



The Lives of Deltas

A Global Research Exchange on Sustainability and the Imaginary

"For let us make no mistake: the climate crisis is also a crisis of culture, and thus of the imagination"
Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Serving a small group of carefully selected Master students from the sciences, the social sciences and humanities who share an interest in creatively rethinking the earth and its inhabitants, this transdisciplinary programme aims to do research on the *Lives of Deltas*. It combines insights from contemporary academia with state-of-the-art technological, urban and artistic research. Together with prominent scientists, scholars and artists, the students taking part in this program, jointly explore and experiment with how human and non-human lives are currently roaming the coastlines and deltas of Maputo, Rio de Janeiro, Hong Kong and the Netherlands. This unique collaboration at top universities in four cities around the world, hereby invites students to share their interest in participating in this program.

2023 Theme: Pollution/Pollination

Deltas, the thresholds where water and land meet, have always been the place where human and non-human life flourished. Today, water and land have transformed into harbor and city, and once again, both are at the forefront of the changing times. At the delta, the power of industrialization, digitalization and urbanization, food scarcity and issues of food safety, sea level rise, extreme heat, heavy storms and other consequences of global warming, can be felt like nowhere else. At the delta, the most complex, or wicked problems arise, and creative, 'out of the box' solutions, have to be found. In our times, the highly urbanized deltas all over the world, reveal the crises of the contemporary in very different ways. Formed by very different (geological, meteorological, humanistic) powers, these 'critical zones', as Latour would call them, show differences, but also unexpected similarities.

The aim of the first Lives of Deltas global exchange, starting in 2023, as established between universities in the cities of Rio de Janeiro, Hong Kong, Maputo and Utrecht, is to explore in what way an affirmative approach on ***pollution and pollination*** allows us to look at how the urban delta is producing both challenges and opportunities for nature-human coexistence today. After a one week introduction to the theme, each city will coordinate two (2 hour) seminars in which they discuss (academic) texts, invite local artists/activists, and generate discussion on the themes that are central to the program (land, water, waste, work, city, technology, senses etc.) and that demand further research in the critical zones/urban spheres to their responsibility. To further the theme of pollution/pollination, the universities involved propose to situate this theme in the following ways:

1. Frontier urbanisation: land, water and environmental challenges in Maputo city
2. Environmental experiences: processes and conflicts in the territories of Guanabara Bay, Rio de Janeiro
3. Problematizing Nature: Hong Kong in between Urbanization and Conservation
4. Nature-scapes: Technology and life in the Netherlands

Schedule:

1st month: Seminars will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays and last for 2 hours, take place at Google Classroom and are scheduled at: 7am Rio; 11am UU/Maputo; 6 pm HK.

2nd month: Each city hosts a research exchange (in clusters of two), each student taking part in the program is both a host (at the home institute) and subsequently invited to take part in an exchange offered by a partner institute. For instance, a student from Rio is hosting the exchange in Rio in week 23-24 and is invited to be part of the exchange in either Maputo or Hong Kong.

After the exchanges, the project will conclude with a livestream symposium where the final products will be shown.

Week	Rio	Maputo	Hong Kong	Utrecht
17	INTRODUCTION TO ALL			
18 Theme 1	Seminar			Seminar
19 Theme 2		Seminar	Seminar	
20 Theme 3	Seminar			Seminar
21 Theme 4		Seminar	Seminar	
22-23	Hosting exchange	Visiting Rio or Utrecht	Visiting Rio or Utrecht	Hosting exchange
23-24	Visiting Maputo or Hong Kong	Hosting exchange	Hosting exchange	Visiting Maputo or Hong Kong
26	ONLINE FILM PRESENTATION			

Exchange: Each exchange involves 12 students (6 locals, 6 guests). During the exchange activities will be organized that connect the theory (discussed in the seminars) to the contemporary situation of the city. This will be realized in cooperation with local organization and with an international artistic residency program which is coordinated by Sonic Acts (see www.sonicacts.com).

Assesment: Though your local university may decide to add additional assessment, the *Lives of Deltas* itself is aimed at the production of short films as its final product. During the exchange, groups of 4 students (2 local, 2 international) are asked to make a short film on a topic related to the city of residency and its local situation. These films (3 in total per residency) concern theory and 'the contemporary', last for 10 to 12 minutes and are aimed at the global audience. For clarity: each student contributes to 2 films (one time as a local, one time as an international student). As we aim to serve a multilingual community, we do our best to make this exchange available for those able to communicate in English and Portuguese.

Funding: Travel arrangements (flights) will be paid for by the *Lives of Deltas* program. For students from Maputo and Rio de Janeiro additional funding may be available. Please contact your local administrator for more information.

Selection process: For the academic year 2022-2023, 6 students will be selected to take part in this exchange per city (the whole exchange consists of 24 students). We aim at a diverse student population, an interdisciplinary group of students willing to learn and to collaborate creatively. We ask you to send a two-page document (PDF) to your local program coordinators with cc to our administrative coordinator (email addresses below). This document includes 1) a letter of interest 2) brief Curriculum Vitae. Please also inform us on the exchange city of your preference. The deadline for application is **February 1st, 2023**.

Local organization:

Dr José Adalima, Maputo: jadalima@gmail.com

Dr Carly Machado, Rio de Janeiro: machado.carly@gmail.com

Dr Winnie Yee, Hong Kong: yeelmw@hku.hk

Dr Rick Dolphijn, Utrecht: r.dolphijn@uu.nl

Administrative coordinator:

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