

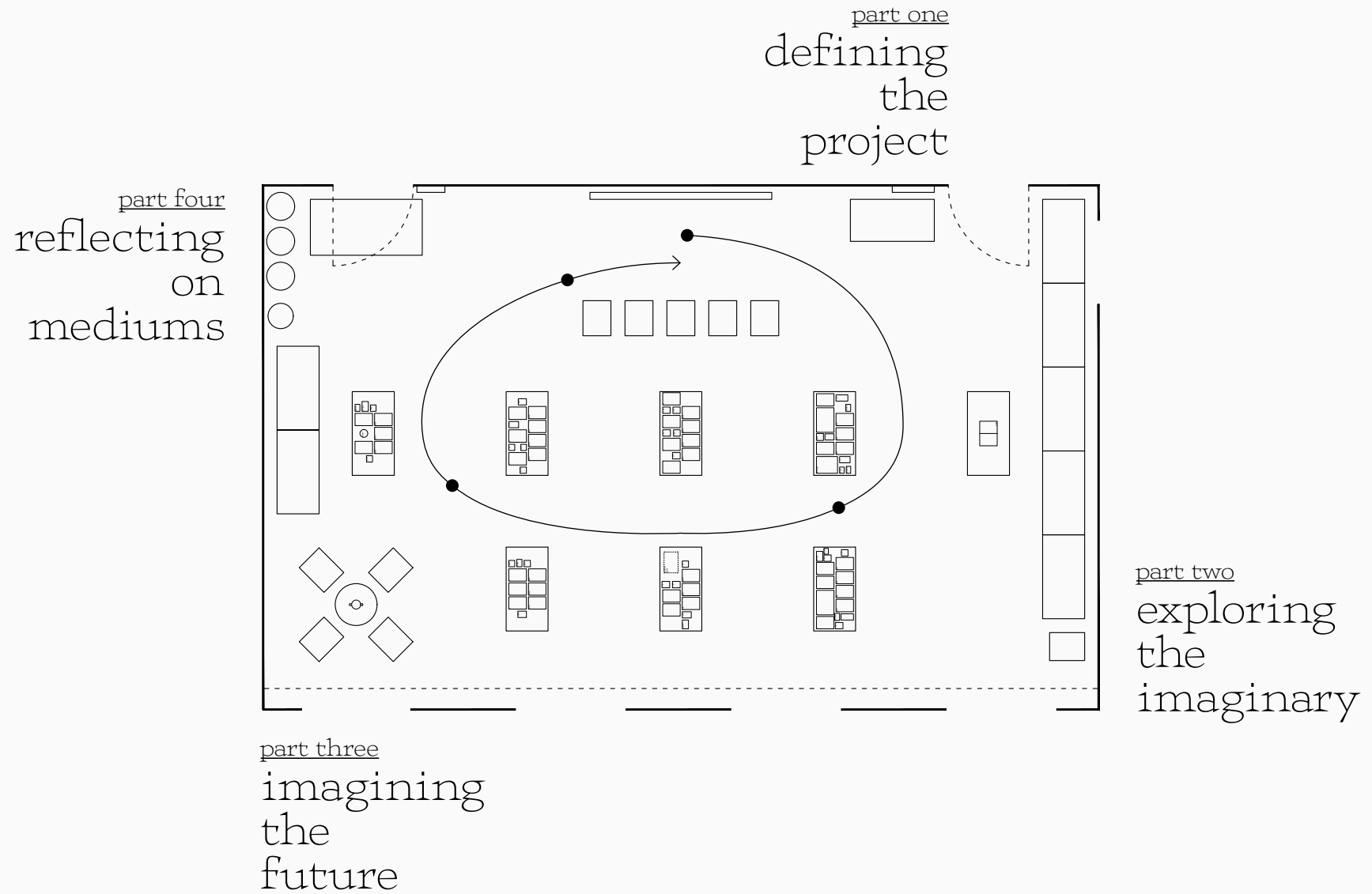
another rural

a post-growth imaginary for rural Greece

in a glimpse

my project addresses the
implementation of the
post-growth agenda in
rural areas, through a
bioregional planning
approach, explored
through a fictional
narrative

contents



part one
defining
the
project

pressures of climate change



https://www.esa.int/ESA_Multimedia/Images/2023/08/Wildfires_continue_to_rage_in_Greece



<https://www.thenationalherald.com/greeces-deadly-floods-wildfires-showed-world-whats-coming-next/> & <https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/1219452/entire-villages-in-thessaly-wiped-out/>

political response

**“If anything, I
would argue that
climate change is
an opportunity for
us to expand our
tourism season”**



Photo and quote from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-09-22/mitsotakis-says-greek-tourism-can-benefit-from-climate-change?srnd=green>



problem statement

we are locked in growth

<https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/233794/greek-population-may-shrink-by-1-4-mln-by-2035-report-says/>

https://www.esa.int/ESA_Multimedia/Images/2023/08/Wildfires_continue_to_rage_in_Greece

<https://www.ekathimerini.com/news/1219452/entire-villages-in-thessaly-wiped-out/>

<https://hellasjournal.com/2023/01/i-alithia-ine-pikri-i-polites-stin-ellada-ke-tin-kipro-vlepoun-ti-diafthora-ke-tin-prospernoun-oligarches-kiries-ke-kirii-den-echoun-mono-i-alles-chores/>

alternative narratives

we require narratives beyond growth



**unlimited
expansion of
production and
consumption is
impossible on a
finite planet**

bioregionalism

**"we not only live
in cities, towns,
villages or
'the countryside'**

**we also live in
watersheds,
ecosystems,
and eco-regions."**

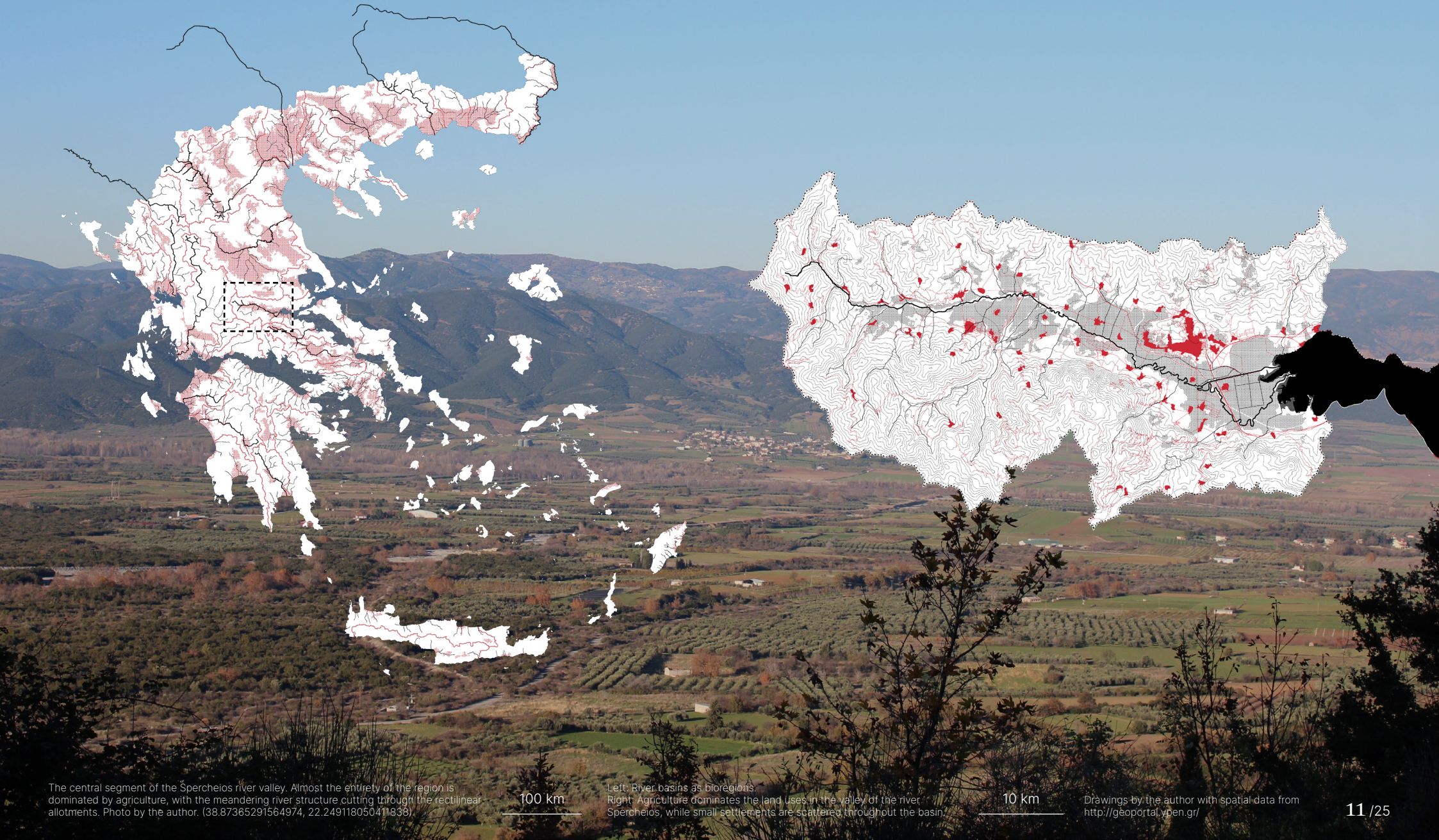
Quote from <https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/bioregionalism-4e15f314327>

Photos from the author from the region of Spercheios.

Left: entering the city of Lamia.

Right: Inside the Valley of Spercheios, surrounded by tall mountains.

bioregion of Spercheios



The central segment of the Spercheios river valley. Almost the entirety of the region is dominated by agriculture, with the meandering river structure cutting through the rectilinear allotments. Photo by the author. (38.87365291564974, 22.249118050411838)

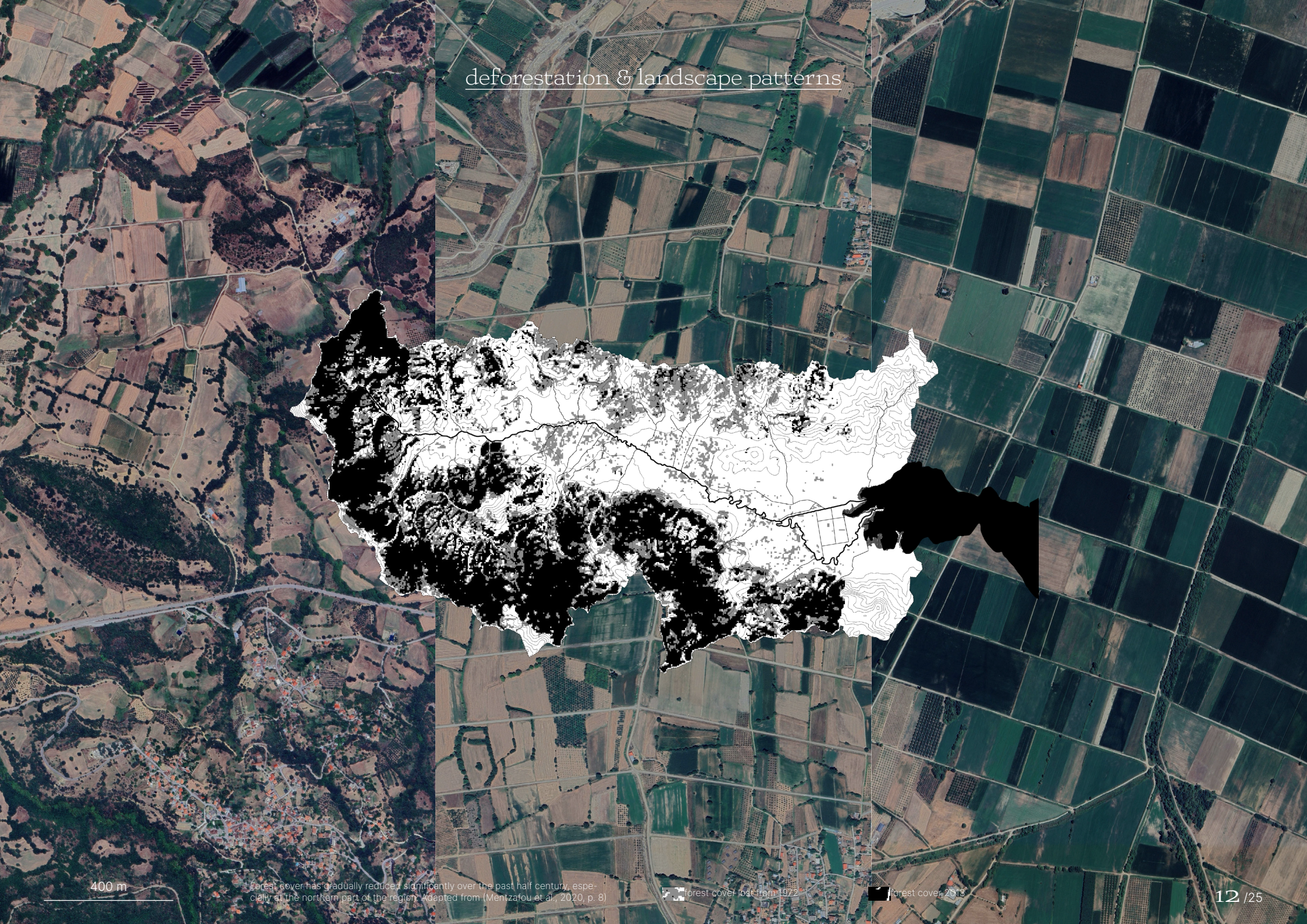
100 km

Left: River basins as bioregions.
Right: Agriculture dominates the land uses in the valley of the river Spercheios, while small settlements are scattered throughout the basin.

10 km

Drawings by the author with spatial data from <http://geoportal.vpen.gr/>

deforestation & landscape patterns



400 m

Forest cover has gradually reduced significantly over the past half century, especially at the northern part of the region. Adapted from (Mentzafou et al., 2020, p. 8)

forest cover lost from 1972

forest cover 2013

space for the river

500 m

Retrieved from the cadastral map service Ktimatologio <https://gis.ktimanet.gr/gis/apr/>





altering the flow

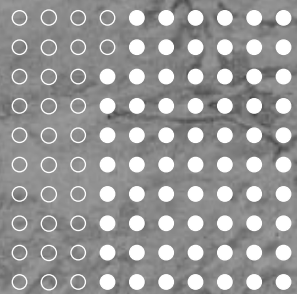
200 m

Retrieved from the cadastral map service Ktimatologio <https://gis.ktimanet.gr/gis/apr/>

wetland degradation

68%

of Greece's
wetlands have
been drained or
destroyed during
the 20th century*



% coverage loss of marsh/wetlands
in Greece

1 km

Retrieved from the cadastral map service Ktima-
tologio <https://gis.ktimanet.gr/gis/apr/>

Data by Zogaris et al., 2018.
Diagram by the author.

implications of growth

“...the government officials we spoke to know what is required to happen in the area to safeguard the village from flooding, but the solutions would cost a lot of money and they think it is better to use that money for a road or other infrastructure that would bring development to the area.”

Photos and quote from <https://www.902.gr/eidisi/koinonia/340098/megales-katastrofes-sti-lamia-apo-tis-plimmyres-foto> & <https://www.ekimkas.com/fouskose-o-spercheios-kai-bike-se/>



sub-group	perceived issues	perceived causes
environmental NGOs	degradation of wetlands pollution destruction of riparian forest overfishing	lack of implementation of nature protection policies industries along the riparian zone discharge their waste into the river
farmer associations	pollution water shortage for irrigation frequent flooding	lack of waste treatment for olive oil production and urban waste lack of fair and efficient system for distribution of water for irrigation purposes
fishermen	pollution of coastal waters reduction of fish stock invasive species	illegal overfishing excessive recreational fishing lack of regulation from understaffed port authority

**complex, inefficient
and rigid bureaucratic
procedures**

**lack of public
participation in
decision-making**

government
officials

limited funding
limited staffing
unclear provisions and guidelines from central government
dysfunctional communication between relevant public services

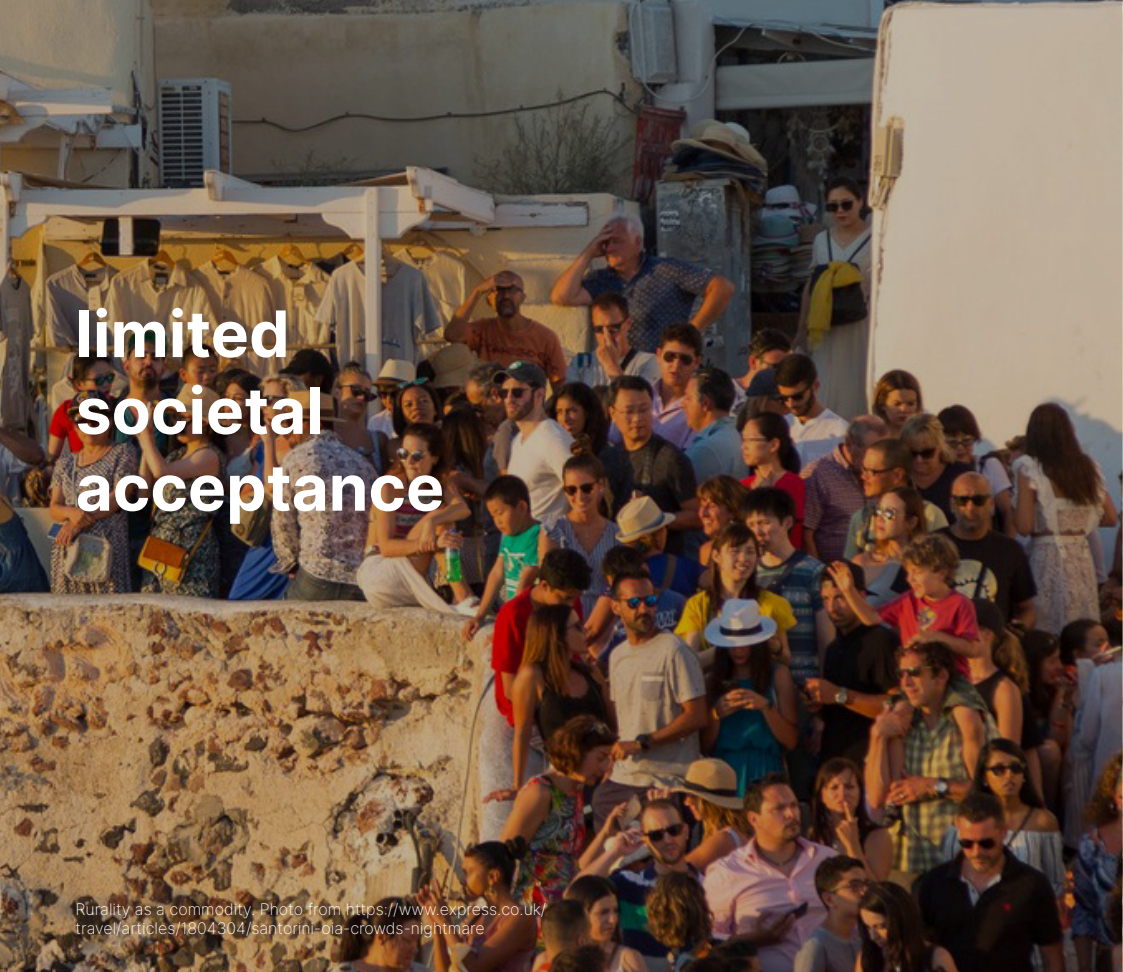
**"if you ever see the
waters of Spercheios
flowing up the stream,
then Greece would
become a proper state
again."**



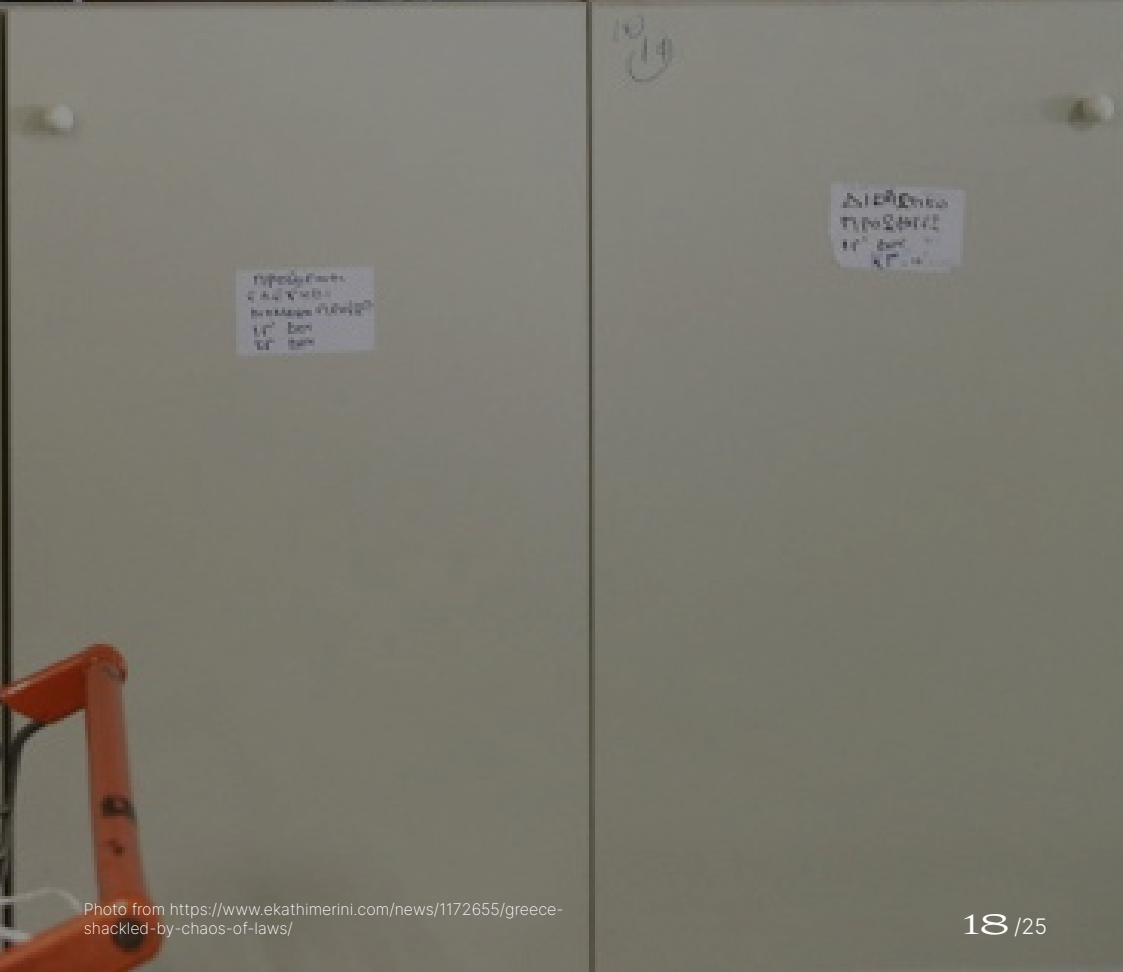
barriers and opportunities



bureaucracy



**limited
societal
acceptance**



rural post-growth agenda

dimension

item

institutional

formation of bioregional administrative body

decision-making through data-driven management of the river basin

ecological

expansion of the riparian zone

shifting the intensive agriculture production to agroforestry practices

prevention of wildfires through grazing and mild agroforestry practices

regeneration of the coastal marsh/wetland

economic

shift to mainly agriculture employment

more investment to the service, nursing and craft sector

adaptation of the coast to wet agriculture

infrastructural

adaptation to energy and water sufficiency

adaptation to conditions of drought and flooding

emphasis on nature-based solutions to river management

diversified, multi-scalar energy production and storage

traditional practises of land and water management

social

engagement to decision making and green politics

population increase of existing villages

standstill

problematic
and corrupt
context



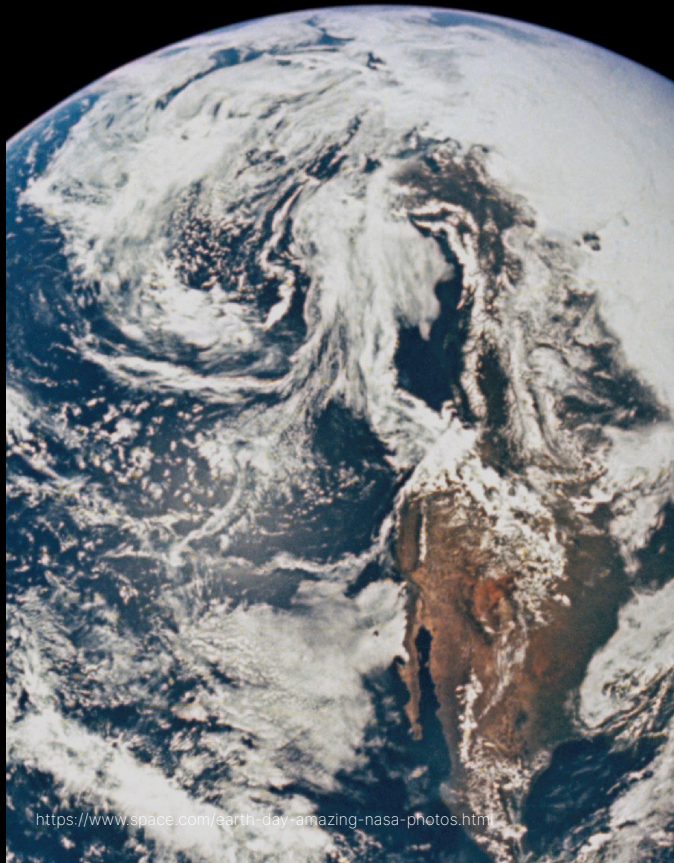
<https://www.thenationalherald.com/greek-train-crash-said-brought-by-debt-corruption-rolling-blunders/>

standstill

problematic
and corrupt
context



overwhelming
post-growth
agenda

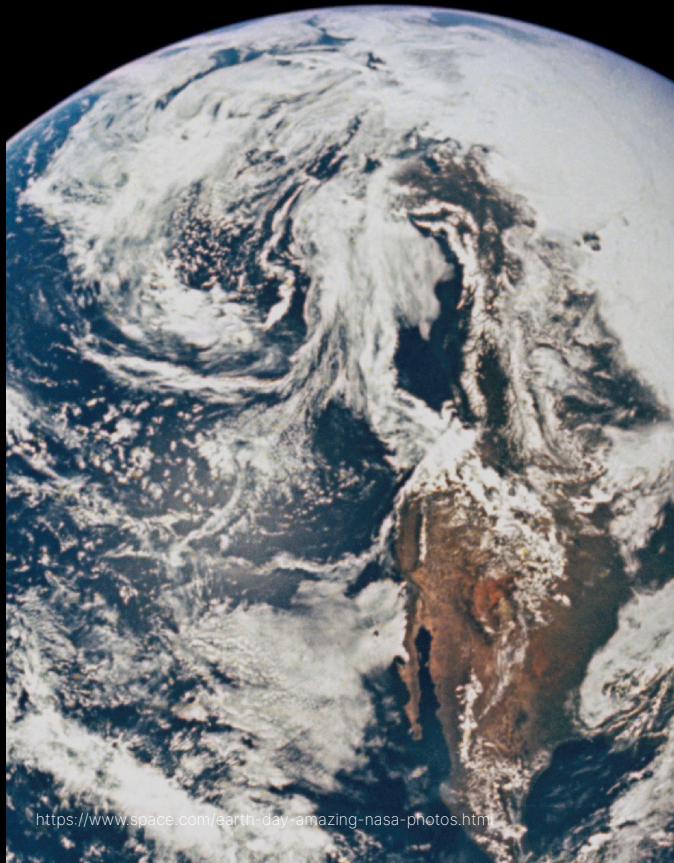


standstill

problematic
and corrupt
context



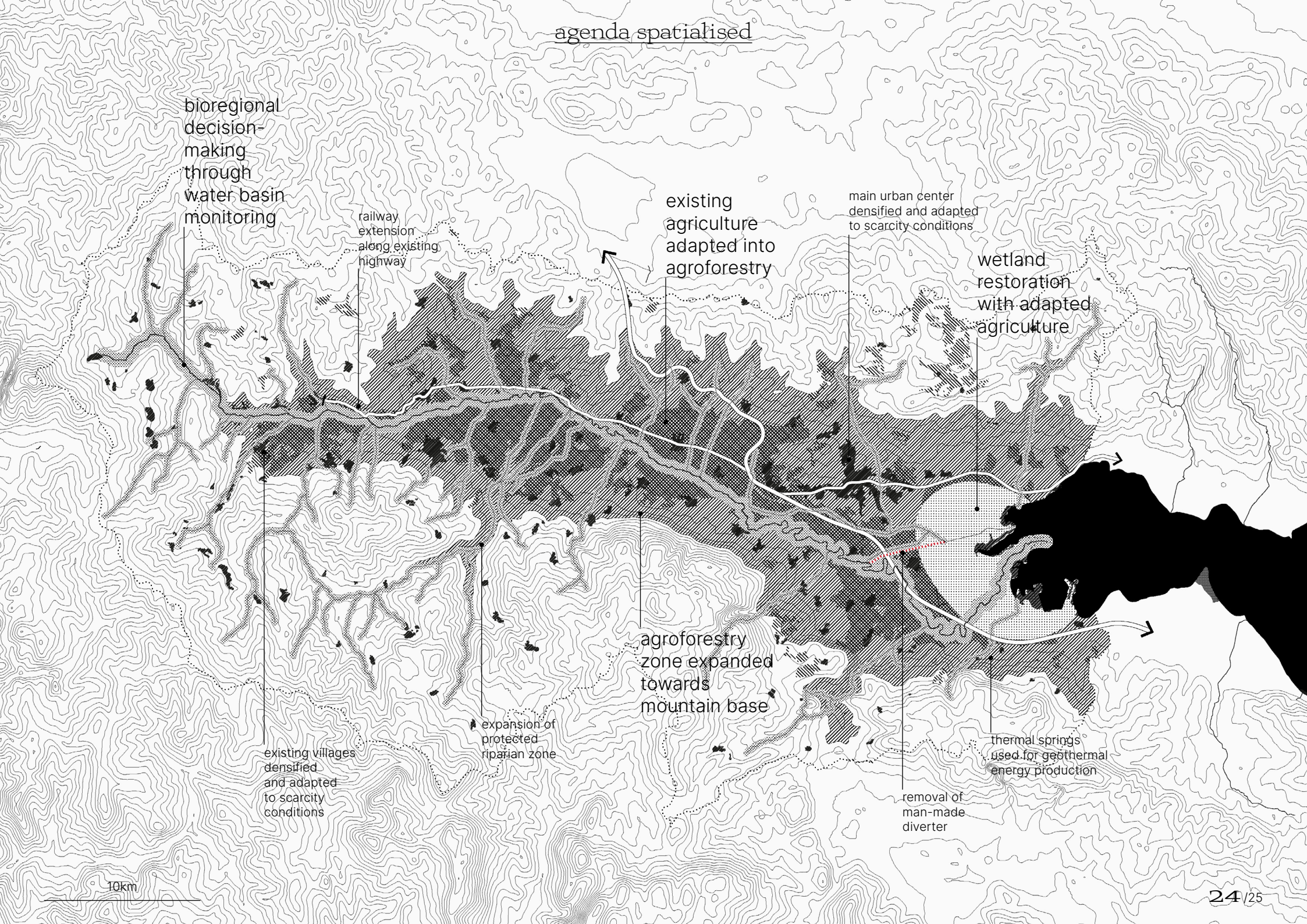
overwhelming
post-growth
agenda



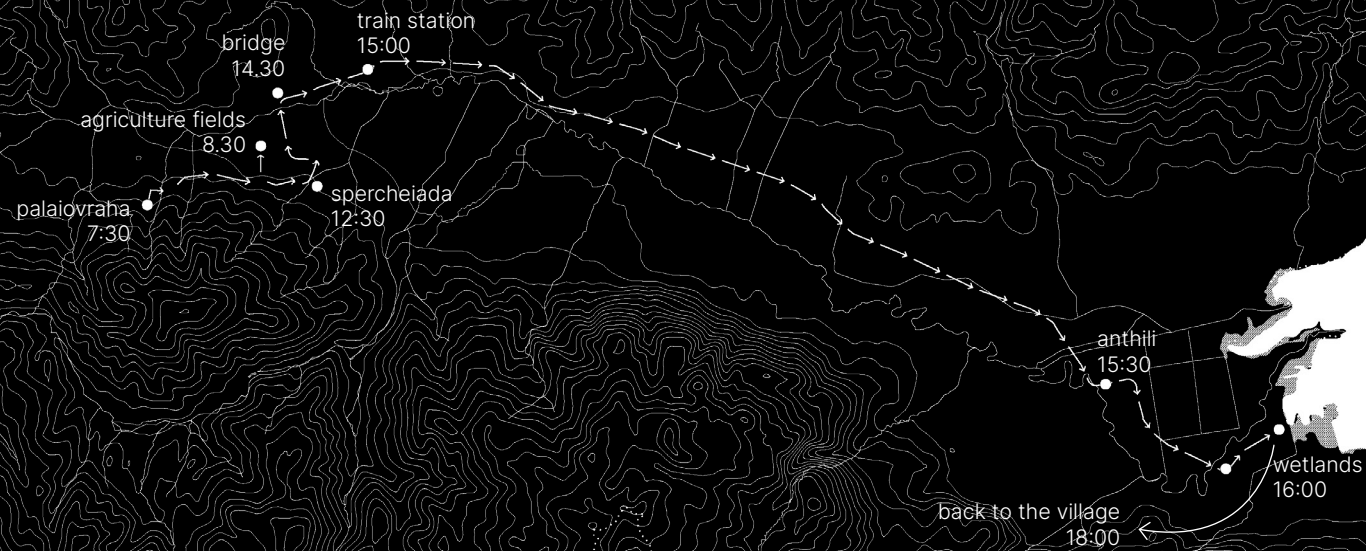
lack of adequate
communication and
imagining tools



agenda spatialised



post-growth imaginary



1

location
house in
Palaiovraha
content
adaptation of
house and immediate neigh-
bourhood

2

location
Palaiovraha
square
content
post-growth
public space and local
mobility

3

location
agriculture
field
content
agroforestry through
labour & land sharing prac-
tices

4

location
meeting hall
at Spercheiada
content
bio-regional
administration &
decision-making

5

location
bridge &
inside train wagon
content
regional mobility &
nature-based
solutions

6

location
Thermopyles and coastal
wetlands
content
geothermal energy
with tourism &
wetland restoration

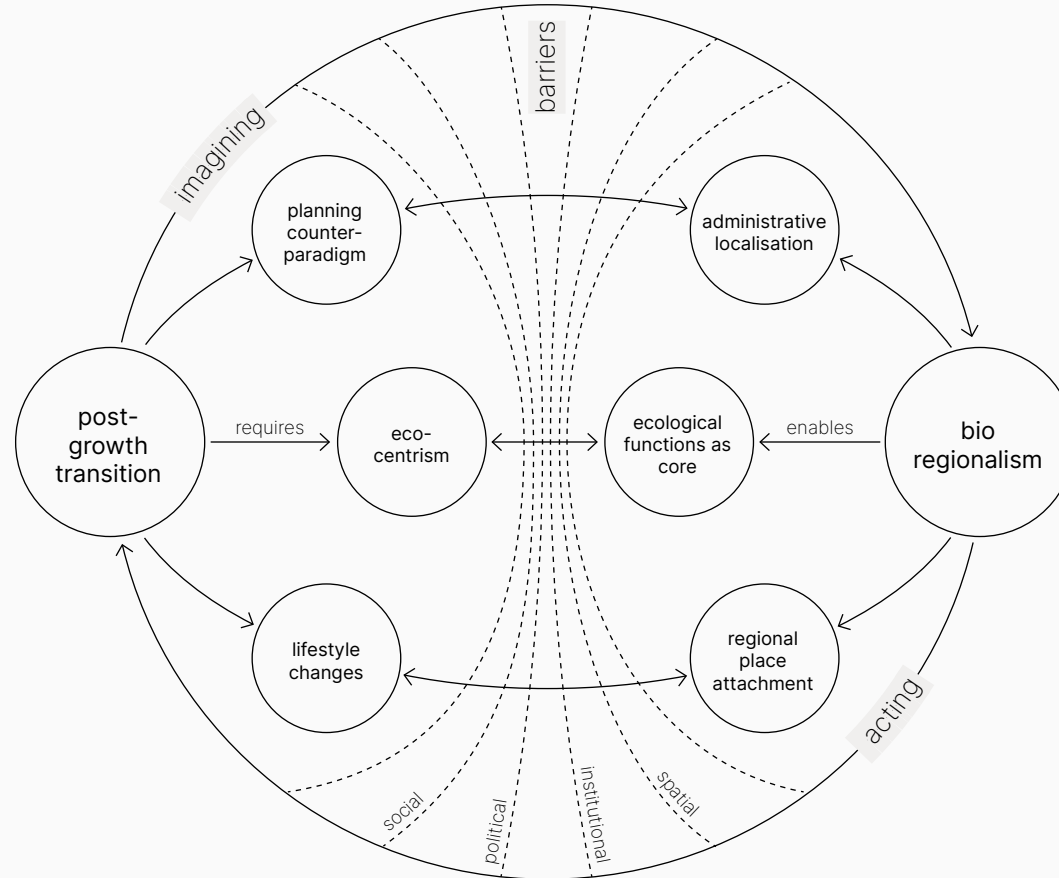
7

location
Palaiovraha
square
content
social bonding,
sharing stories
& reflecting

10km



closing remarks



question for the participants

Which mediums do you
think would work best
and to what audience?

?J5GJ?JJPPPGGGGGGGGGGGY5GGP5555555555
?J5GYYY5PPPPGGGGGGGGGGY5GBP5555555555
k you!
5555Y5PPPPFGGGGGGGGGPG555GGPP55555555
5555JY55PPPGGGGGGGGGGG555PGGP555555