

# Beyond the Bag:

## Designing Low-barrier Public Interactions to Transform Dog Walking into Shared, Sustainable Culture

Dog waste is a small act of daily responsibility with a surprisingly large environmental footprint. In the Netherlands alone, it adds up to tens of thousands of tonnes of waste each year, often handled with plastic bags that end up in general waste. This project, developed in collaboration with Earth Rated, explores how such an everyday act can be reimaged to go beyond disposal, creating interactions that are not only functional but also social, educational and environmentally meaningful.

### Problem



### Opportunity



Many Dutch dog owners intend to act sustainably, buying compostable bags or supporting eco-friendly products. Yet in practice, these bags create environmental trade-offs in production and often end up in general waste, since the Netherlands lacks composting infrastructure. This highlights the intention-action gap, where users mean to consume sustainably but their actions don't achieve the intended impact. The design addresses this gap by making responsible disposal more visible, playful, and socially rewarding, encouraging behavior that bridges personal goodwill with collective sustainable action.



This is brought to life with the Bio-digester Streetlamp, transforming dog waste into light, which forms the centerpiece of a larger event designed with Earth Rated for Dutch urban parks. Here dog owners follow a pathway of interactive elements designed to showcase Earth Rated products and connect dog owners in the community through a multi-sensory experience. Together, these modules turn simple actions into collective culture, showing how brands like Earth Rated can move beyond products to facilitate shared experiences, community building and more responsible public spaces.

earth  
rated

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