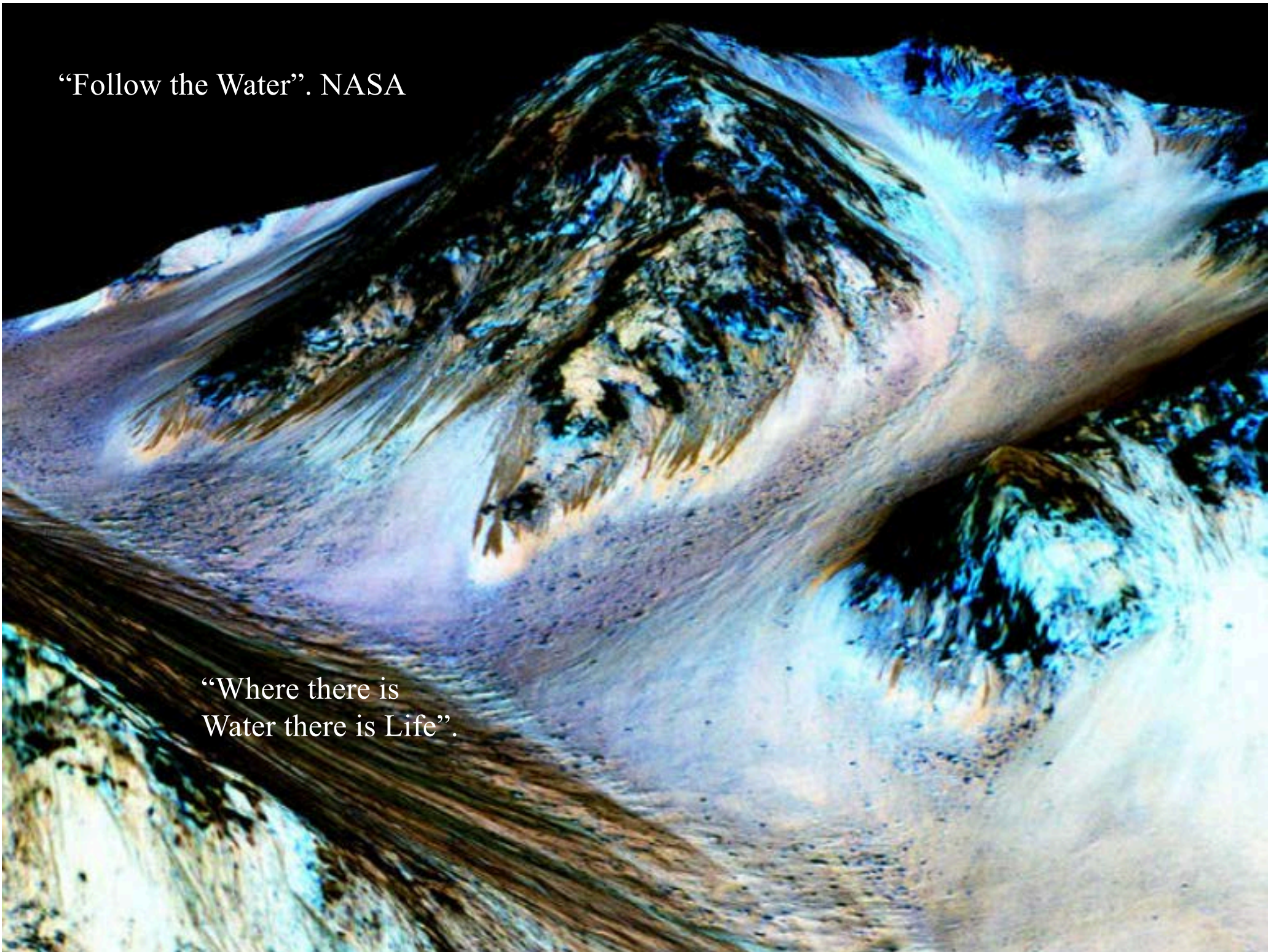


Water Bodies.

Master Studio Urban Field Lab., Visit. Prof. Anuschka Kutz. KU Leuven, 2023/24.
Engagement Urban Cultures. Semester 1 : Exploring Urban Cultures.

“Follow the Water”. NASA

“Where there is
Water there is Life”.



*dry, wet, adventure, pollution, fiction, trade,
leisure, enterprise, colonization, bathing,
extraction, wealth, risk, speculation, stock,
shock, fun, death, debts, coast, sea-level,
discharge, risk, beauty, bounty, slavery, fish,
vessels, oil rigs, kids, swimming rings,
deprivation, rural, farewell, urban, offshore,
island, fringe, privilege, labor, love, loathing,
frozen, trader, merchant, commerce, market,
craft, mystery, luxury, exoticism, escape,
utopia, labor, convicts, quotas, wars, borders,
dredging, shore, sand, mud, haulage, romance,
military, outpost, beach, bar, flooding, ducks,
swans, sewage, contaminants, defense,
freshwater, hotel, algae, estuary, pesticides, oil,
drips, disposal, cleanup, ice cream, sunshine,
mining, radioactivity, yacht, survival, travel,
transport, fresh, salty, foam, path, camping,
floating, sinking, shrinking, singing, tale, male,
power, protein, currents, tides, depth,
shallowness, ...*



Arroyo



Barachois



Bay



Bayou



Beck



Beight



Billabong



Brook



Burn



Canal



Channel



Cove



Creek



Delta



Distributary



Estuary



Fall



Firth



Fjord



Glacier



Gulf



Harbor



Inlet



Kettle



Lagoon



Lake



Loch



March



Moat



Ocean



Oxbow



Pond



Reservoir



River



Sea



Spring



Straight



Stream



Subglacial



Swamp



Tarn



Tidal Pool



Tributary



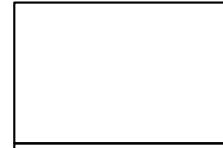
Vernal Pool



Wadi



Wetland



Water is the new frontier.

With water scarcity becoming more and more acute, 'water is the new gold'. Water Bodies are a lifeline under threat. At the same time, water bodies also pose real threats.



1298 Water conflicts and counting.

“Seabeds continue to be drilled for their fossil fuels and minerals, and coastlines developed for real estate and leisure.

Container ports now act as global hubs for new complex networks of global commerce, transferring commodities and generating value across different maritime-dependent sectors of the world economy ranging from shipbuilding to insurance, freight transport to cruises. The legacies of, and continuities in, seaborne slavery and bondage – as well as the modes of resistance and internationalism they engendered – remain central to emancipatory politics across the globe. [...]

Ocean winds, currents, tides and weather patterns have combined with biochemical and geophysical characteristics [...] or natural features such as sandbanks, reefs, lagoons, inlets and shallows to produce specific risks [...] ... the expanded reproduction of capital has radically transformed the nature of the oceans, particularly since industrialization.

It has reshaped coastlines and reconfigured marine ecosystems through dredging, dumping, depletion and discharging. [...] ...the Earth’s geographical separation into land and sea has significant consequences for capitalist development.”

(Campling, Liam and Alejandro Colas (2021). *Capitalism and the Sea*. London / New York: Verso, 1 – 3).



The destroyed Antonivsky Road Bridge over the Dnieper River in Kherson, Ukraine. Photo credit: © LIBKOS/AP].



Ubay Island, Philippines flooded after earthquake. Image credit © AP



Three Gorge Dam China. Image credit © AP

”As a space for human production, the ocean is both a sewer, a sink, a void for movement, a mine for resources and all highly managed yet overpowering at the same time. Consequently, the ocean is providing opportunities within the field of design to explore how it re-configures the urban condition, and likewise how we might hijack it, to further expand the urban condition.”

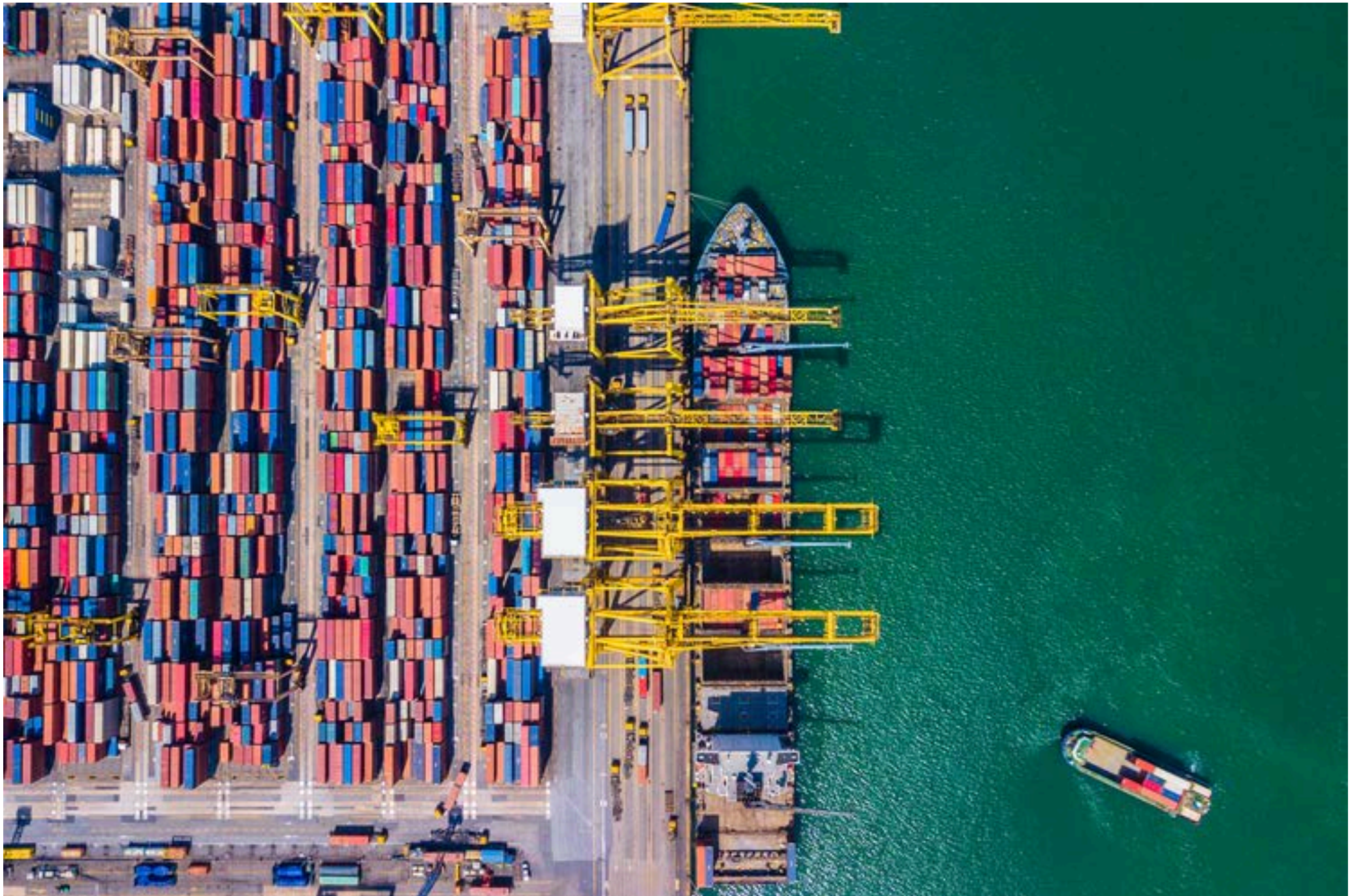
(Liam Mouritz .2019. “Mapping the Ocean. Investigating Portolan Charts to Dislodge the Binary between Territorial Land and Mobile Ocean”. In *Landscape as Territory*, edited by Clara Olóriz Sanjuán. New York / Barcelona: Actar, 115–121.)



Drilling rigs in Cromarty Firth, Scotland. Photo" Adobe Stock.



Slaves pan for gold in Accra, Ghana. Some have children with them as they wade into water poisoned by mercury used in the extraction process. Image credits: © Lisa Kristine.



Container Port Shanghai. Image credits: © apiguide

“The management, maintenance and expansion of modern transportation infrastructure demand extraordinary amounts of land, fresh water and natural resources. [...] We must recognize that the progressive impulse to reorganize landscapes to provide “services” like water conveyance and flood control may have political and redistributive consequences.”

(Ashley Carse, 2014. “Moving ships over mountains: from the conquest of nature to political ecology at the Panama Canal. *Harvard Design Magazine*, Vol 39, p. 69.)



Coastal erosion at Weybourne, Norfolk, UK. Photograph: Dylan Garcia Photography/Alamy



Massive Cruise Ship seen in the Venice Lagoon. Photo: © Stefano Rellandini/Reuters, 2012



Benidorm © Martin Parr, 2019.



Children collect plastic from polluted river in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Photo: © Kazi Salahuddin Razu / Nur Photo via Getty Images

“Why this insistent focus on the dry, when in fact, the wet world with which land lives is itself matter, and the boundaries between the two are dynamic and evolving?”

(Pierre Bélanger in conversation with Jennifer Sigler. In: Sigler, Jennifer, 2014. ‘Who is afraid of the Ocean?’ *Harvard Design Magazine*, Vol 39, p. 2).



The division between land and water is not a line, but a fluctuating condition, impacted and altered by seasons, climate change and weather events, from rising sea levels to decreasing water levels, erosion, material transfers, to human-based activities. Moreover, trade relationships and natural movements, transgress the idea of nation states.

Land to water



Open Coal Mining in the Lusatia Region in Germany. Image: NASA



Open mines turned into lakes. Lusatia Region, Germany. Image: © LMBV_Peter Radke

Water to land – or, rather desert

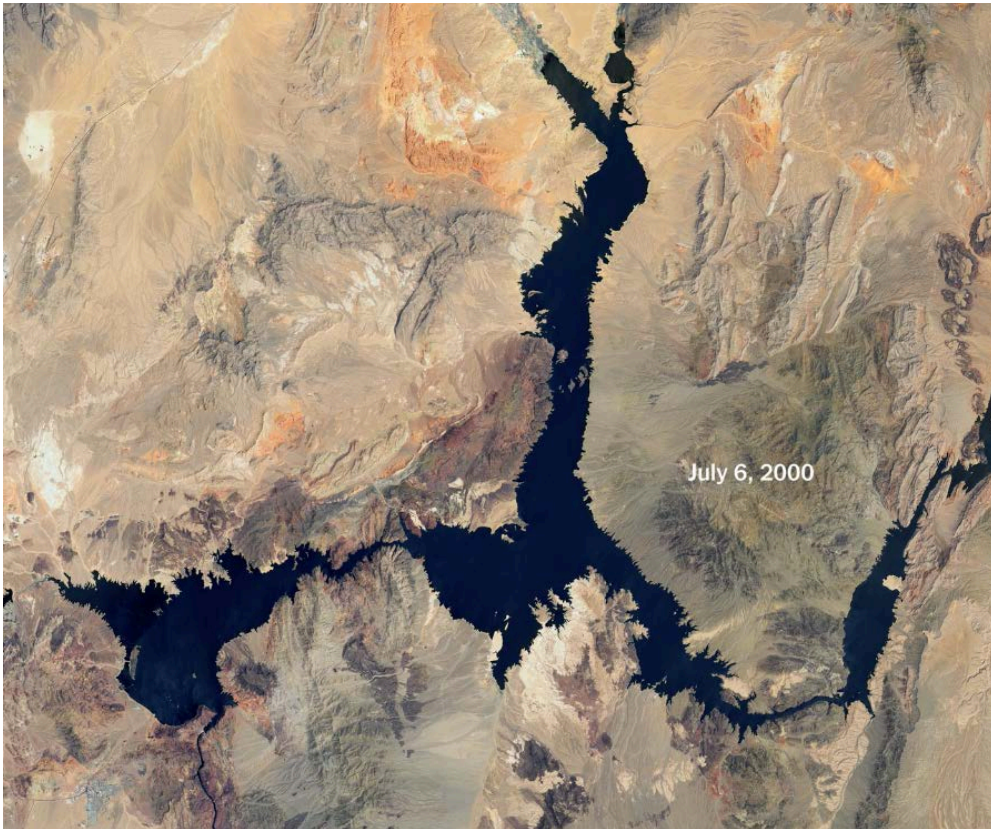


Aral See in 1989 and 2014.

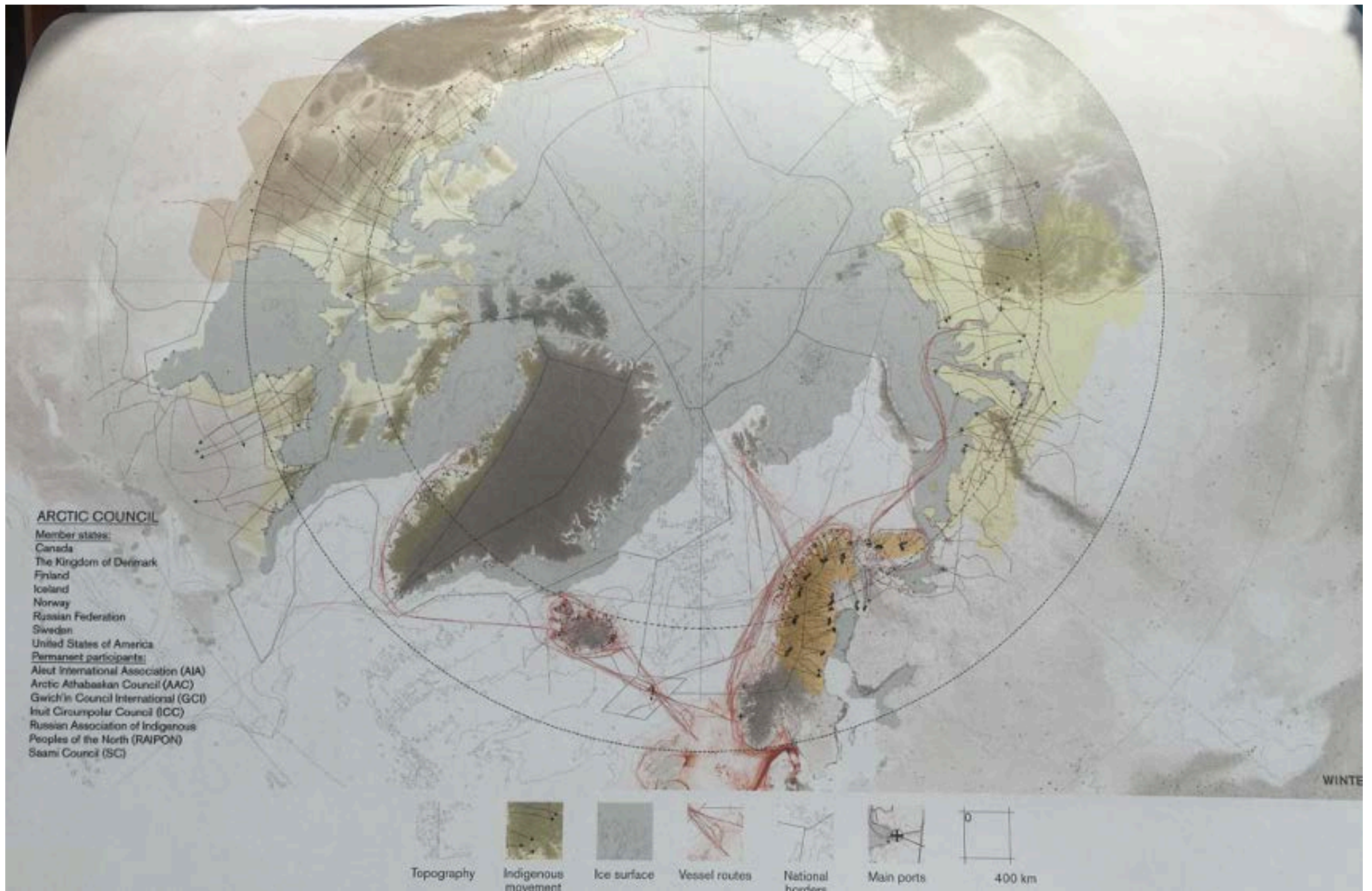
The Aral Sea.

“Good afternoon, Salaam u aleikum,
I have just flown over the Aral Sea by helicopter with Prime Minister [Shavkat] Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan. It is clearly one of the worst environmental disaster of the world. I was so shocked. It really left with me a profound impression\\, one of sadness that such a mighty sea has disappeared. Standing on piers, on what was once piers, I could not see anything –I could see only a cemetery of ships marooned in the sand. It was shocking.” (then Secretary General of the UN Ban Ki-moon, in a press release on 4 April 2010).

Interrogating matter and time dependencies.



A comparison of satellite images from NASA's Landsat 7 and 8 show Lake Mead's water levels on a 22-year course of shrinking. Images by Lauren Dauphin/NASA Earth Observatory.
Lake Mead is a reservoir formed by Hoover Dam on the Colorado River in the Southwestern United States. It is located in the states of Nevada and Arizona, 24 mi east of Las Vegas. It is the largest reservoir in the US in terms of water capacity.



Seasonal North Pole atlas projection showing clashing interests between indigenous communities, resource extraction, shipping routes and states' borders. © In *Landscape as Territory*, edited by Clara Olóriz Sanjuán. New York / Barcelona: Actar, 176–177.

Our
work
will
be
investigative
and
reflective.

We will center our work on water bodies and the relationships between water and land, interrogating how actions in one location affect other locations. Work will be carried out in groups of 2 – 4 students. Each group will nominate a water body that they will focus on. You will interrogate the land / water relationships, zooming in on specific interdependencies.

The water bodies can be located anywhere in the global context, so long as at least one student in the group is familiar with the context, has expertise, experience or another kind of connection to it.

Your water bodies could be coasts, deltas, rivers, lakes, seas, canals or streams... They can be in urban, remote, rural, industrial, pagan, touristic or wild locations. You will need to go beyond the actual location of the water body and investigate spaces of impact and consequence that are connected to the water body.

We will spend considerable time creating oversized maps in starkly contrasting scales from macro to micro, charting our water bodies and the spaces they relate to, from global to local relationships, exhausting many lines of enquiry. We will compare and reflect on differences and similarities between the water bodies. Each group will then formulate strategic adjustments.

Phase 1. Water Bodies. Explorations.

Output: An Atlas in extreme Scales. / A field of Explorations to tell the Story. Our focus will lie on uncovering relationships. This will in turn formulate the groups approach. Critical Cartography, Super-size drawings, scales between 1:100,000 to 0:10 / Field of Maps, Films, Models, Photographs, Probes, Probes, Charts, ...

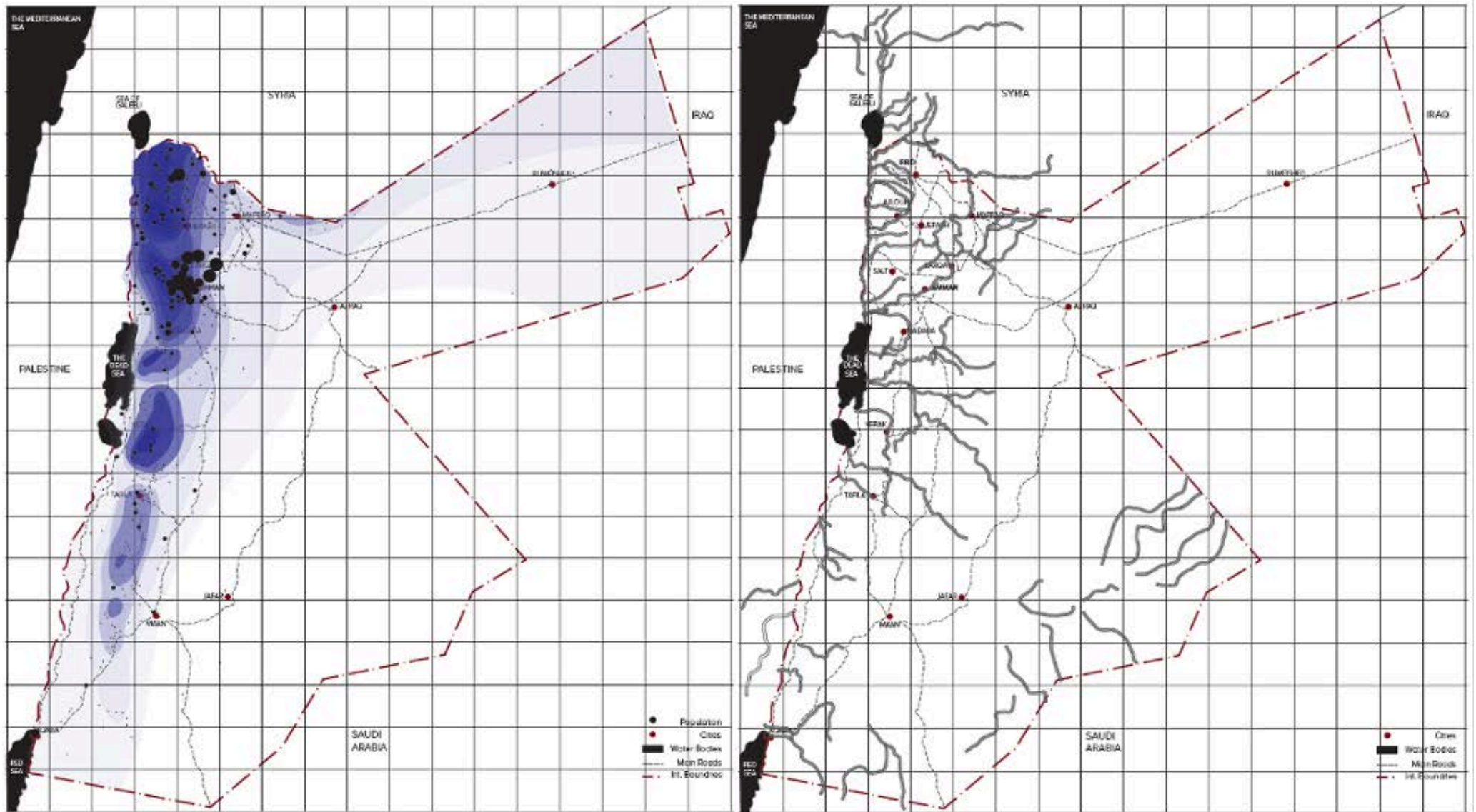
Phase 2. Water Bodies. Reflections. Similarities and Differences.

Output: A comparative chart /story. An Atlas.

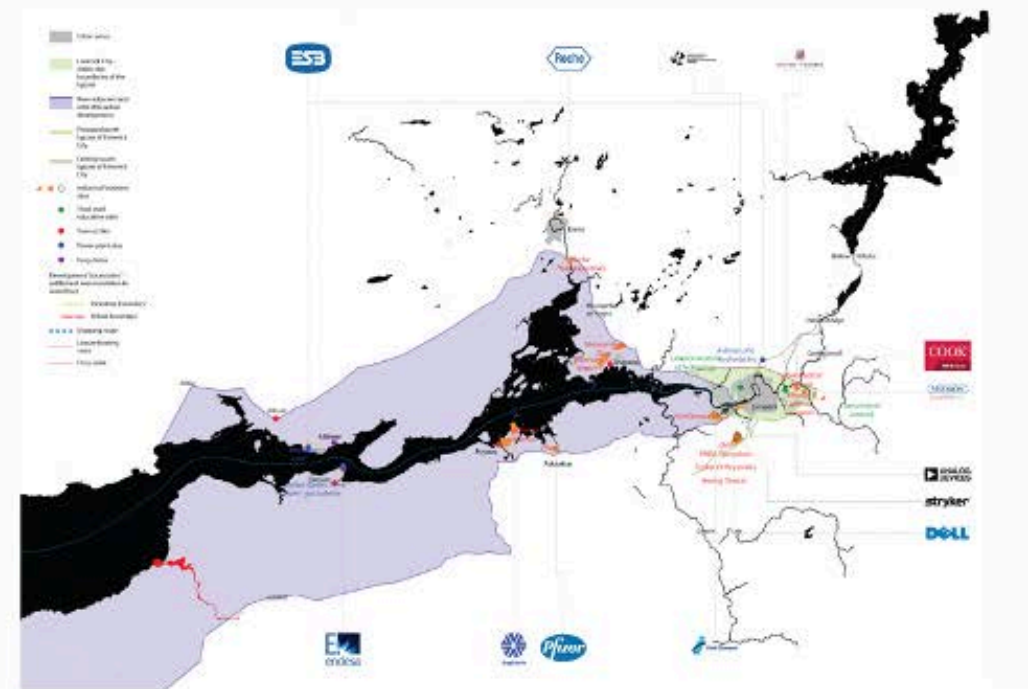
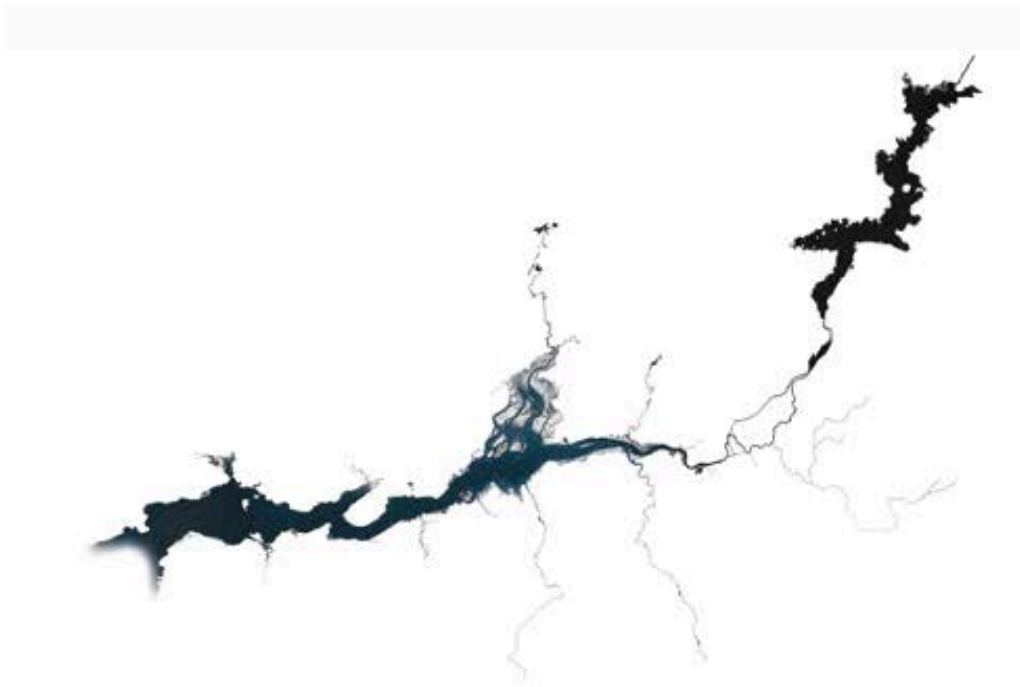
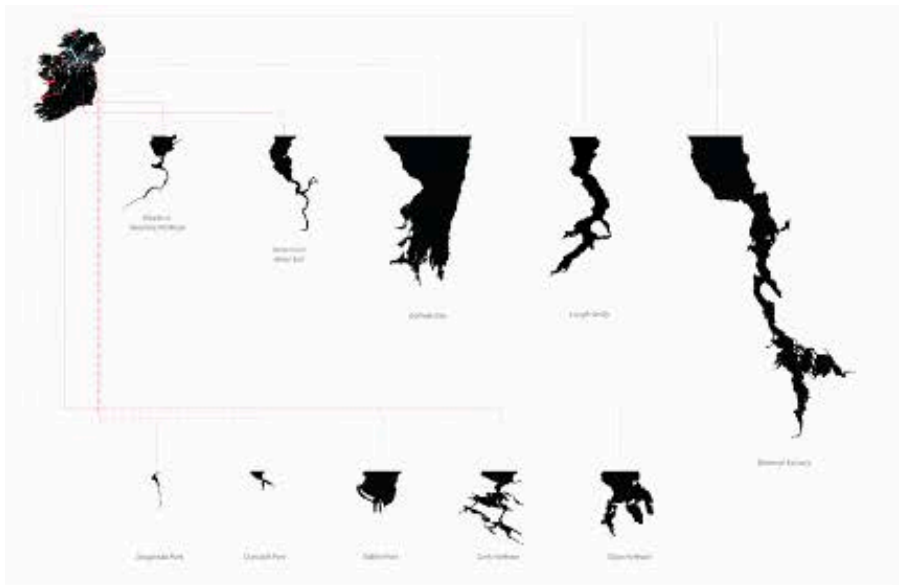
Phase 3. Water Bodies. A Speculative Adjustment.

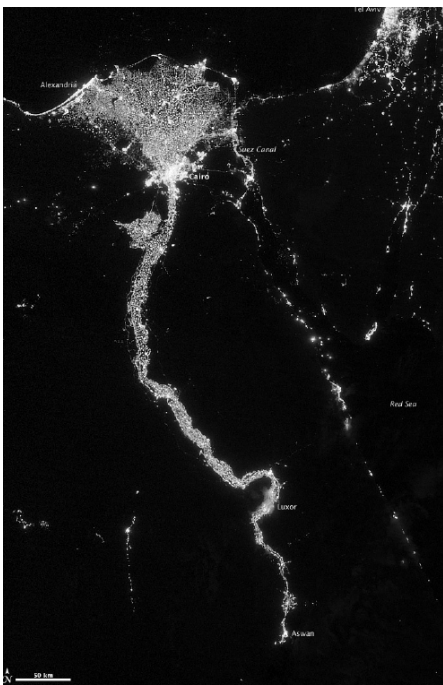
Output: Productions of active spatial drawings / models in 3 selected scales. Focus scales will be nominated by each group from scales between 1:100,000 to 0:10. Projects will emerge from the construction of knowledge made in phase 1 and 2. Each group's work will hook into particular relationships to which concrete spaces are attached.

The studio will work in a *hybrid* mode, with likely alternating on-site sessions on the Brussels campus and remote sessions using digital interfaces. You will need to undertake your own independent travels to locations.

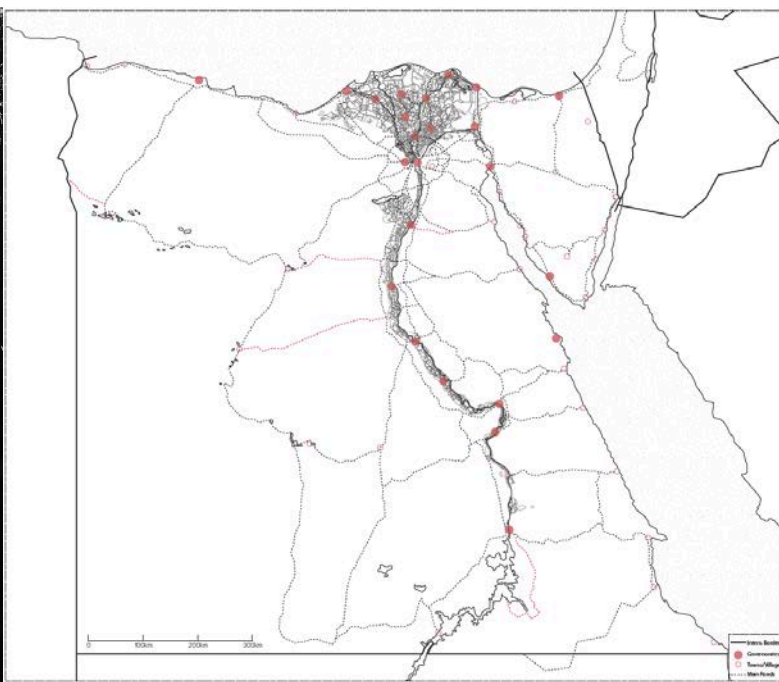


Map of Jordan. left: Water Precipitation and Population Density. right: Water Bodies. Drawings by Sabine Ariqat, Studio Urban Field Lab, KU Leuven, 2021.

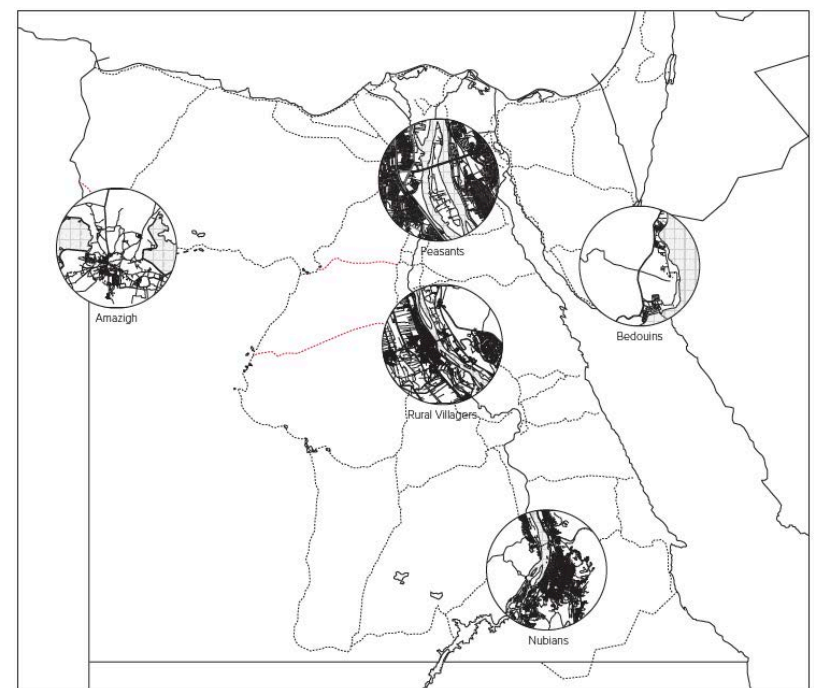




*City Lights Illuminate the Nile,
NASA Earth Observatory.
© Image by Jesse Allen and Robert
Simmon, 2012.*



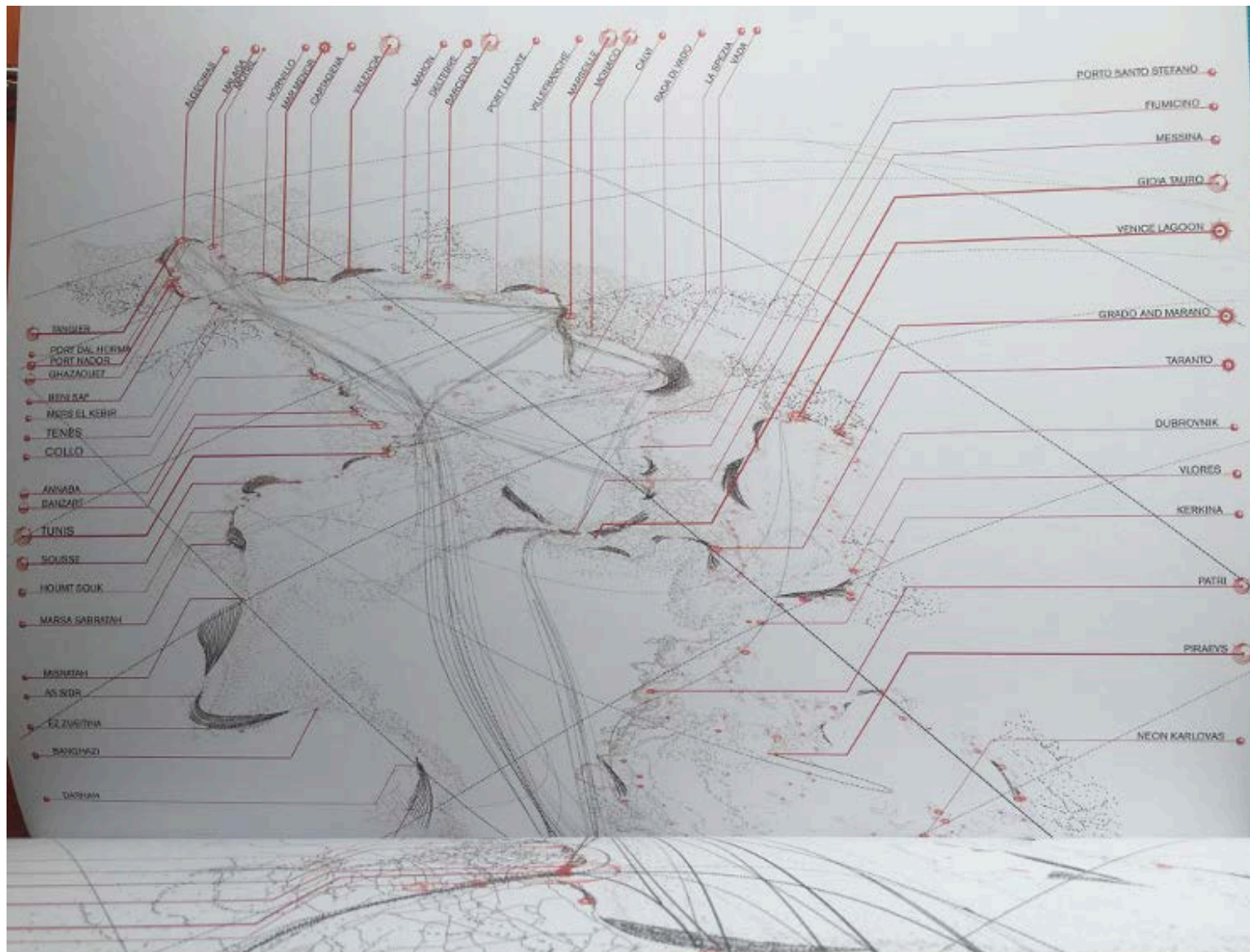
Map of Egypt with governorates. From Master Thesis Ingy Saad.
Studio Urban Field Lab, KU Leuven,2020.



Locating forgotten communities on the map. From Master Thesis
Ingy Saad. Studio Urban Field Lab, KU Leuven,2020.



An Egyptian farmer squats down on cracked soil to show the dryness of the
land due to drought in a farm formerly irrigated by the river Nile, in Al-
Dakahlya. Photograph: Mohamed Abd el Ghany/Mohamed Abd el
Ghany/Reuters/Corbis



Mediterranean sediment atlas seen from the Suez Canal infrastructure. Dislodging Land-Ocean Binaries: the Politics of Littoral Sediments. In *Landscape as Territory*. 2019. Edited by Clara Olóriz Sanjuán. New York / Barcelona: Actar, 124–125.



Sand mining



Port dredging



Lagoon



Shipping lines



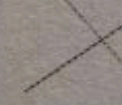
Sediment movement



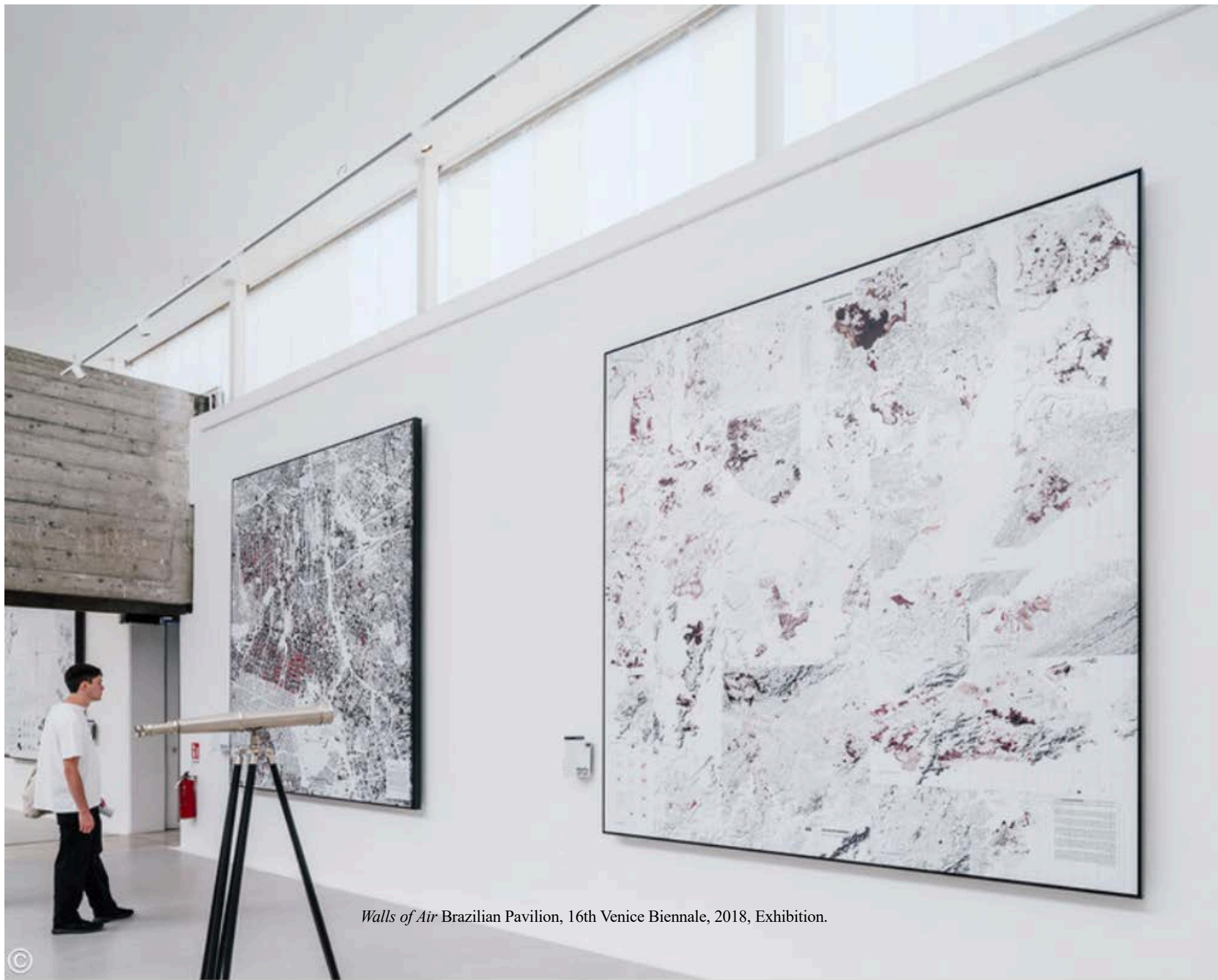
Water circulation



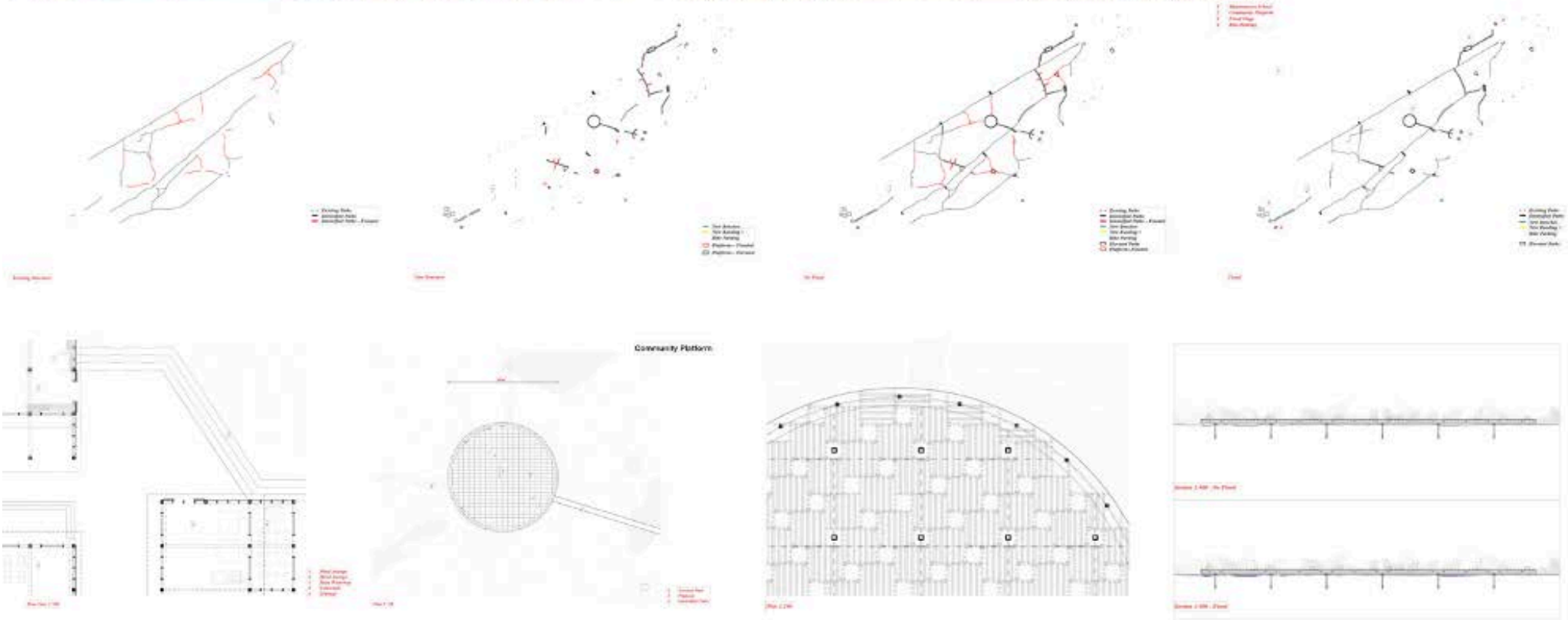
Maritime boundaries



Meridians and parallels



Walls of Air Brazilian Pavilion, 16th Venice Biennale, 2018, Exhibition.



A Memory in Dialogue. Master 1 Project by Olena Kysla and Eirini Pissanidou
 Studio Urban Field Lab Projects for Bucha (Ukraine) / Anuschka Kutz in Collaboration with Ro3kvit, Urban Coalition for Ukraine, KU Leuven 2022/23.