

MushMap

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In times of mass extinction event, biodiversity loss is a matter of local and planetary concern. There are a variety of methods of biodiversity mapping, which are oftentimes part of practices handed down through the modern age, where the drawing of maps and in particular of borders were a matter of colonial and imperial interest. Can we escape this history of appropriation and 'classification' in understanding the living world and its measurement and visualisation in cartographies?

In particular, we intend to question the functioning of borders in mapping biodiversity; what biodiversity entails within those borders, and how it (they) subvert our inclination to stable borders and all they exclude. How can mapping practices be adapted from a more ecosystemic point of view? Does putting a border in the middle of a desert make sense? Is the limit of a city also the limit of a species network? Let's create a perspective change, from the helicopter view to a birds-eye view, from the human to the more-than-human.

Our main goal is to move from a measure of interest to a measure of hope, questioning the current colonial worldview on maps and shifting our perspective to a new, more holistic awareness. We want to critically interrogate the imperialist point of view and question its validity in a practical way. By doing so, we propose biodiversity as a new capital, emphasizing and bringing into presence the 'critical zone' and all that becomes important in these times as political borders fade.

In our pursuit, we aim to redesign the borders of cities (states, countries) based on the biodiversity present in each area, as measured and mapped in various databases. This entails a shift from the colonial instrument of power to democratic methods of cohabitation, fostering a new understanding of land, home, and living in a more-than-human world. As Anna Tsing aptly puts it, 'arts of noticing are an art of inclusion.' Through this journey of polyphonous mapping, we seek to create a new sensitivity to our surroundings, while critiquing the certainty of the universal gaze of the modern cartographer. By incorporating biodiversity as a new capital and challenging the conventional notions of borders, we strive for a future that values and embraces the interconnectedness of all living beings."

We are interested in questioning and experimenting with methodology and measurement as they define space and conventional territorial borders. Moreover, we want to experiment with changing the aesthetics of visual representations of biodiversity, challenging cartographic norms, alongside the modern bias towards the visual in society. But there is a lot going on under our feet, in the soil, in water, in air.

Use geo data but also include the public, and do our own research
Blurry borders
Reverse power
Bioregions // deconstructing 'biodiversity'

This project questions the limitations of maps, the rigidity of the defining lines of maps, why ecotones: the transitions of two biological communities such as the in-between space of a park and urban space are not represented in maps? What would maps look like from the point of view of living organisms such as fungi and underground roots system? Biodiversity, how are the species using the environment, who is making the map? Whose agencies are represented at the maps? What if it's from the perspective of living organisms like fungus? Does the political border in the middle of a desert make sense?