



INNOVATION LIES AT THE HEART OF CLIMATE ACTION, SO WHY AREN'T THERE MORE CREATIVES AT THE TABLE?

Amsterdam, 07 November 2022 – **This year alone, blistering heat waves, floods and famines have proven that climate change is the single greatest challenge of our time. To address it, we need international collaboration, creativity and a hands-on mentality. Creatives have long been underrepresented at climate change talks, but they have the power to put ideas into action. That's why What Design Can Do (WDCD), in collaboration with the Creative Industries Fund NL, is bringing 18 designers and innovators from the African continent and the Netherlands together at the UN Climate Change Conference 2022 (COP27).**

BRINGING DESIGNERS TO THE TABLE

From 6-18 November, leaders from around the world will arrive in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt for COP27 with the aim of setting goals to secure a positive climate future – ‘uniting the world to tackle climate change’. This task isn't to be underestimated; they'll work together to find solutions to structural challenges, many of which are driven by short-term and profit-first values.

*“Year after year, we see the same leaders setting the same ‘ambitious’ climate targets with the same outcomes,” says **Richard Van der Laken**, co-founder and creative director of WDCD. “It’s not enough. The climate crisis means that it’s time to stop business as usual. We urgently need a range of creative ideas, fresh perspectives, and disruptive voices - from around the world - at the table. That’s why we’re proud to harness the energy of creatives from seven countries that will showcase how innovation lies at the heart of the climate movement. That’s where our hope lies: in creativity, and in collective action.”*

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WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

What Design Can Do is bringing a group of 18 creative innovators, called the **Creative Climate Collective**, from **Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, South Africa and the Netherlands**, to **COP27**. Each member will present their work to visitors at COP27 and have the chance to connect to international delegates from national governments, charity organisations, investors, knowledge institutes and others.

*"We need to rethink what climate really means to our daily life: from spatial planning, to mobility issues and energy & food scarcity" says **Syb Groeneveld**, Executive Director Creative Industries Fund NL. "To combat this climate crisis we need the imaginative power of designers. Here at COP27 we support the international exchange of knowledge, experience and networks between designers, civil society and policy leaders. That's today more necessary than ever."*

A BAR OF SOAP MADE OF URINE - WHATS THAT GOT TO DO WITH IT?

What do bars of soap made entirely of human activity waste - including urine - and buildings made out of recycled and discarded materials have in common? They highlight design's instrumental role in both advocating for a more sustainable future as well as tackling the social impacts of climate change with creativity. Both **Arthur Guilleminot**, an eco-deviant artist based in the Netherlands, and **Kevin Kimwelle**, a community architect and social innovator based in South Africa, the respective designers of these projects, are two members of the Creative Climate Collective who hope to show the power and ingenuity of design to address the climate crisis.



[Piss Soap, Arthur Guilleminot (credits: Pedro Matias)]



[Building made from recycled materials, Kevin Kimwelle (credits: Colin Milman)]

Creative climate innovators aren't prepared to wait any longer for governments to take action. They are already using their fresh perspectives to work on climate solutions in their local context. By providing these innovators with a global platform like COP27, they are able to highlight the role of design to tackle the impacts of the climate crisis.

The Creative Climate Collective consists of a passionate group of makers and designers from around the world, that also include: **Wekesa Zablon**, a designer with Circular Design Nairobi, working to develop and implement circular economy strategies in Kenya; **Marta Uetela**, an industrial designer and entrepreneur who

WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

founded BioMec which designs and builds high performance prosthetics and wheelchairs based on plastic collected from the sea; **Samuel Oteng**, a fashion designer based in Accra, Ghana who has been repurposing second-hand pieces for over a decade; **Marwan Rasmy**, an energy engineer working with Greenish, a foundation in Egypt that aims to achieve sustainable development through interactive educational activities and provide support to local communities vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change; **Rania Elkalla**, a global award-winning Egyptian designer who founded Shell Homage, designing functional and sustainable products out of egg and nutshells; **Hannah Bosland**, founder of ComposTerra's whose mission is to make sustainable lifestyles more accessible by extending the journey of biomaterials; and many others.



[credits: Rania Elkalla, Shell Homage tables]



[credits: Marta Uetela, BioMec]

FOR THE EDITORS

For any press enquiries, interview requests or for more information regarding the Creative Climate Coalition at COP27, please contact louise@whatdesigncando.com

For more information about the Creative Climate Collective please visit the webpage [here](#).

For more information about the individual collective members and their projects, including photos, please visit the [press folder](#).

ABOUT WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

What Design Can Do (WDCD) is an international platform that advocates for design as a tool for social change. Since 2011, we have undertaken numerous activities to promote the role of designers in addressing the world's most pressing societal and environmental issues. To date, WDCD has hosted 15 successful conferences in Amsterdam, São Paulo, and México City. In 2016 WDCD launched an ambitious design challenge programme that engages the creative community with urgent societal issues such as the wellbeing of refugees and climate change. So far, the programme has resulted in €10m in funds raised by initiatives post programme.

ABOUT CREATIVE INDUSTRIES FUND NL

The Creative Industries Fund NL is the cultural fund for design, architecture, and digital culture, and every imaginable crossover, in the Netherlands. Through its grant schemes and programme activities, the Creative

WHAT DESIGN CAN DO

Industries Fund NL supports makers, designers and cultural institutions to experiment, research and make. The Fund strives to connect the unique talent of designers and makers with sectors within and outside the cultural domain by focusing on specific themes and involving designers in addressing current social issues. The Creatives Industries Fund NL supports projects and activities both in the Netherlands and abroad.

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