DESCRIPTION

BETTER Life's educative boardgame allows participants to better understand the need for and advantages of collaboration amongst various societal actors. The players assume the role of different organisational entities within a fictional world. Each player has their **own ambitions**, but needs to be ready to **compromise and cooperate** with other players to reach certain communal goals. The goals within the game are aligned with the current **EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030**. Failure to reach these goals will have negative consequences for all participants, so each player needs to finely balance how much of their in-game resources they allocate towards their own agenda and how much they want to contribute to common targets.

The game is played in **five rounds**, representing two-year intervals from 2020 until 2030. Within each round, players take turns rolling dice, playing action cards and triggering events that can be both positive or negative. The game ends after the year 2030 is reached, after which communal and individual goals will be evaluated to determine which player managed to allocate their resources most efficiently and accumulated the most **Victory Points**.

CONCEPTS WITHIN THE GAME

Biodiversity Loss Meter

During the game, biodiversity loss can occur (either through certain events or as a result of weak or unsuccessful policy implementations). If the **Biodiversity Loss Meter** ever reaches level 5, the game **ends and all players lose.** The game starts with the **Biodiversity Loss Meter** at 0.

Policy Meter

As part of the **Voting Process,** policies are implemented after each year, whereby the degree of success of the implementation affects the increase in the **Policy Meter.** At the end of the game (when the year 2030 is reached), the **Policy Meter** needs to have reached level 10, else **all players lose**. The game starts with the **Policy Meter** at 0.

Influence Points (IP)

IP represent how much influence a player has accrued over time and IP can be used to either avoid negative or enable positive outcomes of **Events,** or, more prominently, is used during the **Voting Process** at the end of the year to vote for the implementation of a **Policy**. Influence Points are gained (and lost) throughout the game. Players should hide their stack of IP tokens from the other players. IPs not currently owned by a player are stockpiled in a **IP reserve** (e.g. placed aside).

Rounds

One round represents two years in-game and lasts until each player reaches the **End of Year** space. Once all players have reached the **End of Year,** the **Voting Process** takes place before a new round begins. A total of five rounds are played.

- The first player to reach the **End of Year** space first in any given round receives **4 IP and gets to choose one of five available Action Cards**.
- The second player to finish receives **3 IP and chooses one of four remaining Action cards**.
- The third player to finish receives **3 IP and chooses one of three remaining Action Cards.**
- The fourth player to finish receives **2 IP and chooses one of two remaining Action Cards.**
- The last player to finish receives **2 IP and receives the last remaining Action Card.** However, that player then starts the next round (i.e. the next two-year interval).

Action Cards

A player can have at most **four Action Cards**. If they receive a fifth card, they will have to discard **Action Cards** until they have four remaining. The **role-specific Action Card** does NOT count towards this limit. **Action Cards** can be played either at the start of their turn or at certain times during the game. Each **Action Card** will denote when it can be used.

Voting Process

At the end of the year, all players vote for the implementation of a **Policy**. The policy that is voted on each year is drawn randomly from the stack of remaining policies, but once voted on, that policy is **implemented** and will not be voted on in the future. Before voting, players can take two minutes to discuss with each other and attempt to convince or influence other players to vote / not vote on the implementation of the presented policy. Players are allowed to "lie" about their intended support of the policy-to-be-voted-on.

After the discussion, the voting process takes place. To do so, each player secretly takes however many IP they wish to contribute from their stack of IP and hides them in their fist (it is also possible to choose zero IP tokens). Once each player has decided on the amount of IP to be forwarded, all players open their fists at the same time and place the IP points into the **communal IP pool** where they are then counted and afterwards placed back into the box – they do NOT return to the players.

The success of the implementation depends on the number of total IP that the players forwarded into the **communal IP pool**. The degree of success with regard to the implementation decides if the **Policy Meter** increases and if the **Biodiversity Loss Meter** increases or decreases.

- [0-5 total IP]: Weak or unsuccessful. **Policy Meter +0. Biodiversity Loss Meter +1**
- [6-9 total IP]: Semi-successful implementation. **Policy Meter +1. Biodiversity Loss Meter +0**
- [10+ total IP]: Successful implementation. **Policy Meter +3. Biodiversity Loss Meter -1**

Personal Score

Players receive **Victory Points** at the end of the game (when year 2030 is reached) based on:

- Remaining personal IP (three remaining IP = **1 Victory Point**)
- Implementation of **personal Policy Targets**
    - Successful implementation of primary policy target = **7 Victory Points**
    - Semi-Successful implementation of primary policy target = **3 Victory Points**
    - Successful implementation of secondary policy target = **4 Victory Points**
    - Semi-Successful implementation of secondary policy target = **2 Victory Points**
    - Successful implementation of tertiary policy target = **2 Victory Points**
    - Semi-Successful implementation of tertiary policy target = **1 Victory Points**

Winning the Game

After tallying all **Victory Points**, the player with the most amount of **Victory Points** is declared the winner, provided that the **Policy Meter** is at level 10 and the **Biodiversity Loss Meter** has not reached level 5.

BEFORE STARTING

Choosing your Role

At the start of the game, each player either chooses or randomly gets allocated one of five playable roles that are all assumed to exist within the realm of the game and act at the same local level:

- University
- Industry
- Non-Government Organisation
- Municipality
- Citizens

Each role receives **their role-specific special Action Card (which can be used once per round)** as well as draws two random **regular Action Cards** from the **Action Card** stack. In addition, each player starts with five **Influence Points (IP)** and accordingly takes five **IP** from the box.

Revealing the First End-of-Year Policy

At the start of the first round, the first policy to be voted on at the end of the round is revealed. The next policy is then revealed at the start of the second round (i.e. representing the years 2022-2024) and so on.

Personal Policy Targets

After choosing their role, each player draws one **Policy Target** card. The three policies mentioned on each **Policy Target** card represent the primary, secondary and tertiary policy priorities that the player wishes to see implemented. If the primary policy target is implemented at any stage of the game, the player receives a certain amount of **Victory Points** at the end of the game, whereby the primary policy priority awards the most **Victory Points** and the tertiary policy priority the least amount.

HOW TO PLAY

Who starts

The player to not have travelled by airplane for the longest time period starts the game, after which the others take their turn in a clockwise order.

On their turn

Before the player rolls the dice, they can decide to use their **role-specific Action Card** (can be used once per round, i.e. once in the two-year interval) and/or use a **regular Action Card** (if they have one that can be applied at the start of their turn). Otherwise, they roll the dice and move as many spaces ahead as the dice indicates.

Role-specific spaces

If a player lands on the space of e.g. the **University**, one of two things happen:

- If the player represents the institution (i.e. if the **University player** landed on the **University space**, they receive **two IP** from the **IP reserves.**
- If the player represents a different institution (e.g. the **Industry player** landed on the **University space**, then they have to pay one of their IP to the **University player**. If the player does not own any IP at this time, the IP is taken from the **IP reserves.**

Skip Turn Space

If a player lands on a **Skip Turn Space**, their next turn is skipped.

IP Space

If a player lands on an **IP Space**, they receive one **IP** from the **IP reserves**.

+1 Space

If a player lands on a **+1 Space**, their dice roll on their next turn is increased by +1.

Bonus Space

If a player lands on a **Bonus Space**, they get to roll again immediately.

Empty Space

If a player lands on an **Empty Space**, nothing happens and their turn ends.

Biodiversity Fund Space and Biodiversity Fund Payout Space

If a player lands on the **Biodiversity Fund Space**, they have to pay one IP into the **Biodiversity Fund**. If the player does not own any IP at this time, the IP is taken form the **IP reserves**. If a player lands on the **Biodiversity Fund Payout Space**, they receive all the IP currently within the **Biodiversity Fund.** If there is no IP in the fund, they receive one IP from the **IP reserves**.

Event Space

While moving along the board, players can land on **Event** spaces. If they do so, they pick an **Event** card from the top of the **Event** pile and read it out. After the event is resolved, it is placed on the side. If all events are drawn over the course of the game, the discarded **Event** cards are reshuffled and turn into a new **Event** pile.