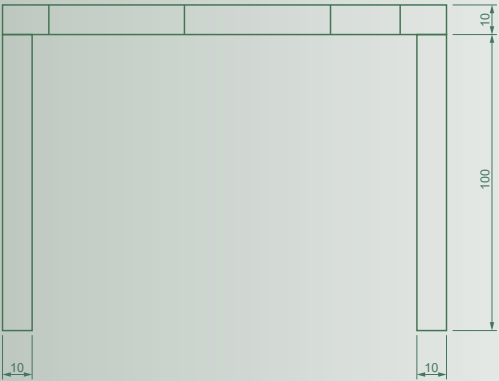
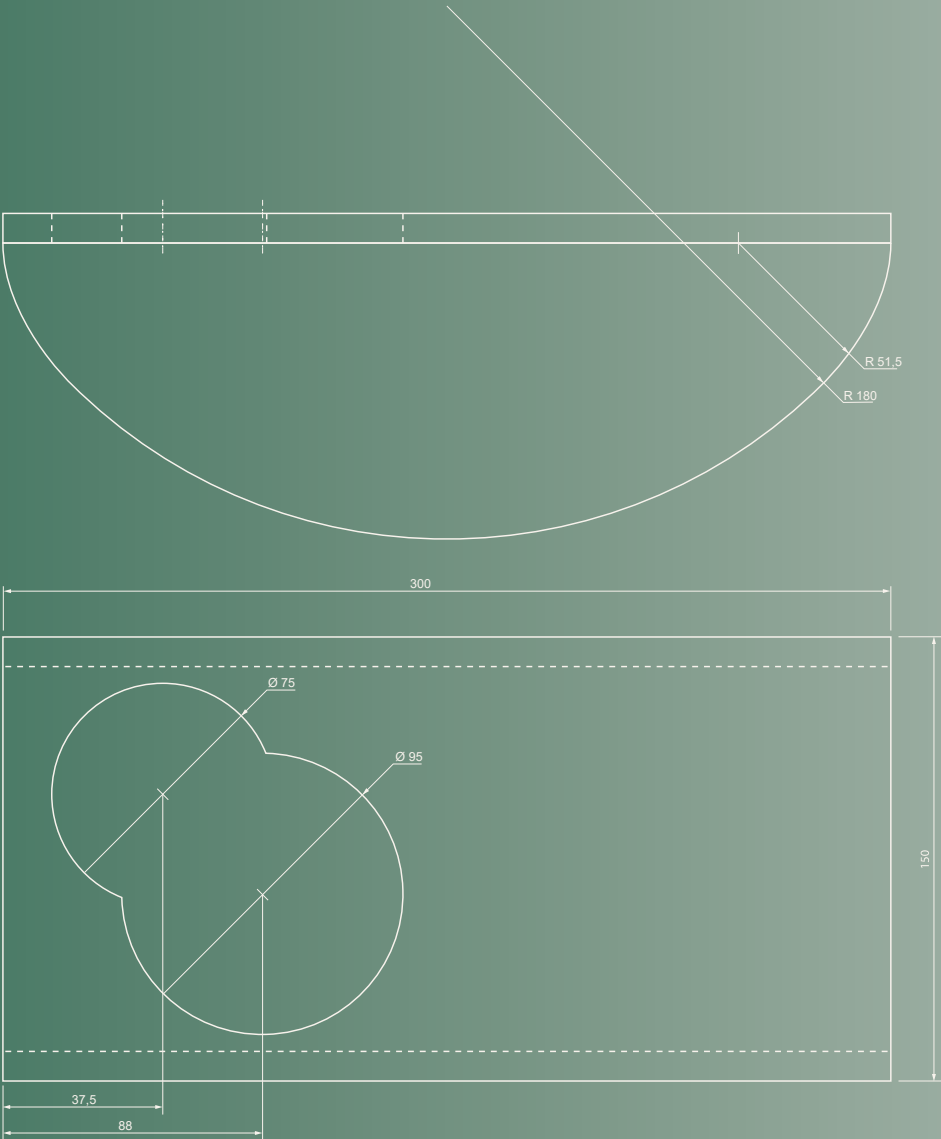
After several cardboard prototypes, we started making wooden prototypes, first laser cut and then by hand. The first test prototype was laser cut to see the effect of the dark edge on the object, which could have helped the user to perceive the inclination of Somos. Seeing the result we decided to make a hand-cut prototype because the black edges contrast too much with the color of the plywood and was not useful to the understanding of the tool. We then thought of a packaging for the transport of *Somos* when it is delivered in person, based on criteria of portability and simplicity, so that the various components can fit together.







# Technical drawings



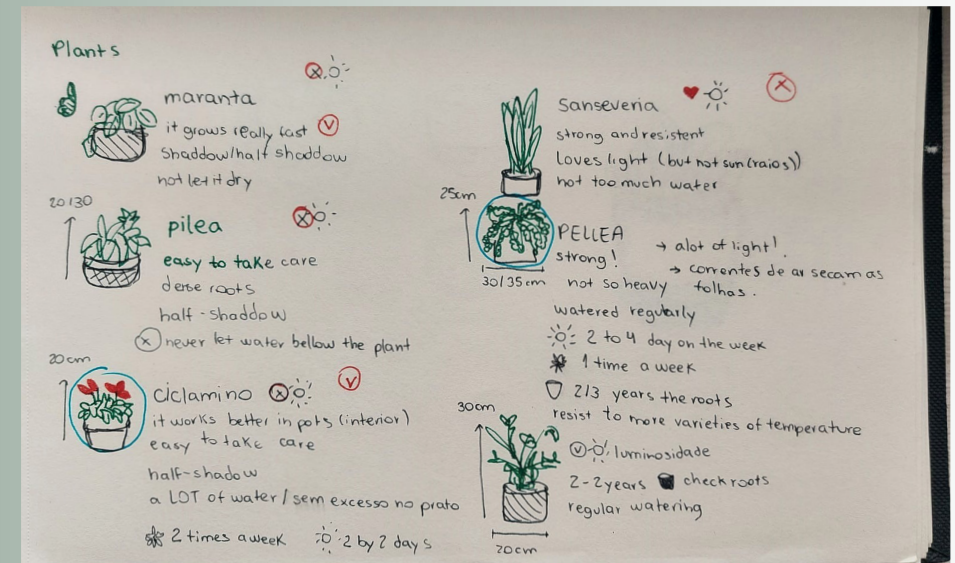
NAME: SOMOS		SHEET:  1 / 1
COURSE: INNOVATION STUDIO		
SCALE:  1 : 1	MATERIAL: PLYWOOD	DATE: 14/01/2022
	STUDENTS: ANITA COLOMBO, MARTA CONTE, DARIA KOVALEVA, JULIANA MACEDO MAINES, SAMUELE SALA VENI	



# Research about plants

When choosing specific plants for our product, we focused on some main requirements-plant resistance that is good for people who learn how to take care of plants and do it for the first time, as well as adaptable plants that are able to survive in conditions when a person does not always give the plants the necessary amount of water. An important requirement was also the plant's need in absorbing lots of water since watering plants is the main idea of our product's mechanism and the main action people do for taking care and learning with our tool.

For example, Tradescantia, as one of the selected plants based on the research, resists short periods of drought, as well as excess water. The ideal condition to grow for this plant is to always have a slightly humid substrate, it's needed to be moistened generously twice a week in summer and once in winter. Moreover, Begonia and Primrose also met the requirements described above. Besides, we also studied the materials of the pot and analysed the characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of each one in terms of using it for growing plants. Our choice fell on clay material that has a variety of benefits when used for planting pots. Clay pots provide a healthy environment for most plants and that was the most important criterion.



Connecting  
with nature  
is a matter  
of balance.



# Bibliography

Arbolia. <https://www.arbolia.it/it/home/>

Bar-On, Y. M., Phillips, R., & Milo, R. (2018). The biomass distribution on Earth. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115(25), 6506–6511.  
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1711842115>

Bloomscape. <https://bloomscape.com>

Cambridge Dictionary. (2021, November 17). nature.  
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/it/dizionario/inglese/nature>

Carrington, D. (2021, October 29). Humans just 0.01% of all life but have destroyed 83% of wild mammals. *The Guardian*.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/21/human-race-just-001-of-alllife-but-has-destroyed-over-80-of-wild-mammals-study>

DIRT Virtual Webinar Launch with Arizona Muse [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6MeHmADoh8&feature=youtu.be>

Ducarme, F., & Couvet, D. (2020). What does 'nature' mean? *Palgrave Communications*, 6(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-020-0390-y>

Earth Overshoot Day 2021 Home - #MoveTheDate. (2021, November 1). Earth Overshoot Day. <https://www.overshootday.org>

Eliante. <https://www.eliante.eco>

Emine Zehra Kasap, Feyza Ağzitemiz, & Gülten Ünal. (2021). Cognitive, Mental and Social Benefits of Interacting with Nature: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Happiness and Health*, 1(1), 16–27.

Fighting Climate Change and Re-launching the Global Economy: The Challenges for the G20. (2021, July 21). ISPI.  
<https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/fighting-climate-change-and-re-launching-globaleconomy-challenges-g20-31201>

Forest and food solutions for the climate crisis. (2020, December 10). G20 Insights. [https://www.g20-insights.org/policy\\_briefs/forest-and-food-solutions-for-the-climate-crisis/](https://www.g20-insights.org/policy_briefs/forest-and-food-solutions-for-the-climate-crisis/)

Gelio, P. P. (1991). Piante in casa e sul terrazzo. Come conoscerle e coltivarle. Giunti Demetra.

Giono, J. (2017). L'uomo che piantava gli alberi. Salani.

Il giardino degli aromi. <https://www.ilgiardinodegliaromi.org>

In the spirit of nature, everything is connected. (2018, January 29). IUCN. <https://www.iucn.org/news/europe/201801/spirit-nature-everything-connected>

John B. (1990). 120 piante da casa. Milano, Mondadori.

Kasap, Emine & Ağzitemiz, Feyza & Ünal, Gülten. (2021). Cognitive, Mental and Social Benefits of Interacting with Nature: A Systematic Review. 1. 16-27.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354422999\\_](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354422999_)

L'intervista di Corrado Formigli a Stefano Mancuso. (2020, November 2). [Video]. YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dUVSNkUtmg>

Making Peace with Nature. (2021). United Nations Environment Programme. <https://www.unep.org/resources/making-peace-nature>

Mancuso, S. (2019). La nazione delle piante. Laterza.

Nature definition and meaning. Collins English Dictionary. (2021, November 18). Collins Dictionaries.

Nieuwenhuis, P. (2016, December 15). Humans strive for efficiency but could learn so much from nature's resilience. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/humans-strive-for-efficiency-but-could-learn-somuch-from-natures-resilience-66103>

One Tree Planted. <https://onetreeplanted.org>

Panguaneta. <https://www.panguaneta.com/corporate/sustainability>

Panguaneta 2020. <https://www.panguaneta.com/images/download/bds-panguaneta-2020.pdf>

United Nations. (2021). Facts and Figures. <https://www.un.org/en/actnow/facts-and-figures>

Viola, A. (2020). Flower Power: Le piante e i loro diritti. Einaudi.

World Health Organization. (2021). COP26 special report on climate change and health: the health argument for climate action.

Yoshifumi Miyazaki. (2018). Shinrin-Yoku. Gribaudo





A project by

**han**