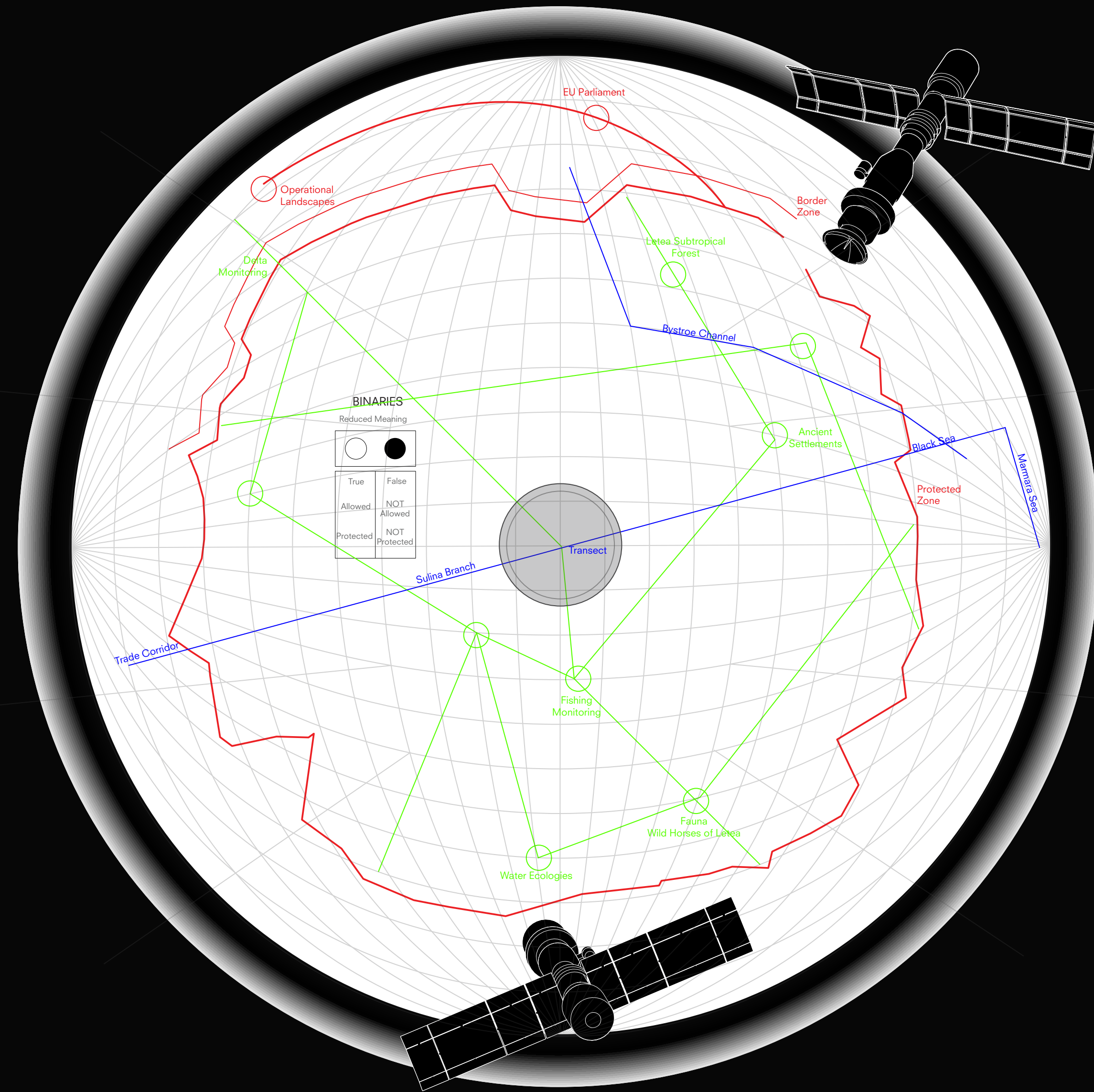


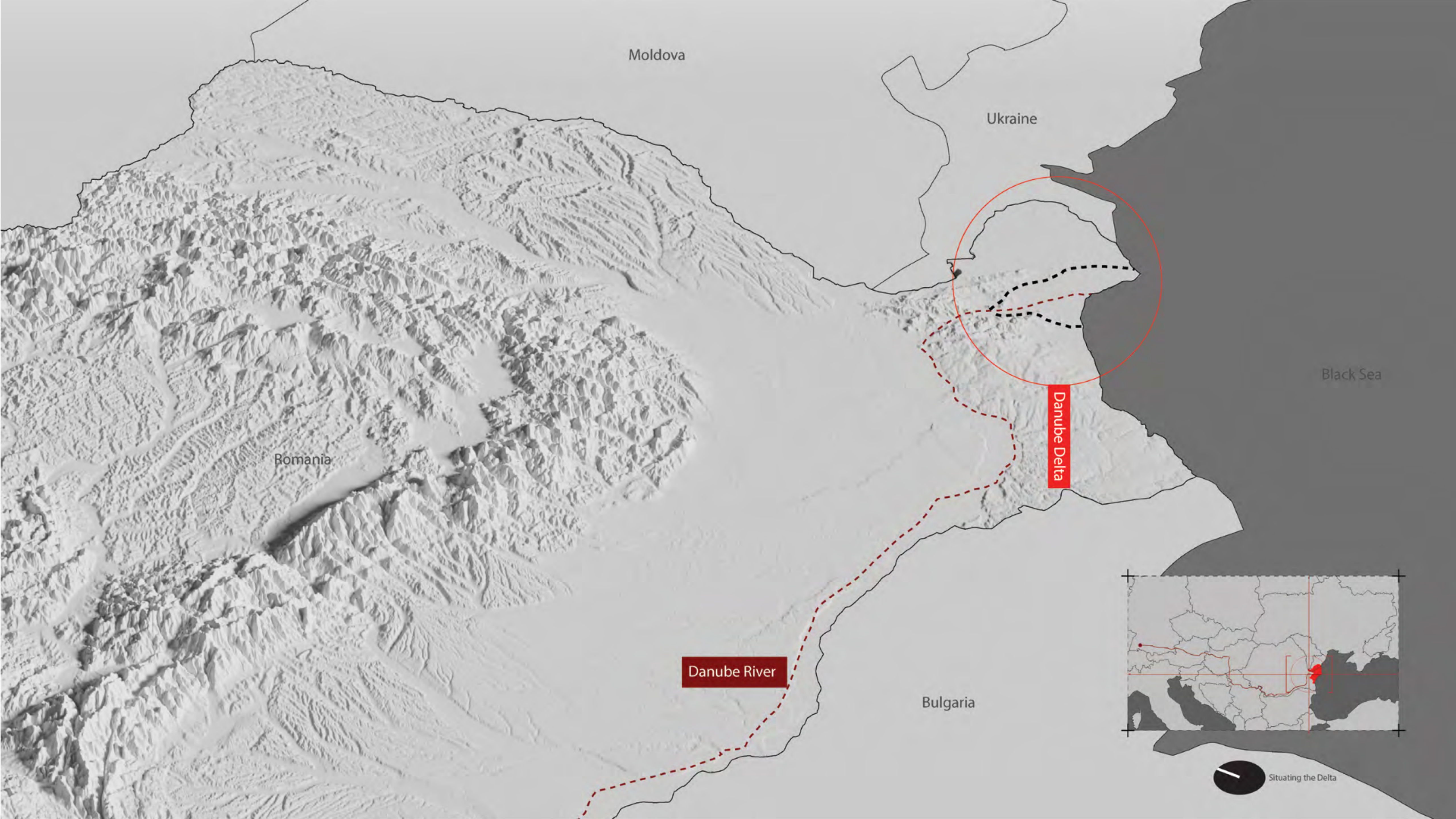
EXTRACTIVE PRESERVATION

Interfaces of Profanation, Power and Ecology in the Restricted Zone





THE CRITICAL ZONE



Moldova

Ukraine

Romania

Black Sea

Danube Delta

Danube River

Bulgaria

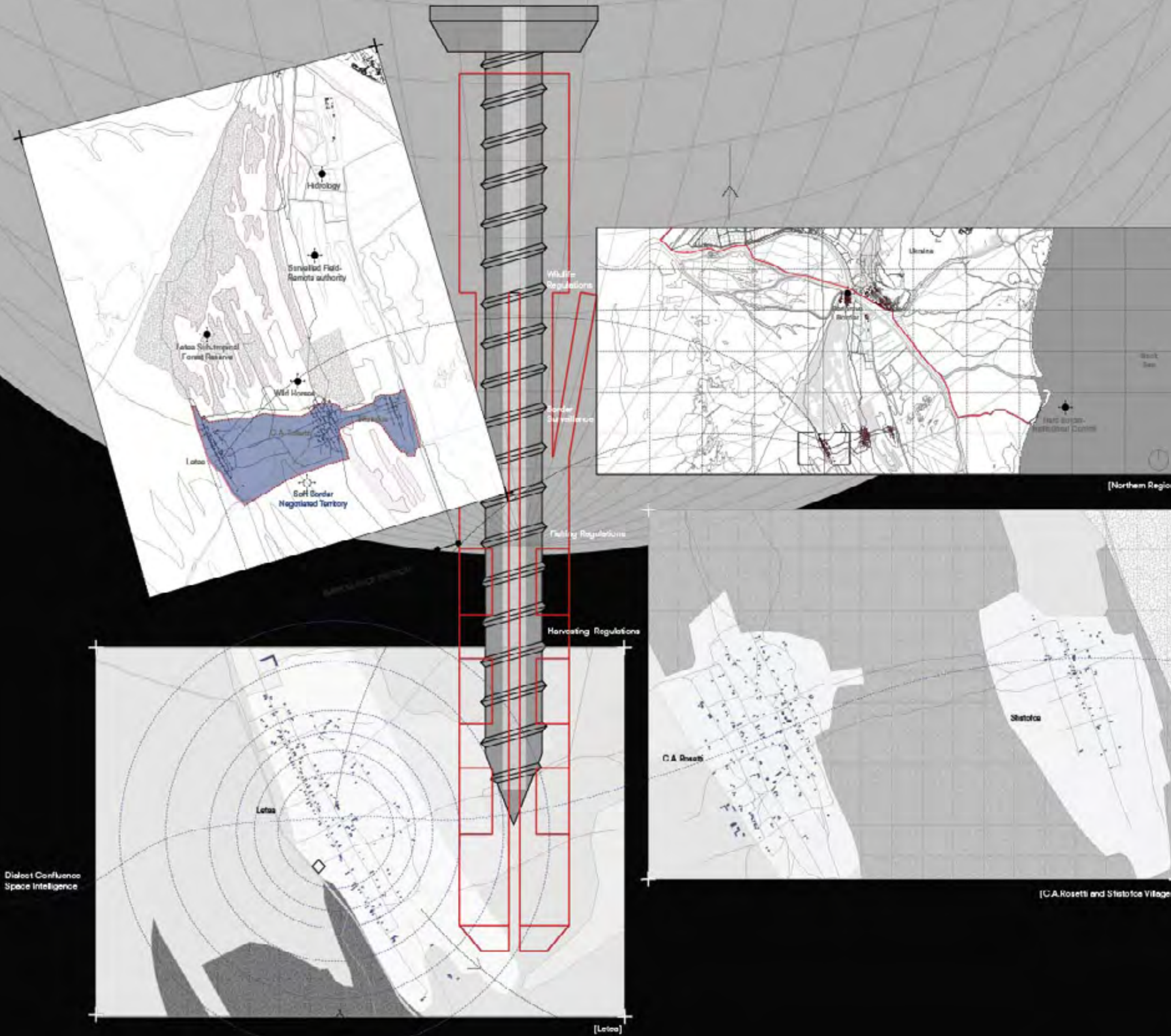
Situating the Delta



ONE OF
THE MOST
SUCCESSFUL
REWILDING
PROJECTS
IN EUROPE

Fig. 01: Danube Delta, Romania-Ukraine, seen by Copernicus Sentinel-2.
Source: European Space Agency (2021)

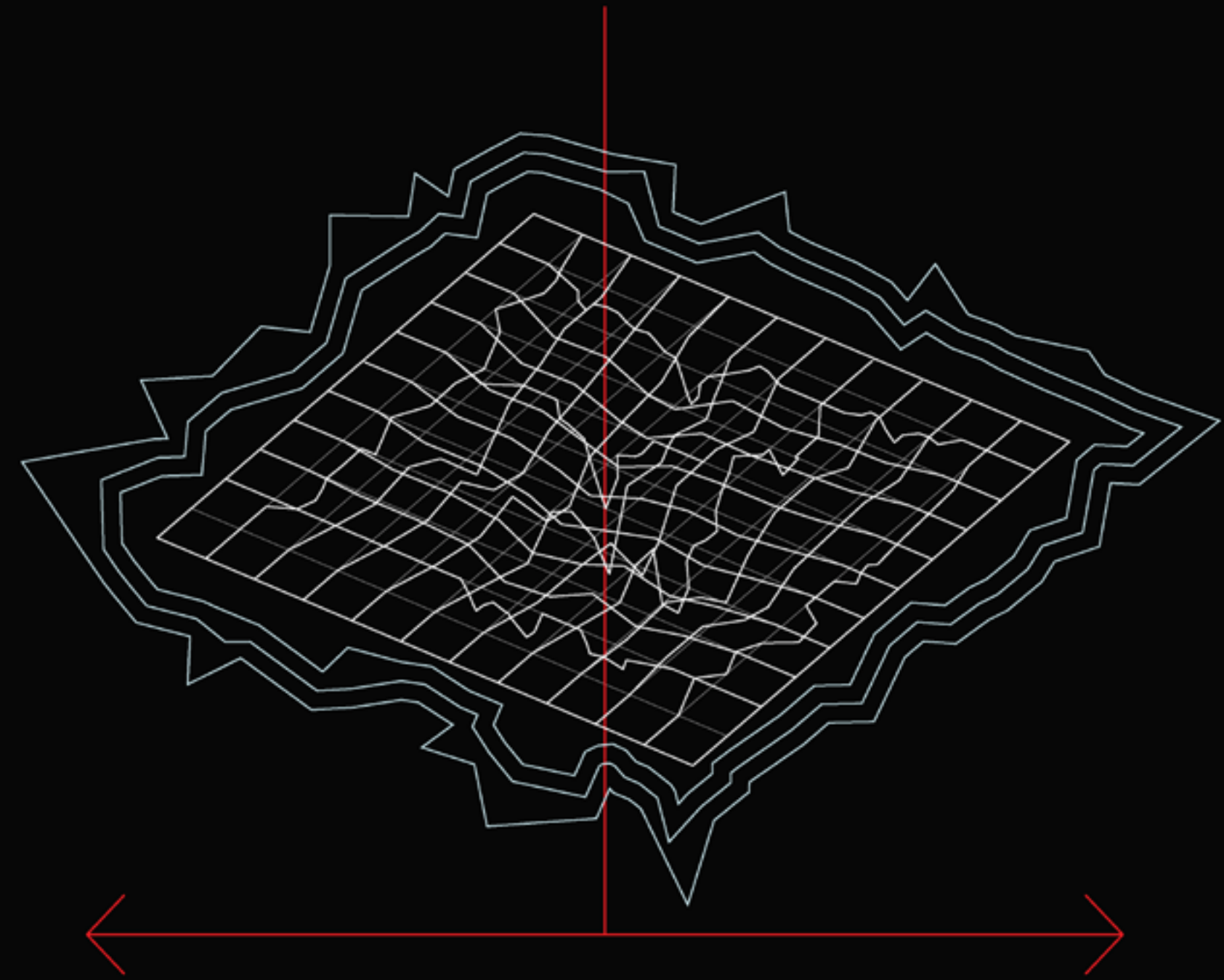
Nature Conservation as Form of Extraction





EXTRACTION
(of resources)

through power- labour



EXTRACTION
(of livelihood)

through power - preservation,
and regulation

EXTRACTIVE TERRITORIES

How can architecture operate as a mediating device between regimes of environmental governance and situated practices of care in inhabited, yet restricted territories?



Fig. 02: Human chess game being played in Palace Square, former Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg), in 1924
Source: Open Culture, 2025

Fig. 03:
Source: Epicoco, 2024



Fig. 03: Imagining Sailing Away- Children playing on a boat made from discarded objects

**“One day humanity
will play with law just
as children play with
disused objects, not in
order to restore them
to their canonical use
but to free them from it
for good”**

Agamben, 2007

PROFANATION THROUGH PLAY

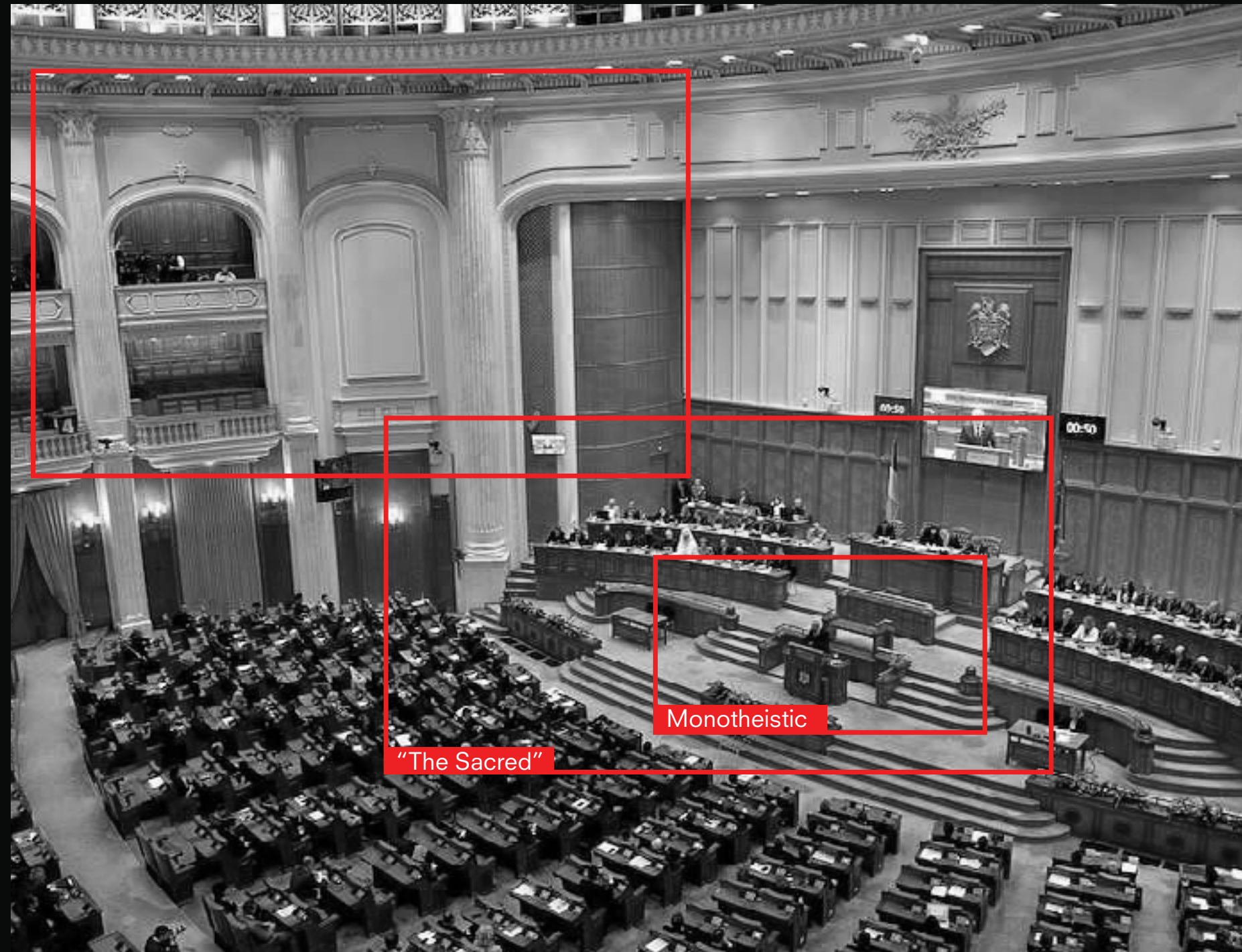


Fig. 04: Parliament Hall of Romania
Source: Romanian Insider, 2018

MAKING OF POLITICS

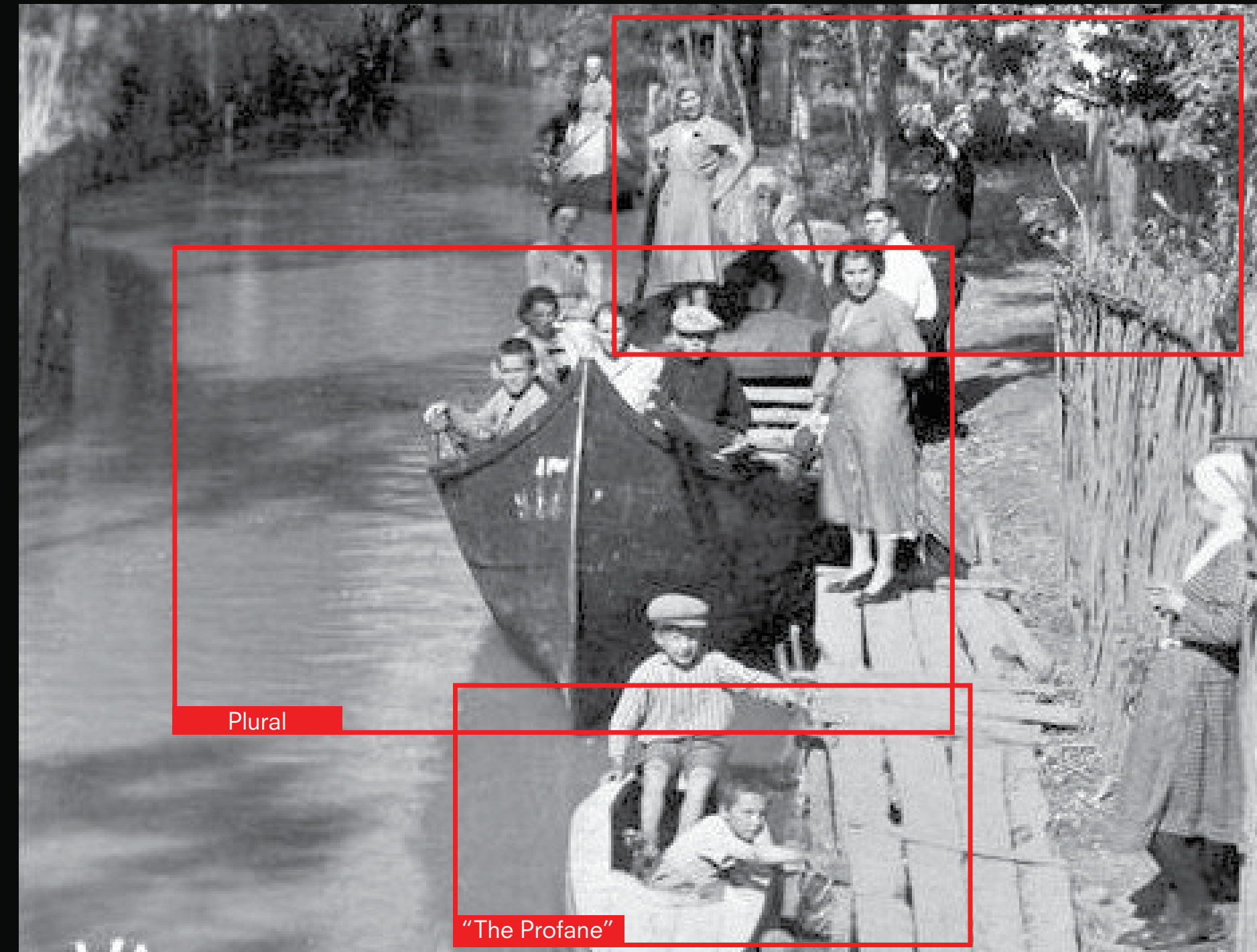
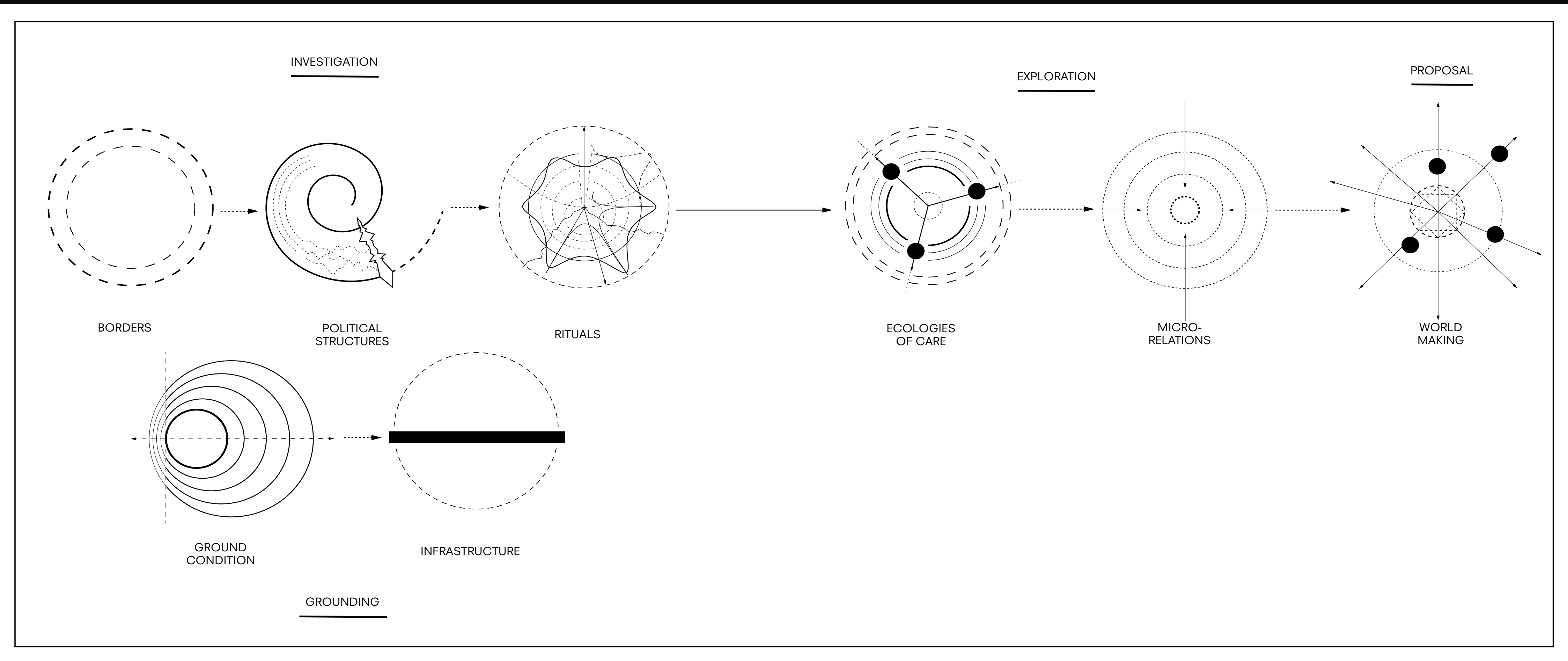


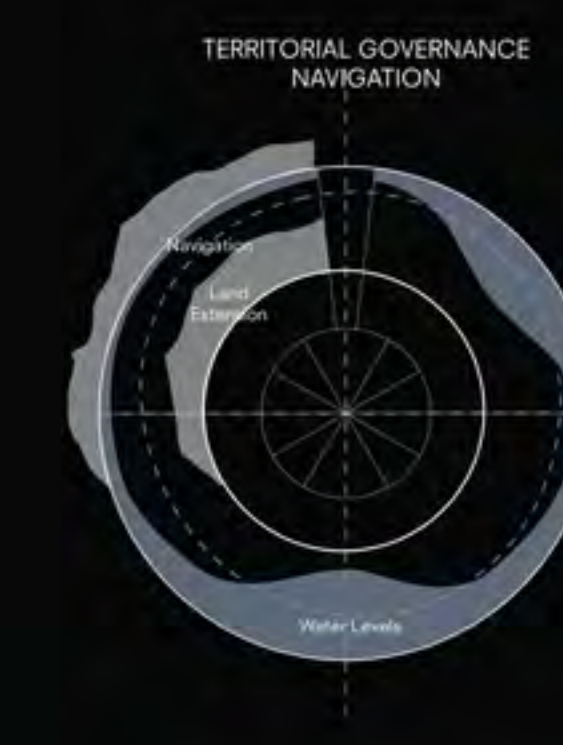
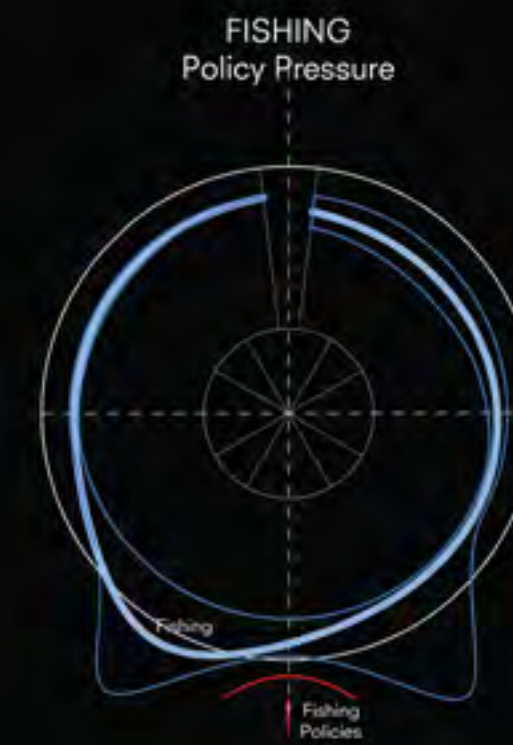
Fig. 05: Locals in Vâlcov Danube Delta, 1937
Source: Arhitectura 1906, 2022

TACIT KNOWLEDGE | SITUATED DIPLOMACY

PROFANATION OF POLITICS



Practices follow social, natural, and territorial relations- not fixed borders.

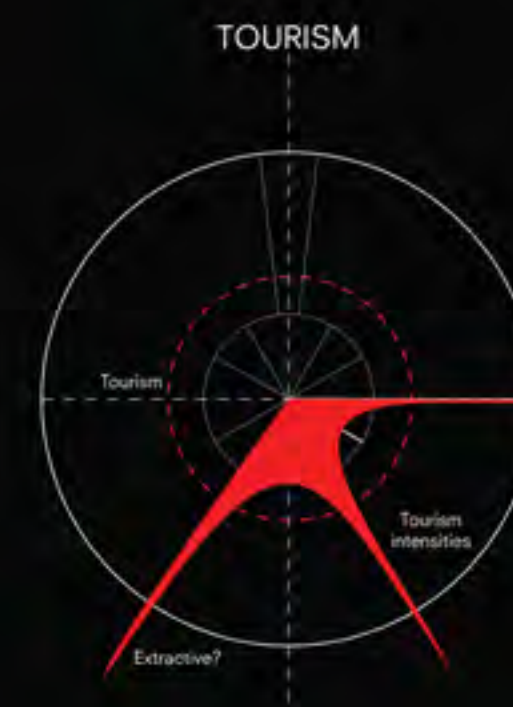
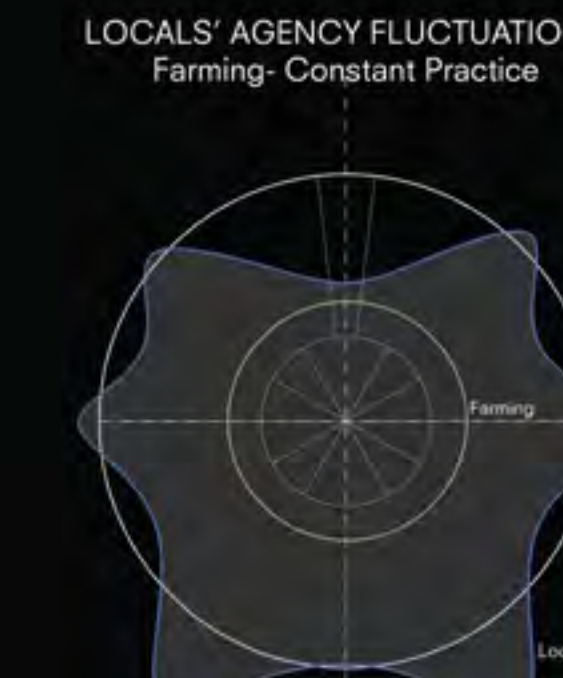
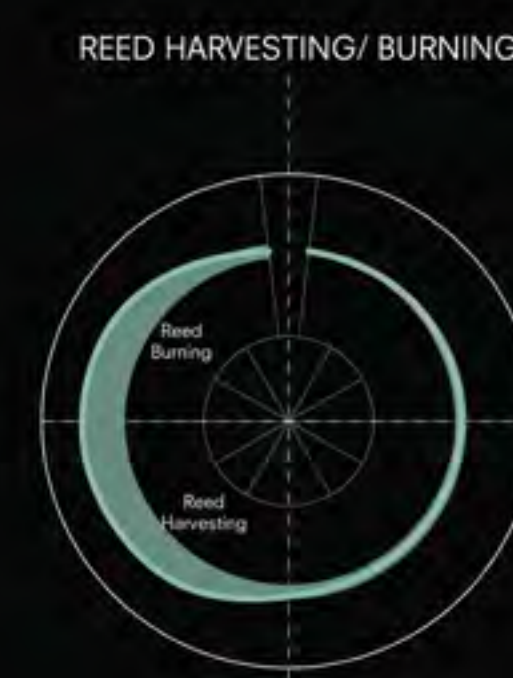


Spring - Reopening
 Floodwaters return, expanding territory
 Fishing rituals resume at dawn
 Routes are tested and renegotiated
 Livestock and homes adapt to rising water
 Silence and avoidance near nesting birds

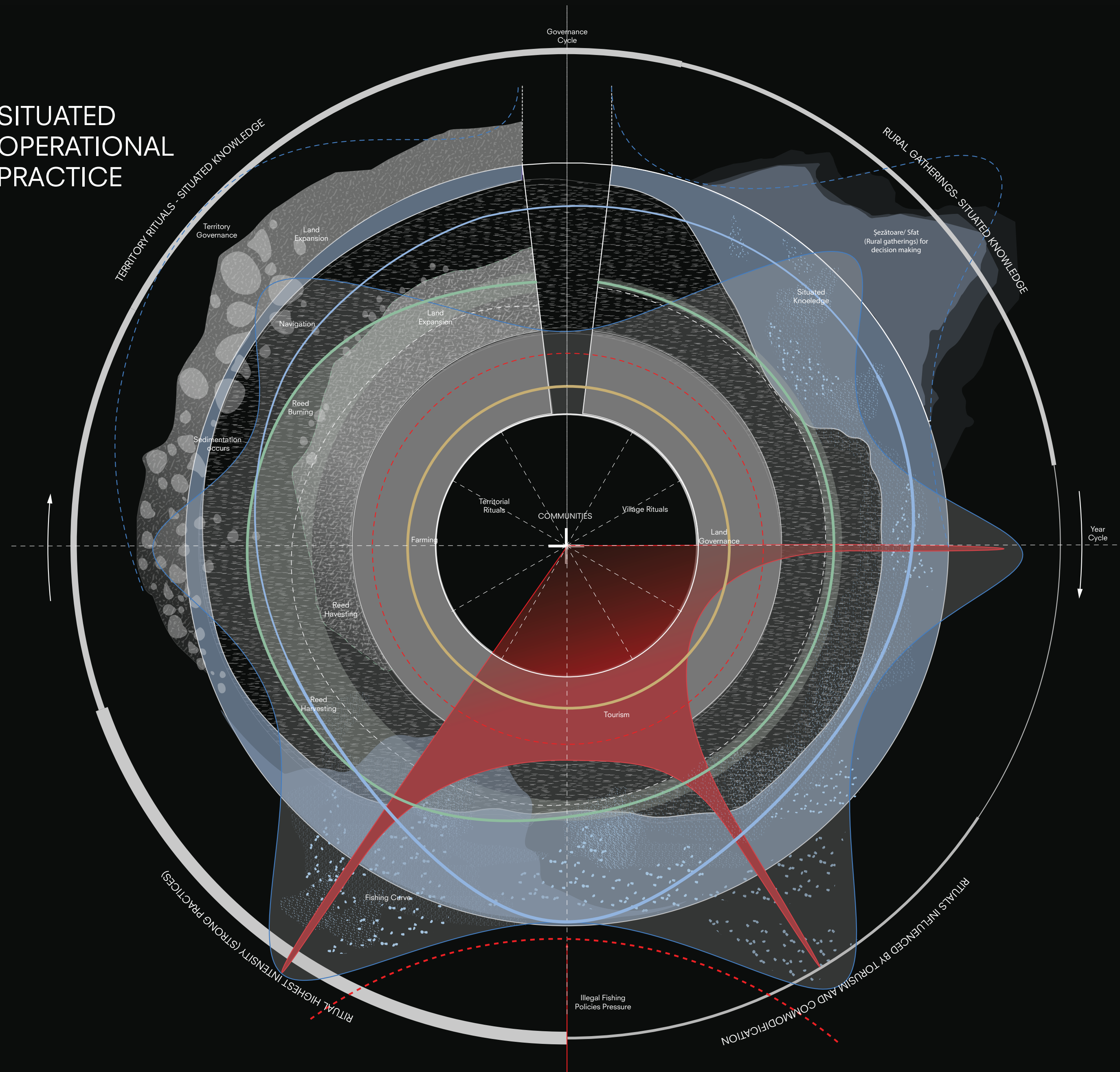
Summer - Negotiation
 Daily fishing routines stabilize
 Reed growth limits movement
 Narrow channels require verbal negotiation
 Tourism introduces external rhythms
 Weather (fog, storms) interrupts mobility

Autumn - Extraction
 Fish concentrate as harvesting peaks
 Reed cutting begins collectively
 Channels are cleared for access
 Territorial claims become more defined
 Preparation for winter isolation

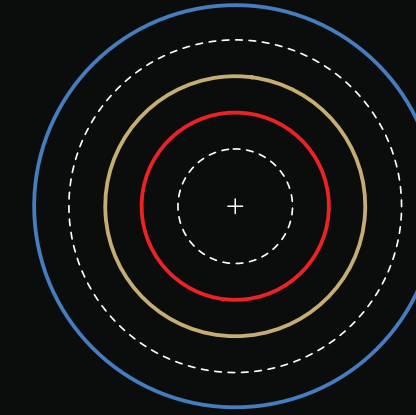
Winter - Closure
 Reed harvesting continues
 Food and routes are shared
 Boats and tools are repaired
 Community rituals intensify
 Șezătoare/ Șfat- Romanian word for communal gatherings for decision making



SITUATED OPERATIONAL PRACTICE

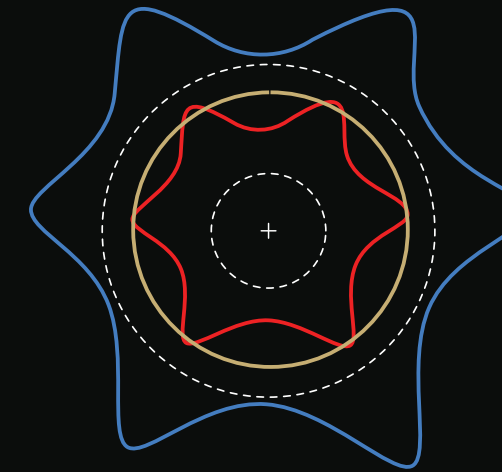


LAYERS OF PRACTICES



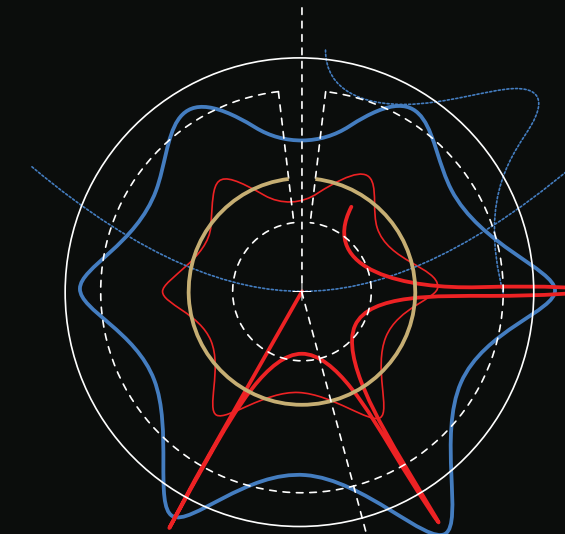
Local practices, tourism, governance happen in separate cycles

STRIATED SPACE



An 'ideal Delta' with seasonal modulations

SMOOTH SPACE



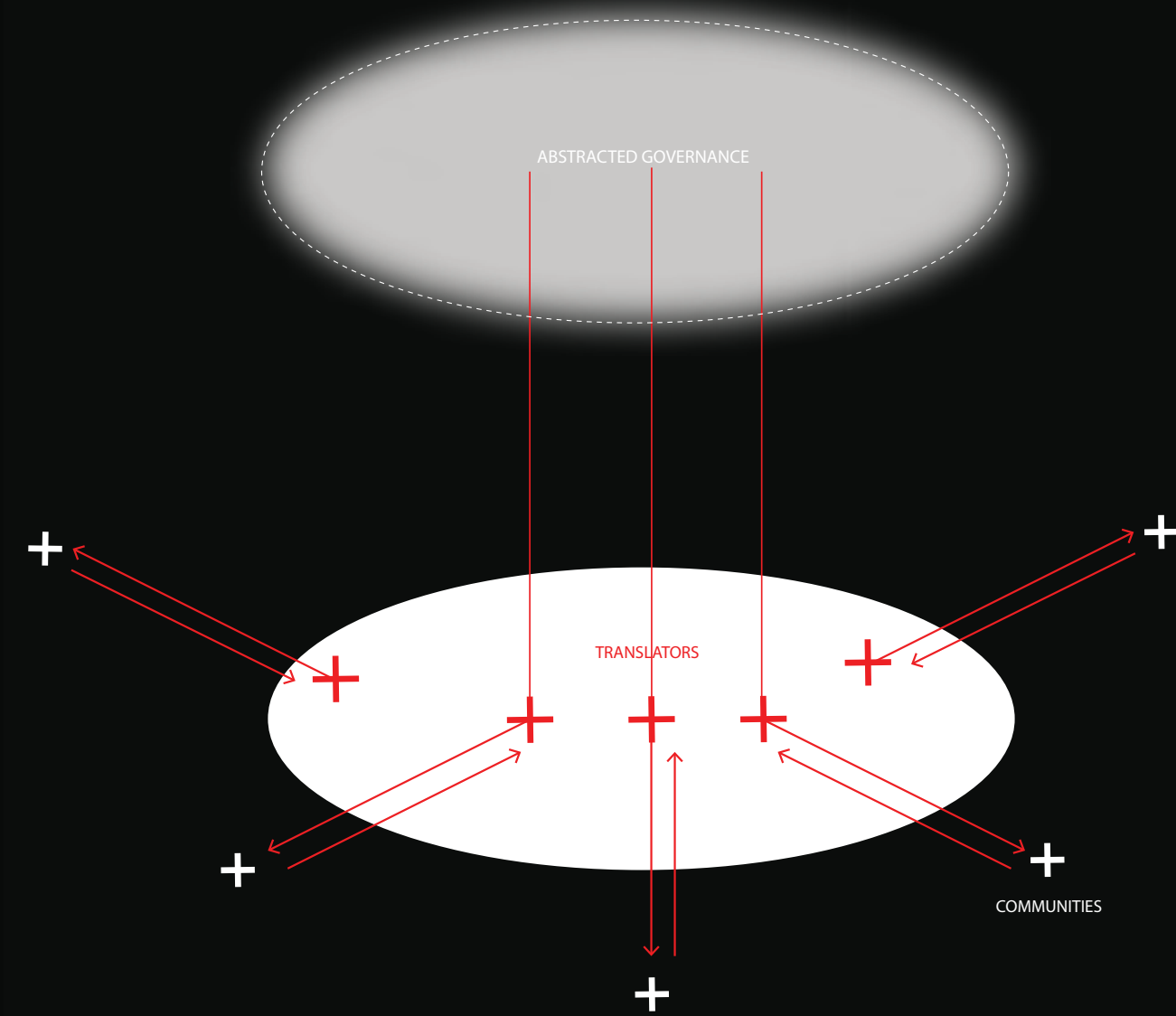
Current realities impacted by geopolitics, control, tourism (and lack of agency)

- Locals' Agency (Water)
- - - Rituals (Fading Agency)
- Locals' Agency (Territory)
- Local Constant (Farming)
- Tourism
- Territory Boundary

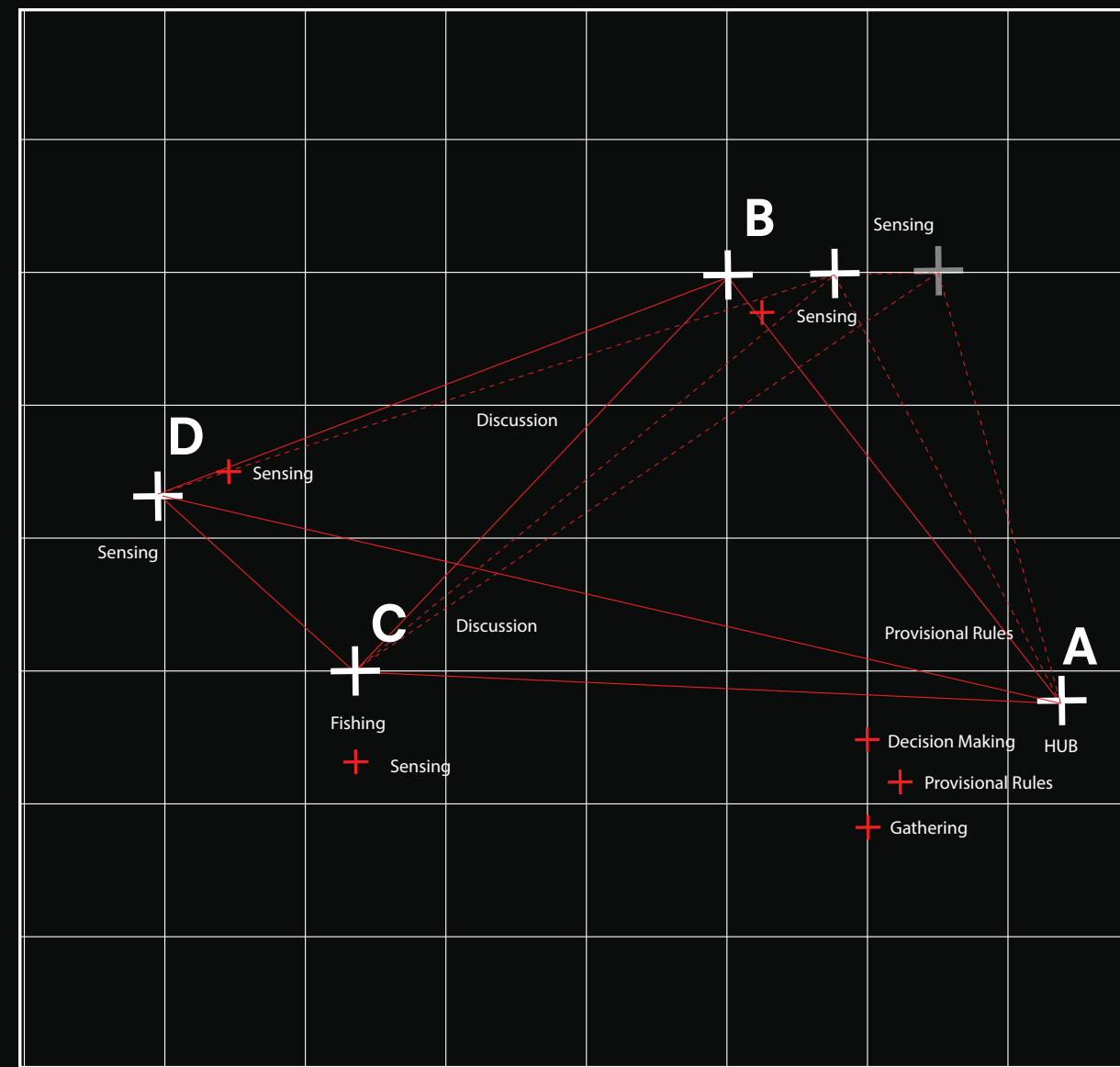
DISPERSED PARLIAMENT

INTERFACES OF PROFANATION, POWER AND ECOLOGY IN THE RESTRICTED ZONE

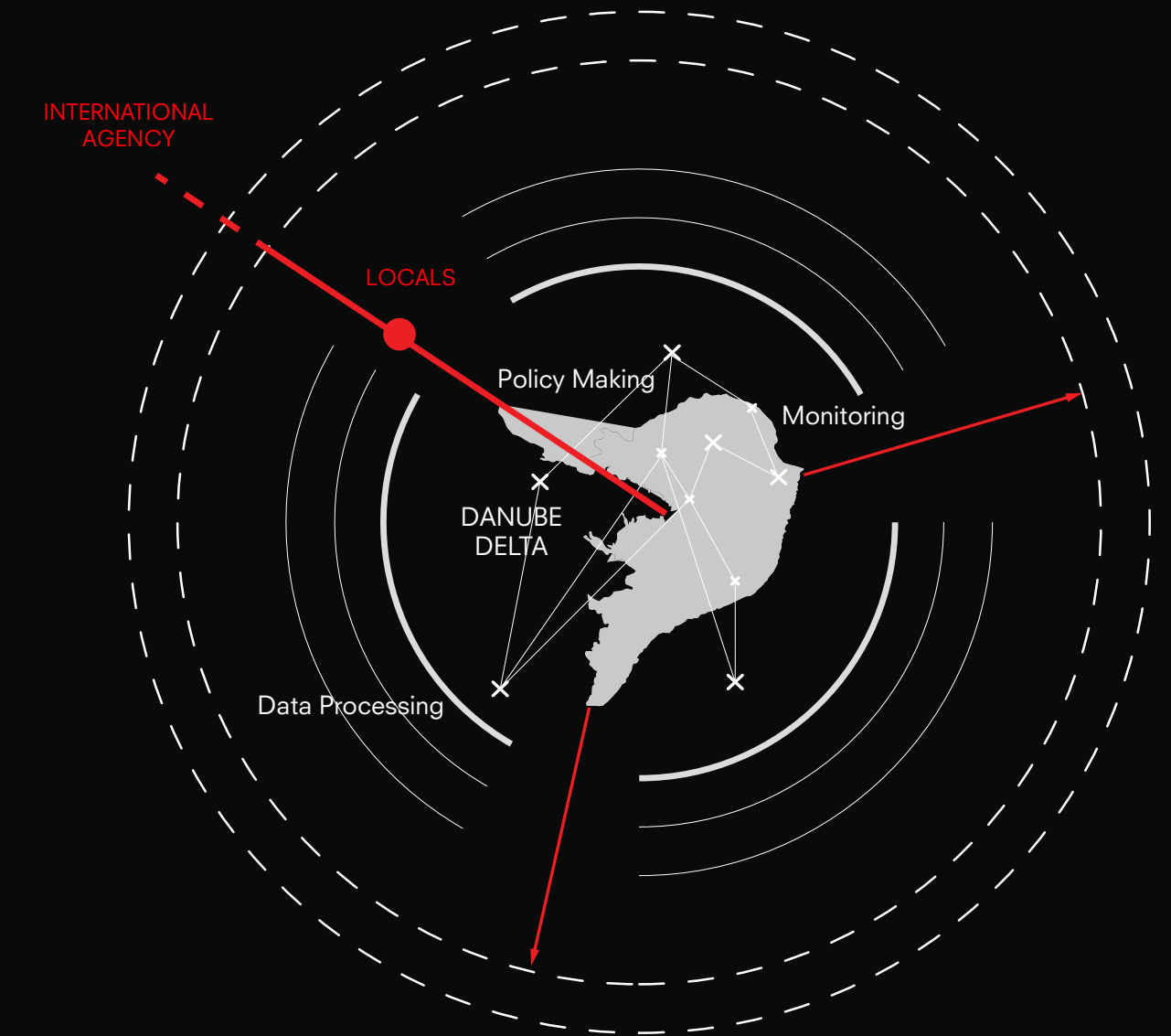
PROPOSAL



Abstract Data → Interpretation → Negotiation → Spatial Sequence

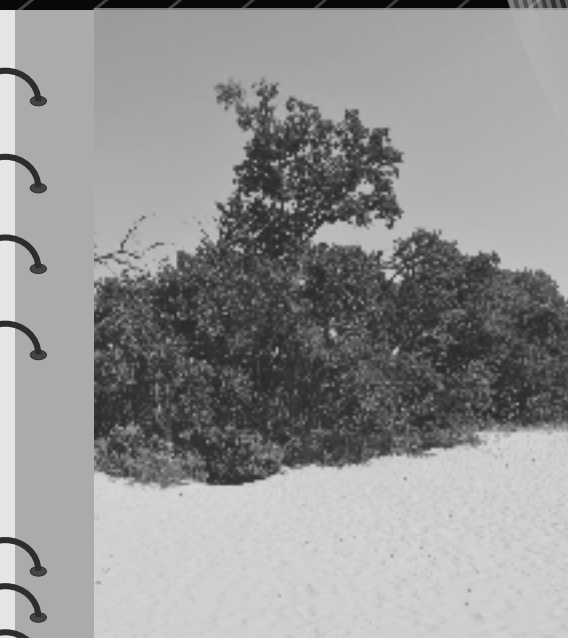
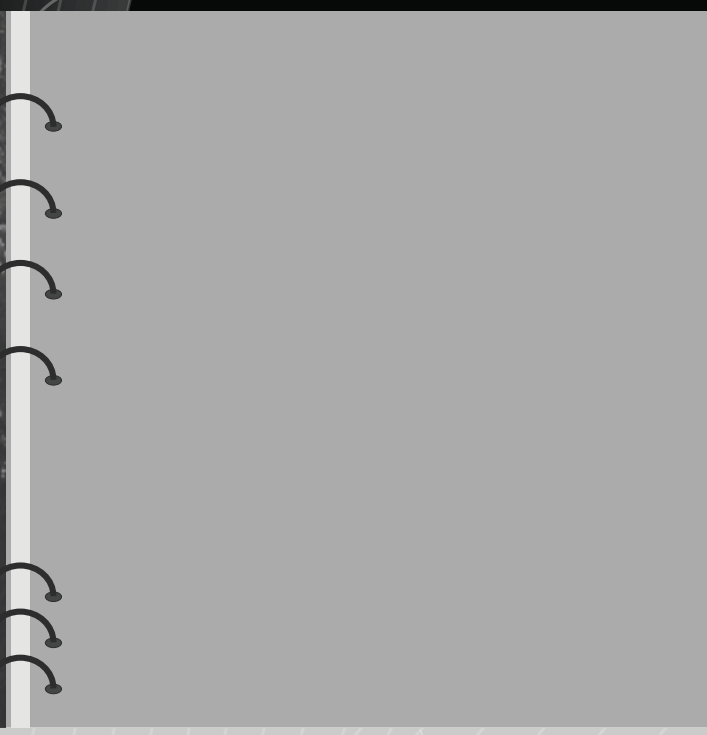


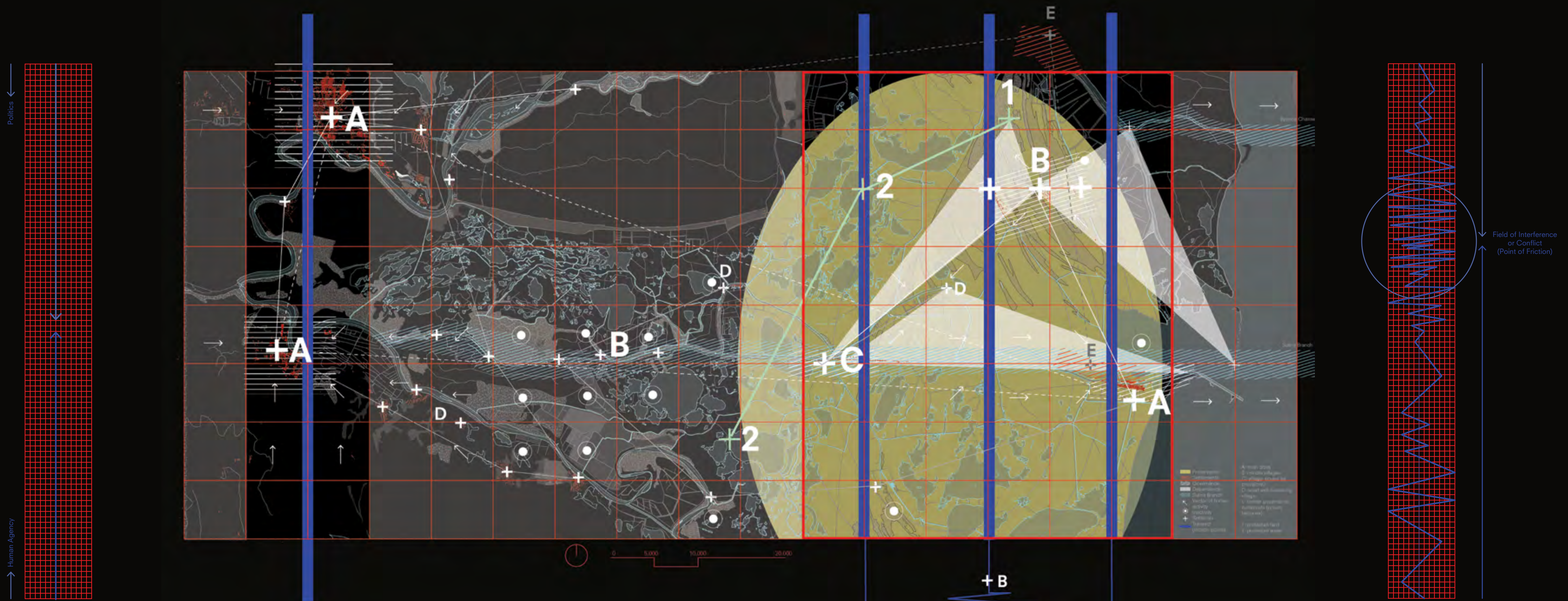
Practice → Sensing → Discussion → Provisional Rules → Back to Practice



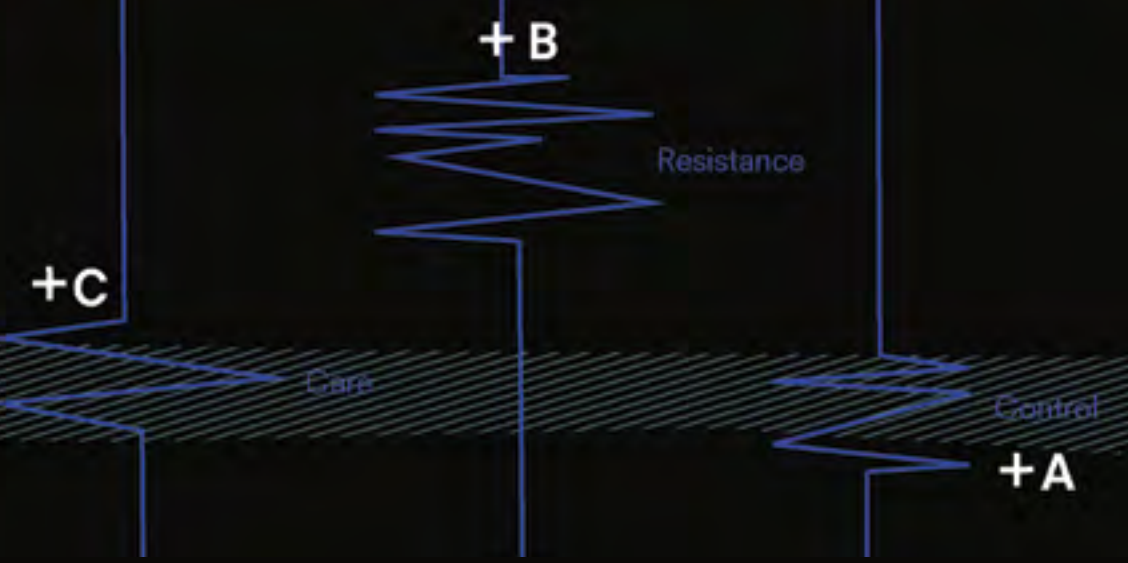
BOTTOM-UP GOVERNANCE

MAKING GOVERNANCE TANGIBLE





What conflicting systems coexist? What is fragile, but persistent?
 What is informal, but essential? Where does human order fail
 and where does it adapt?



FRICION LINES IN THE NORTHERN REGION



Fig. 06: Satellite Image of Mita 23 Region
Source: Google Earth

SENSING



Fig. 07: Satellite Image of Crisan-Caraorman River
Source: Google Earth

TACIT KNOWLEDGE- MONITORING

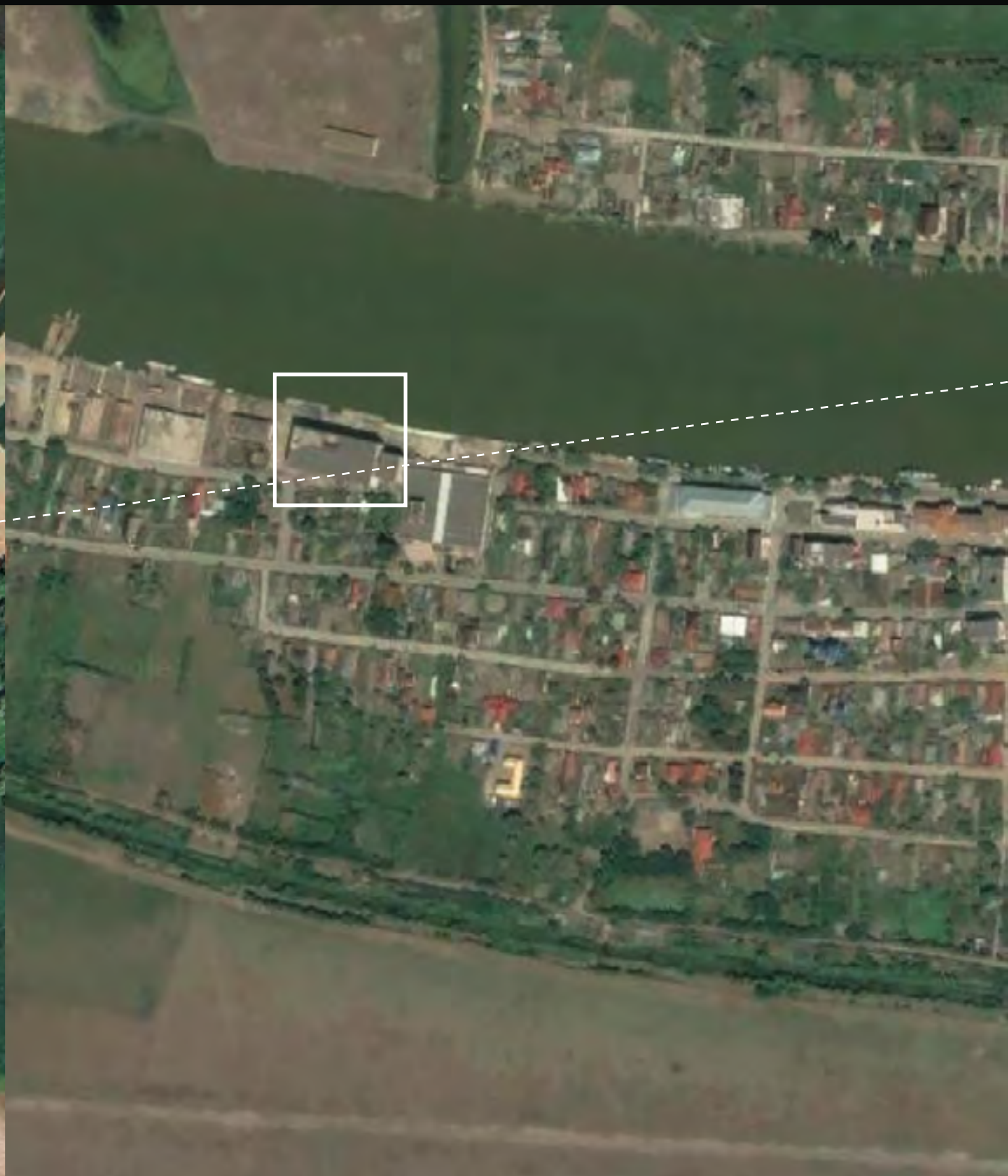
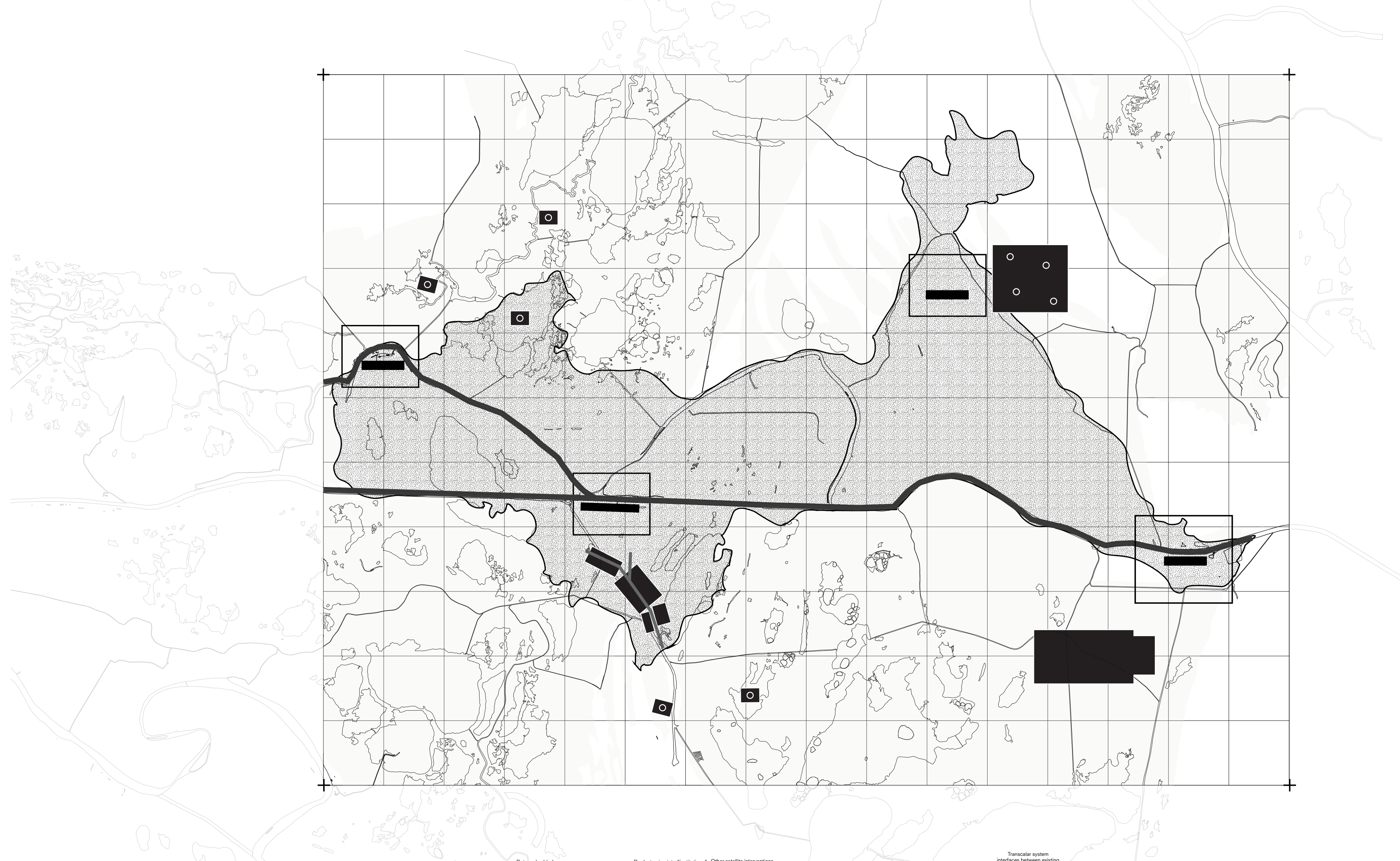


Fig. 08: Satellite Image of Sulina
Source: Google Earth

SITUATED DIPLOMACY

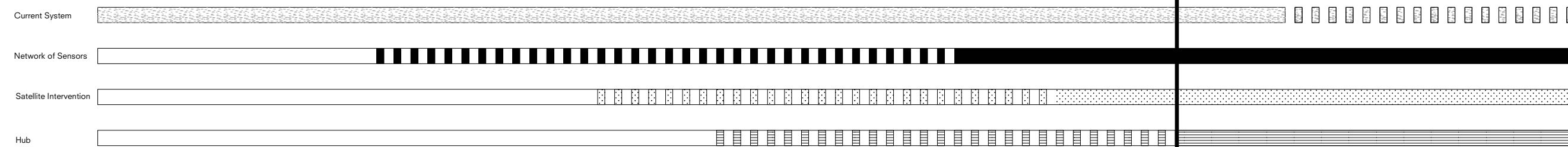
THE TRILOGIC INQUIRY



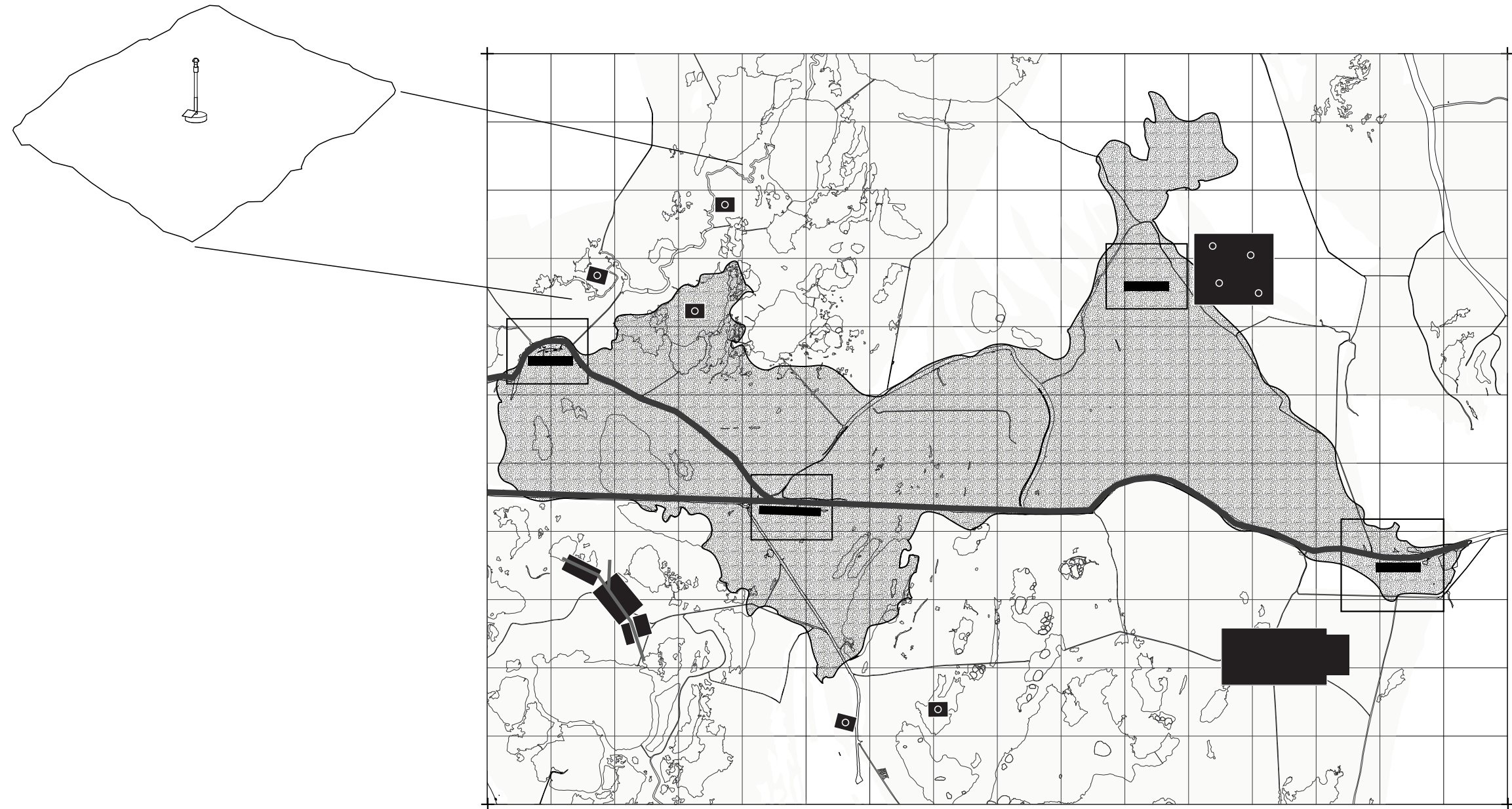
Data embedded in local practice

Docks turning into "institutions" Other satellite interventions (eg. reed harvesters)

Transcalar system interfaces between existing and new structures



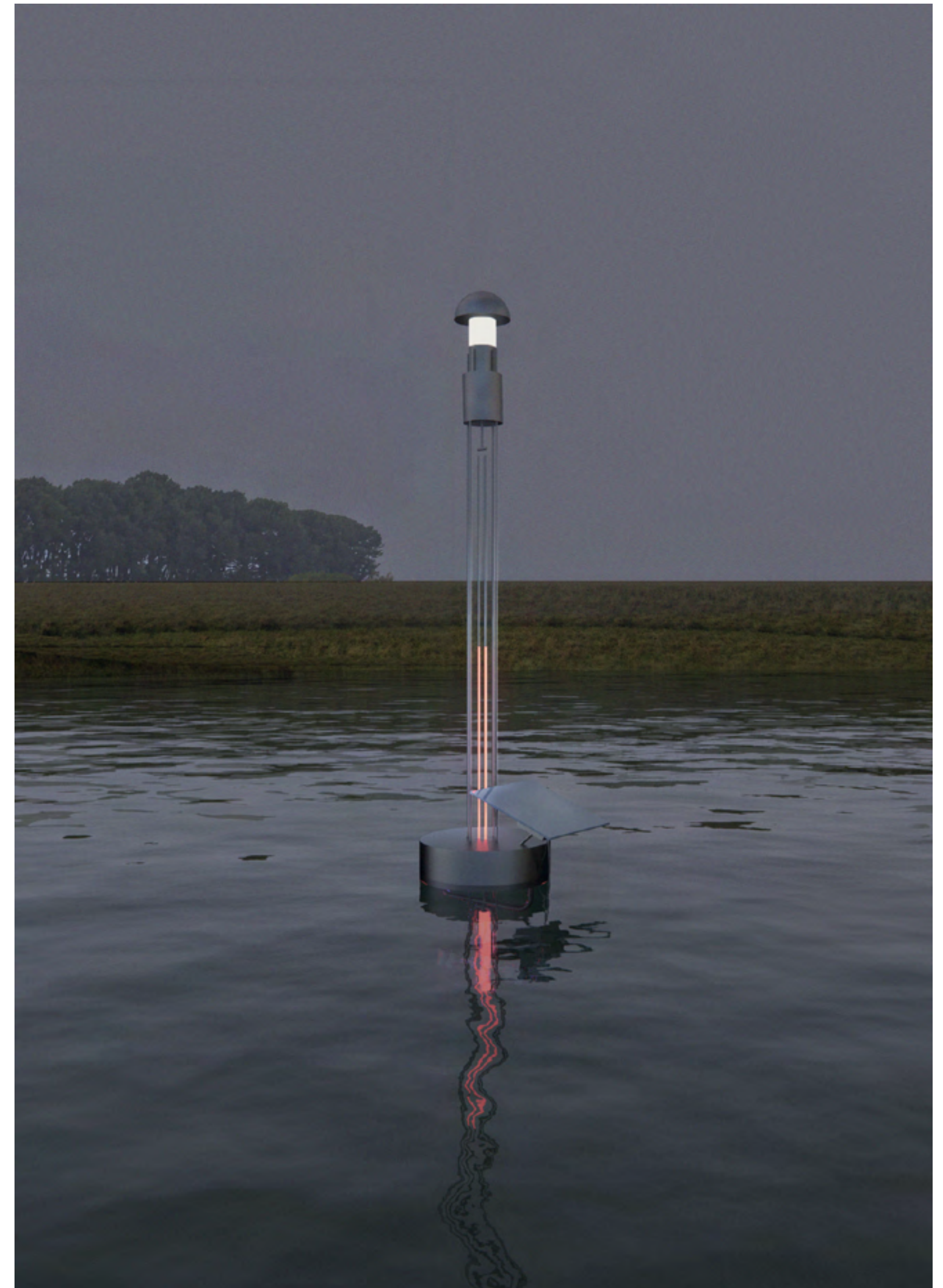
site 1



Phase I: The territory begins to listen.

**Small sensing devices are embedded
throughout the villages, reedfields and lakes**

Their presence is visible.



water sensors in lakes (part of unesco reserve park)

site 2



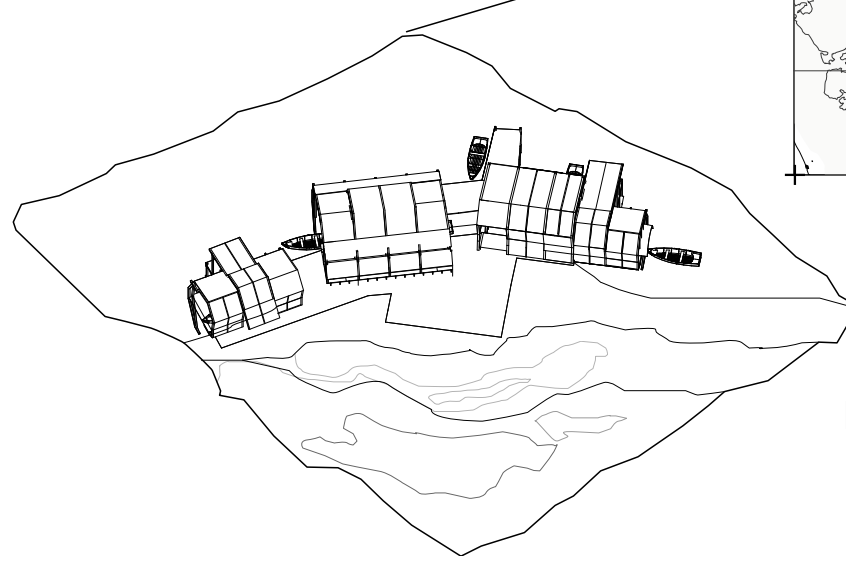
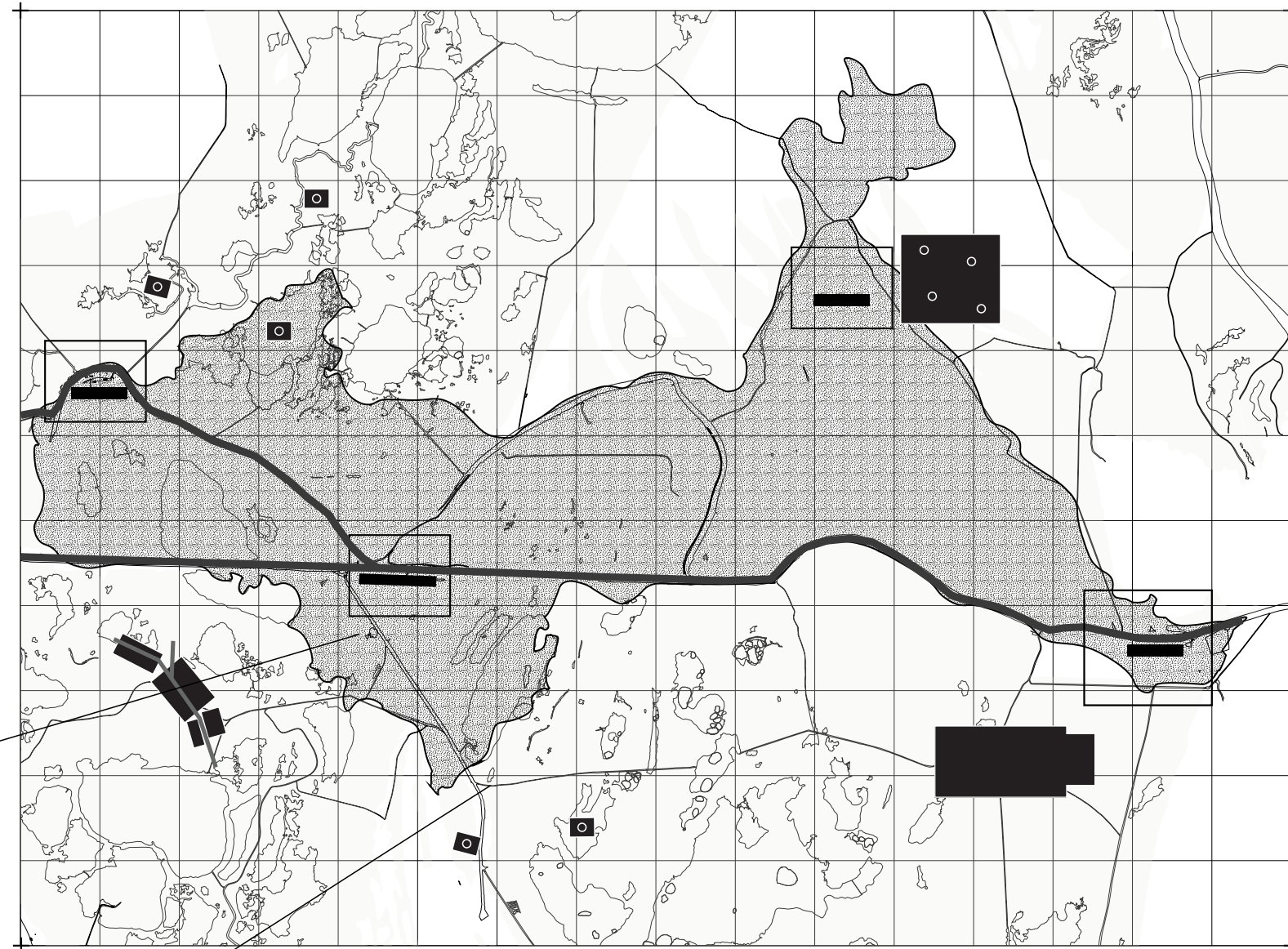
**Together they register fluctuations in water quality,
fish populations, seasonal flooding,
and environmental stress.**

Data returns to the commons.



sensors in letea's natural reserve

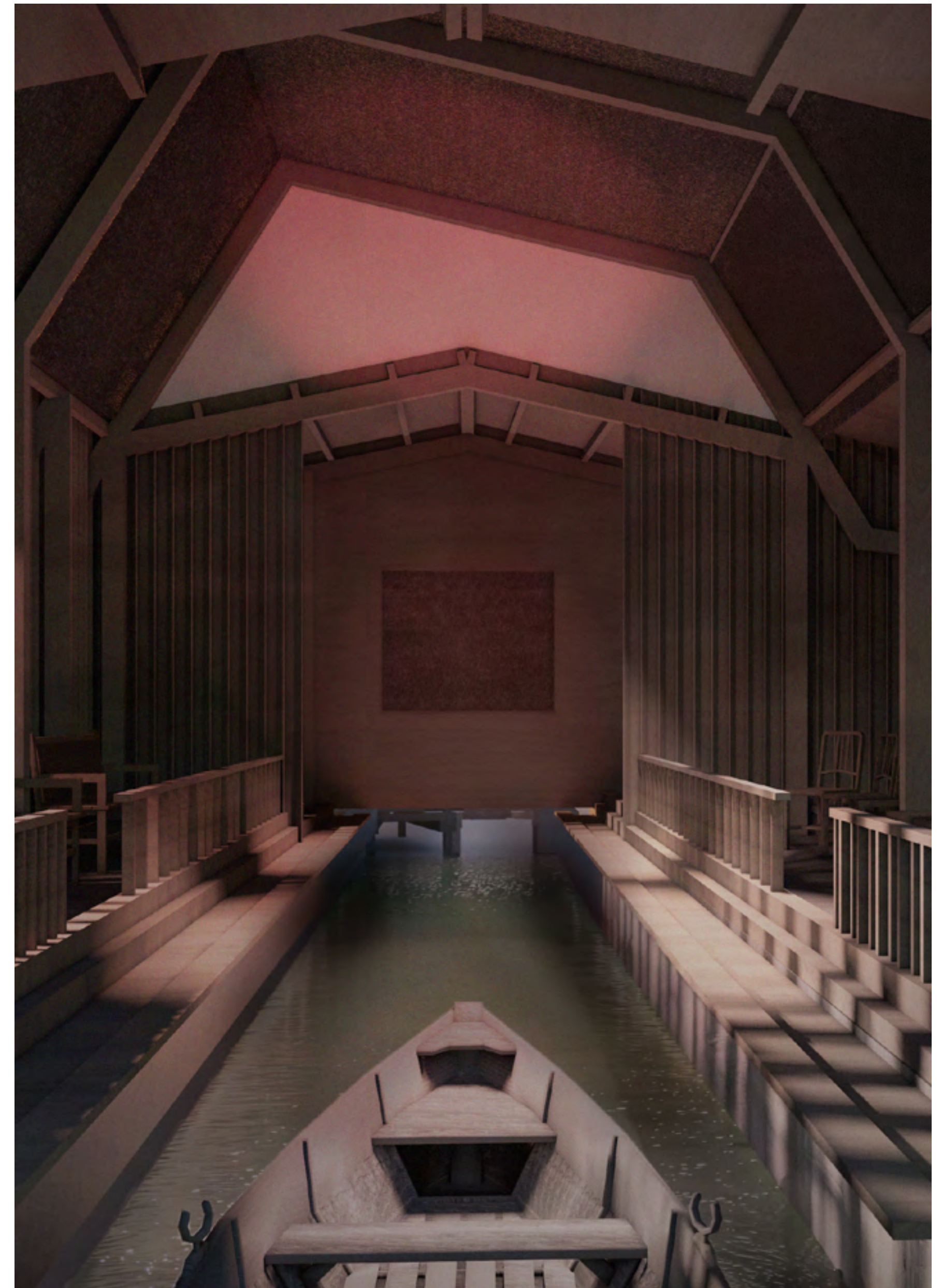
site 3



Phase II: Information gathers.

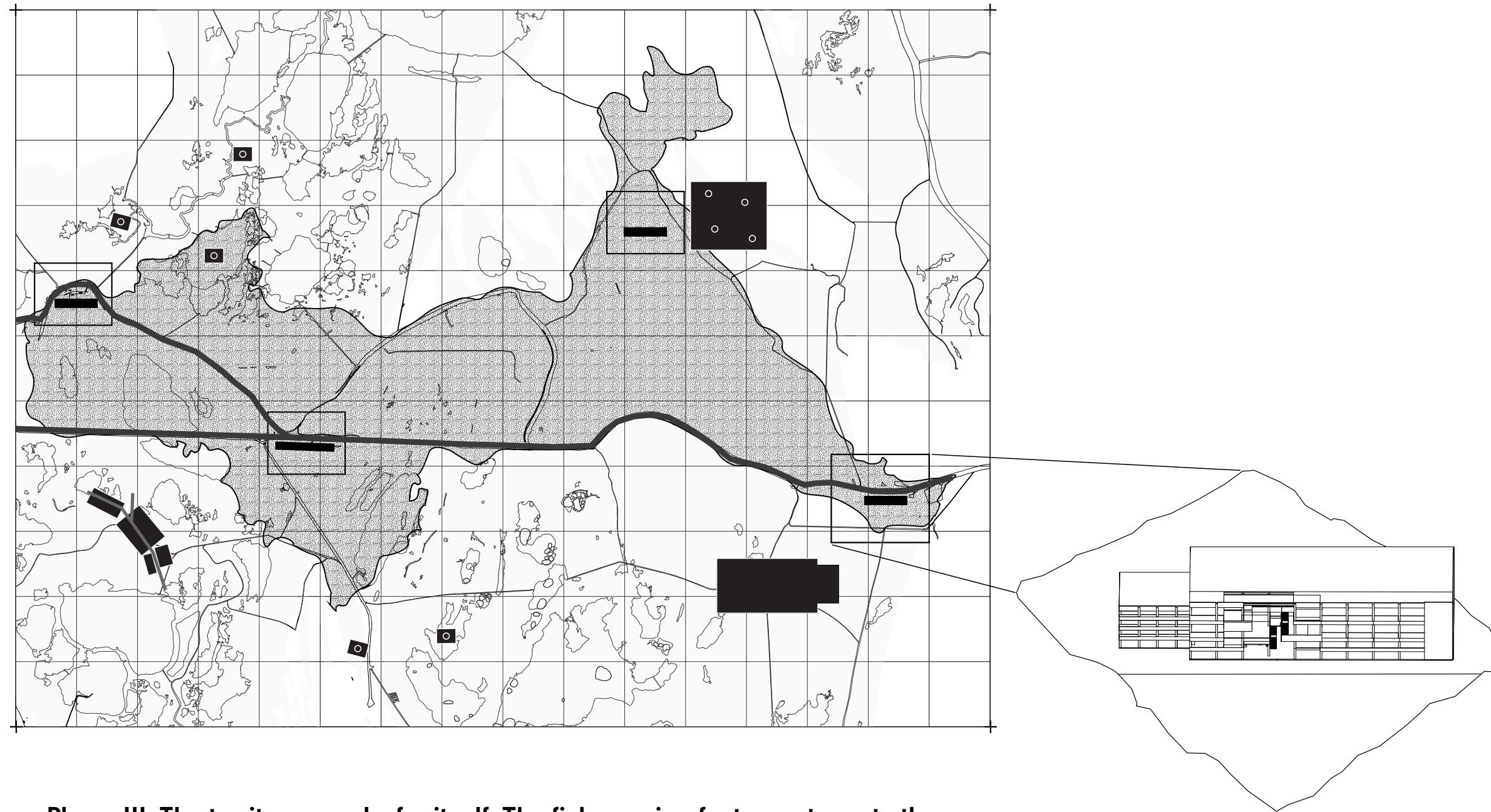
**Fishing docks become monitoring spaces that
bring together ecological data and local observation,

transforming measurement
into collective understanding.**



water sensors in lakes (part of unesco reserve park)

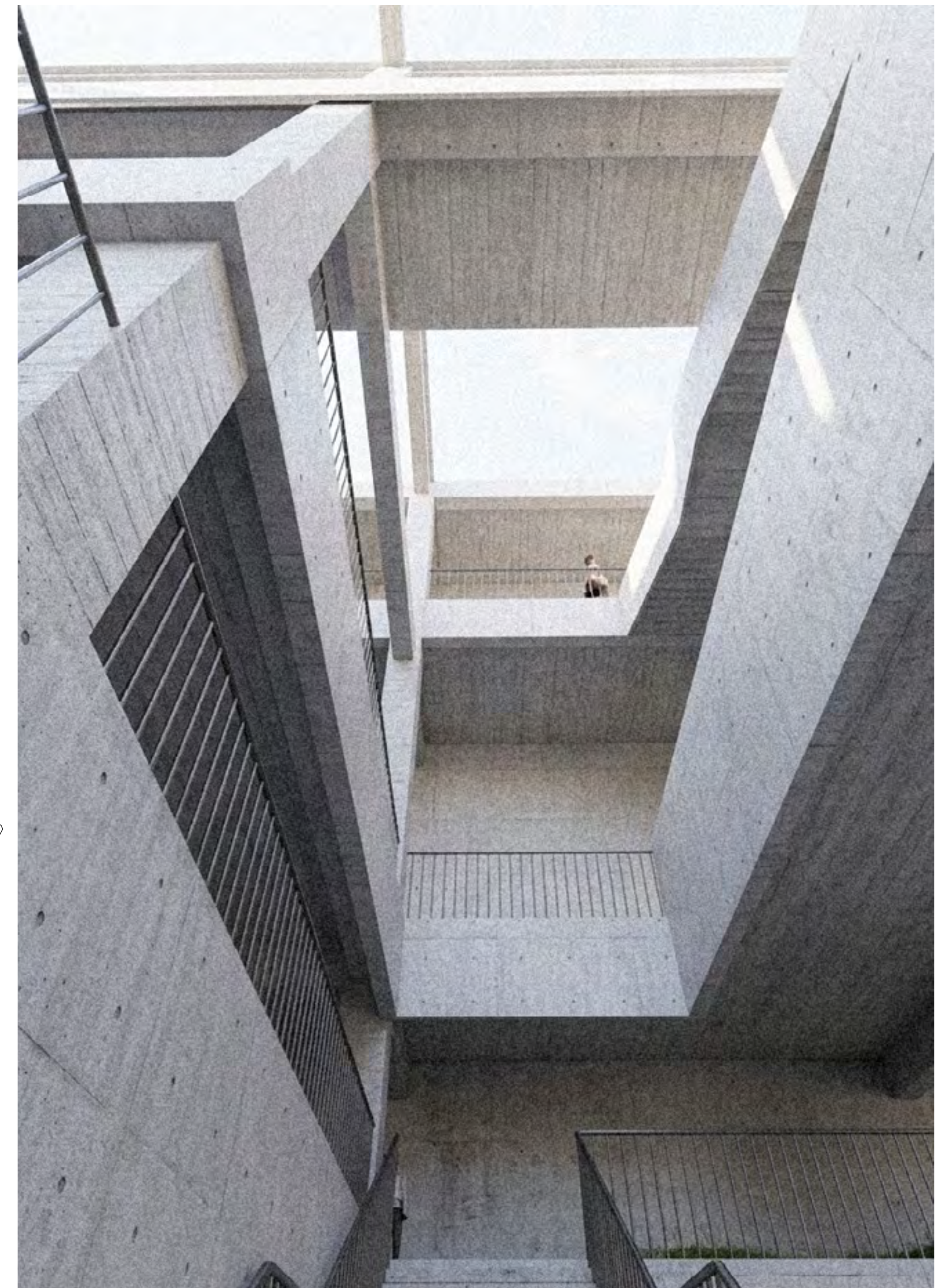
site 4



Phase III: The territory speaks for itself. The fish canning factory returns to the commons.

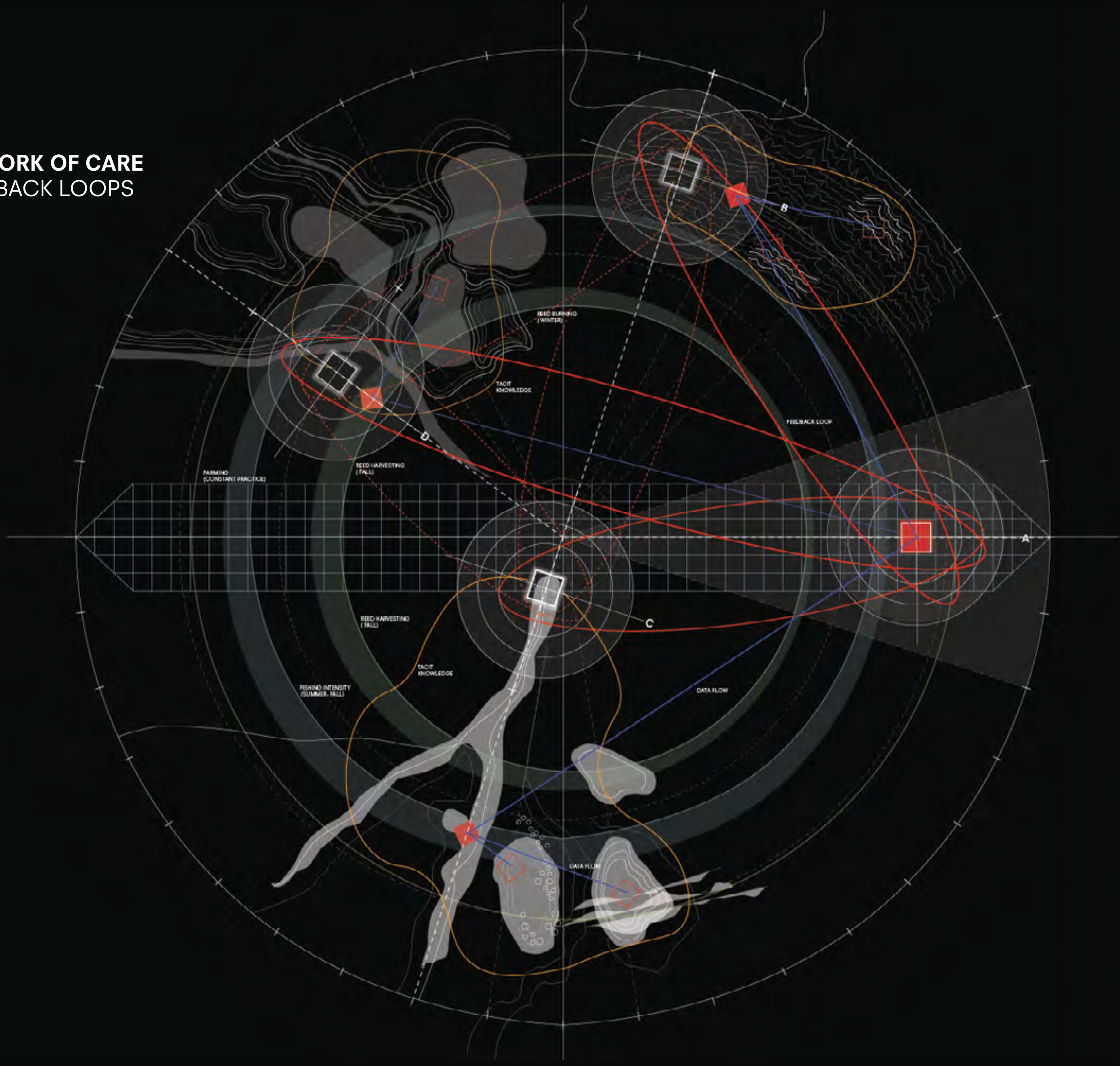
Gathered information is stored, debated, and reinterpreted within a shared archive and assembly hall.

It reveals the contested relationships between observation, governance, and everyday life.



giving the fish factory back to the people

NETWORK OF CARE FEEDBACK LOOPS



INFRASTRUCTURE (SULINA BRANCH I)

VILLAGES

HUB

INTERVENTION

SENSOR

FISHING

SENSOR- WATER LEVELS

SENSOR- FISH

REED HARVESTING

REED EDGE

FARMING

DRY LAND

CATTLE

LETA FOREST (UNRICO RESERVE)

FLOWS

DATA FLOW

FEEDBACK LOOPS

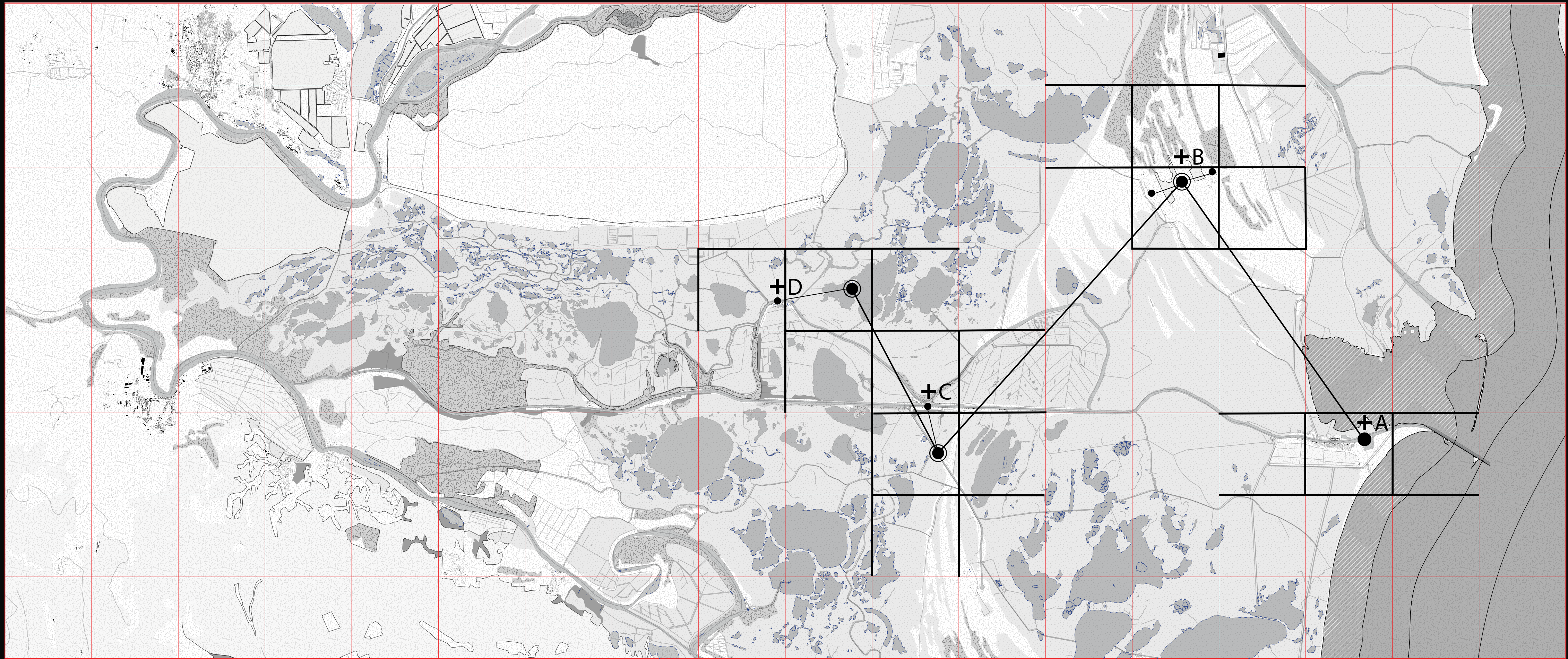
TACIT KNOWLEDGE

INTENSITIES (TEMPORAL LAYER)

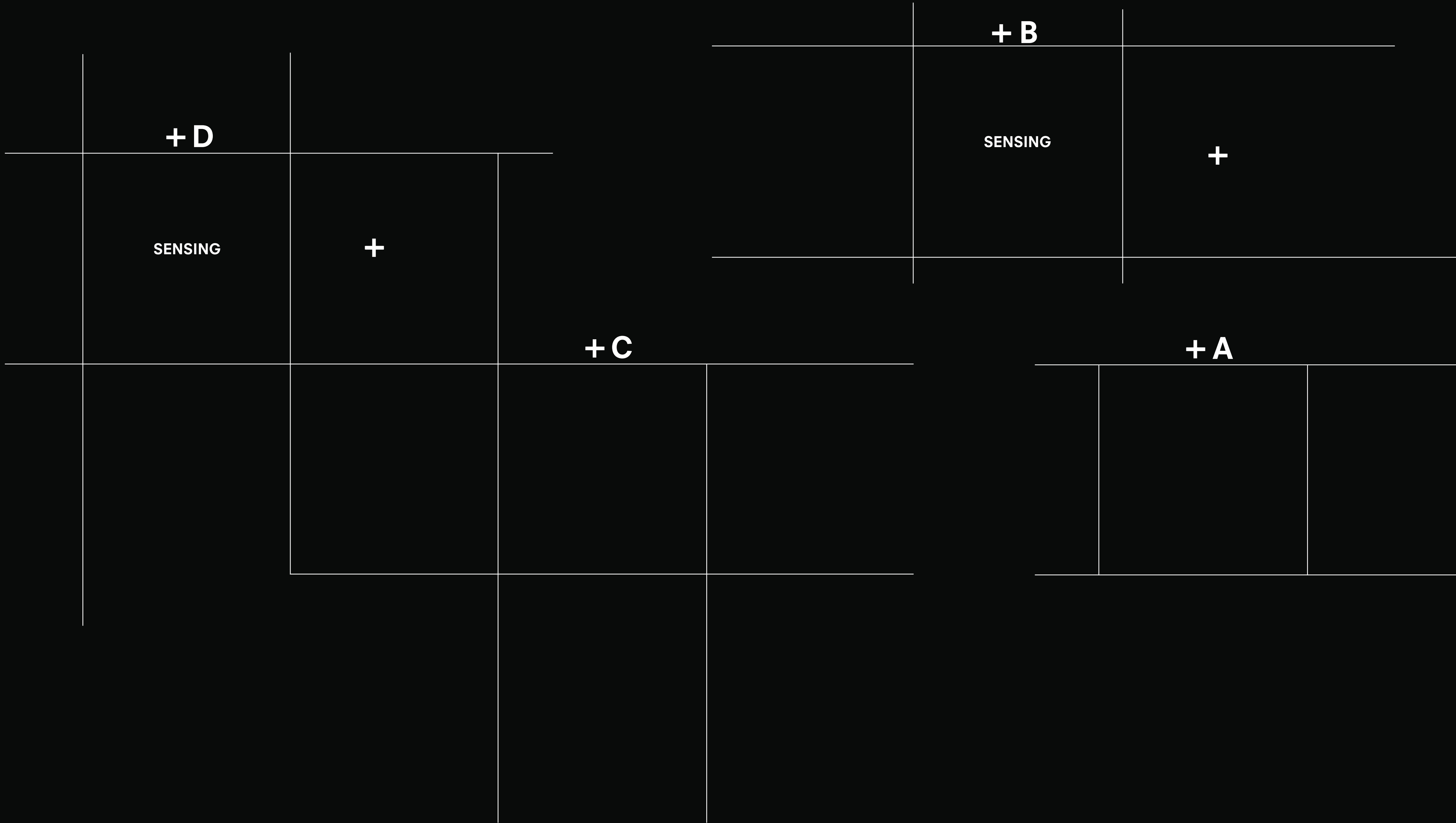
FARMING

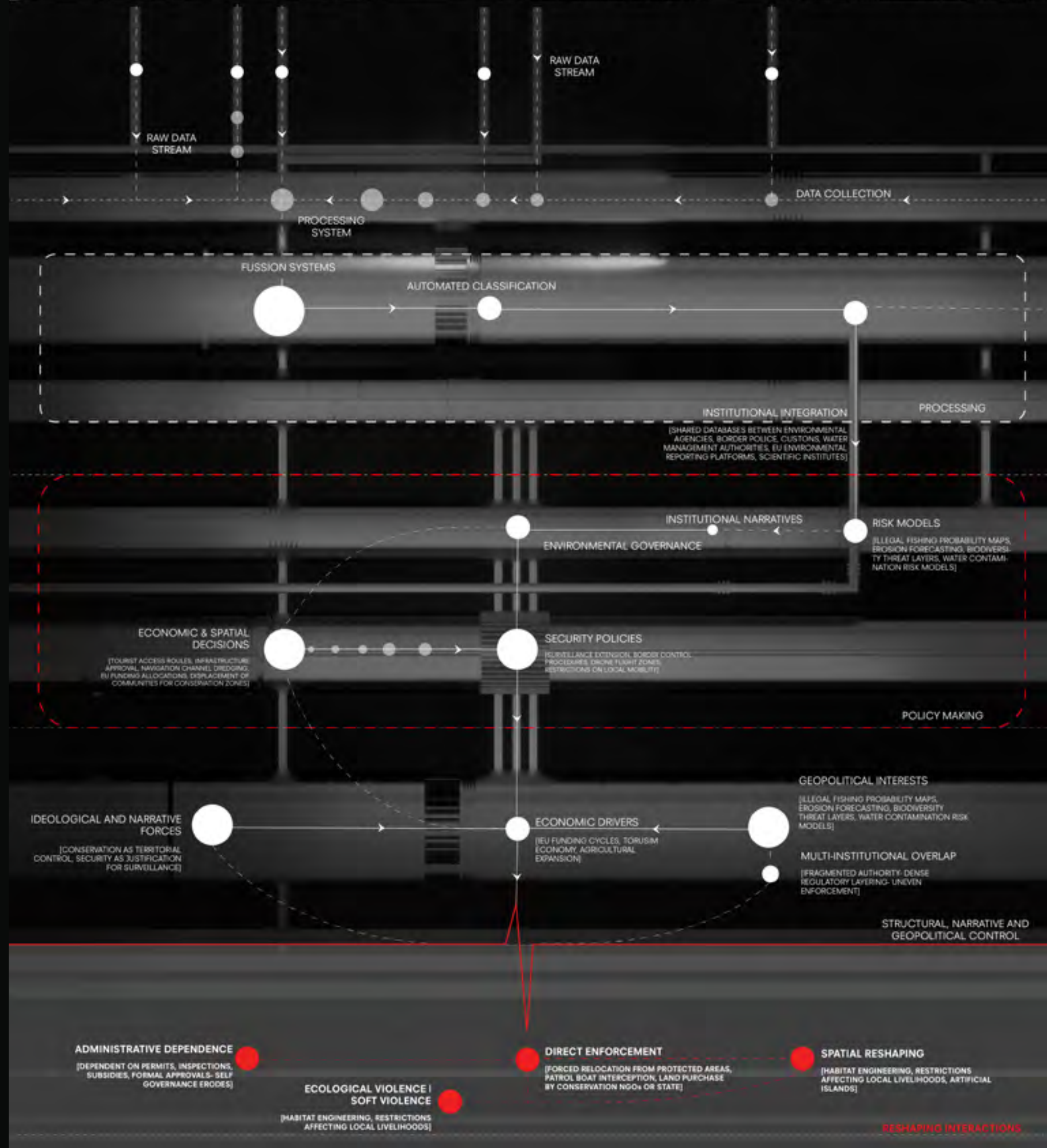
REED HARVESTING

FISHING

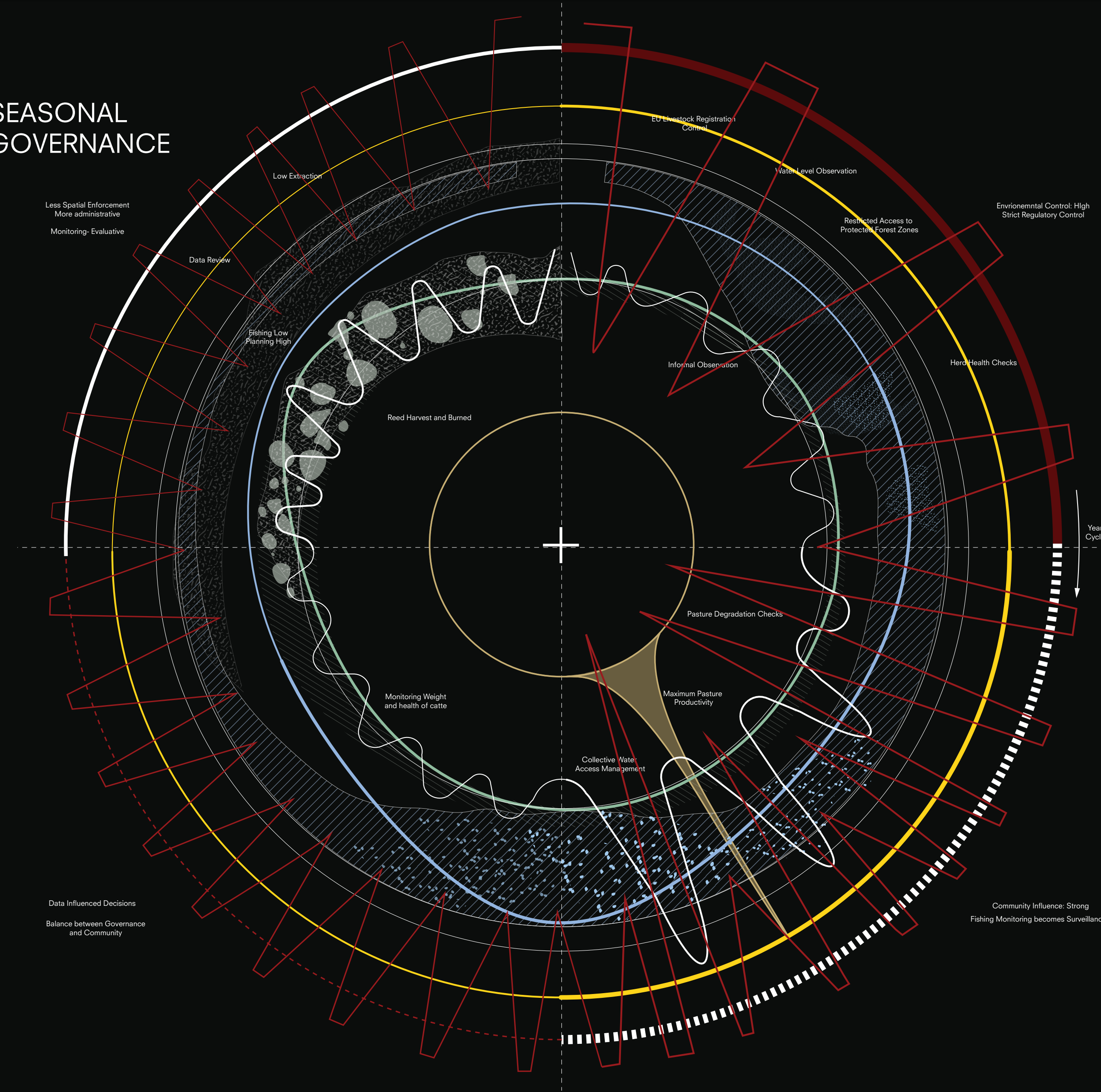


INTERVENTION SITES





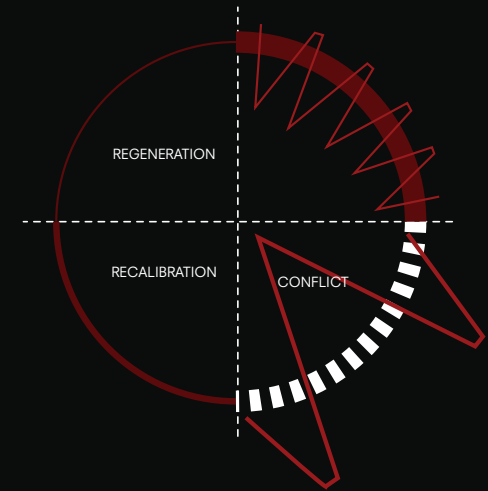
SEASONAL GOVERNANCE



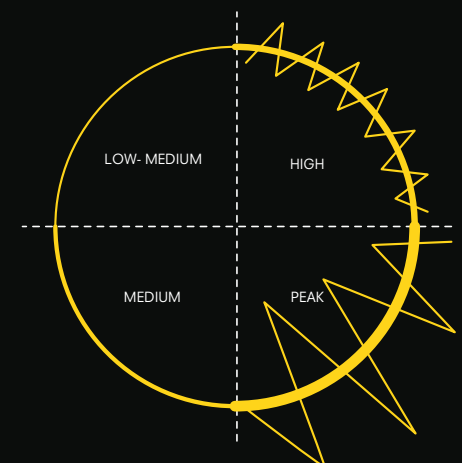
Less Spatial Enforcement
More administrative
Monitoring-Evaluative

Data Influenced Decisions
Balance between Governance
and Community

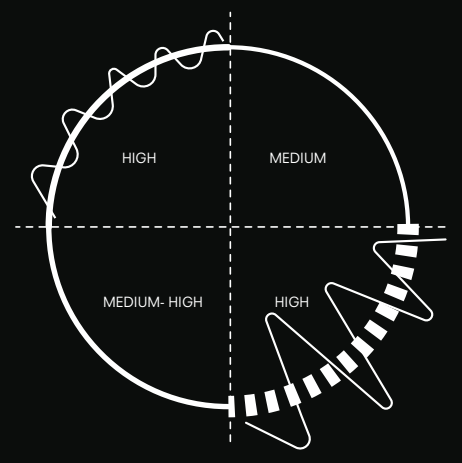
TYPES OF GOVERNANCE



MONITORING INTENSITIES

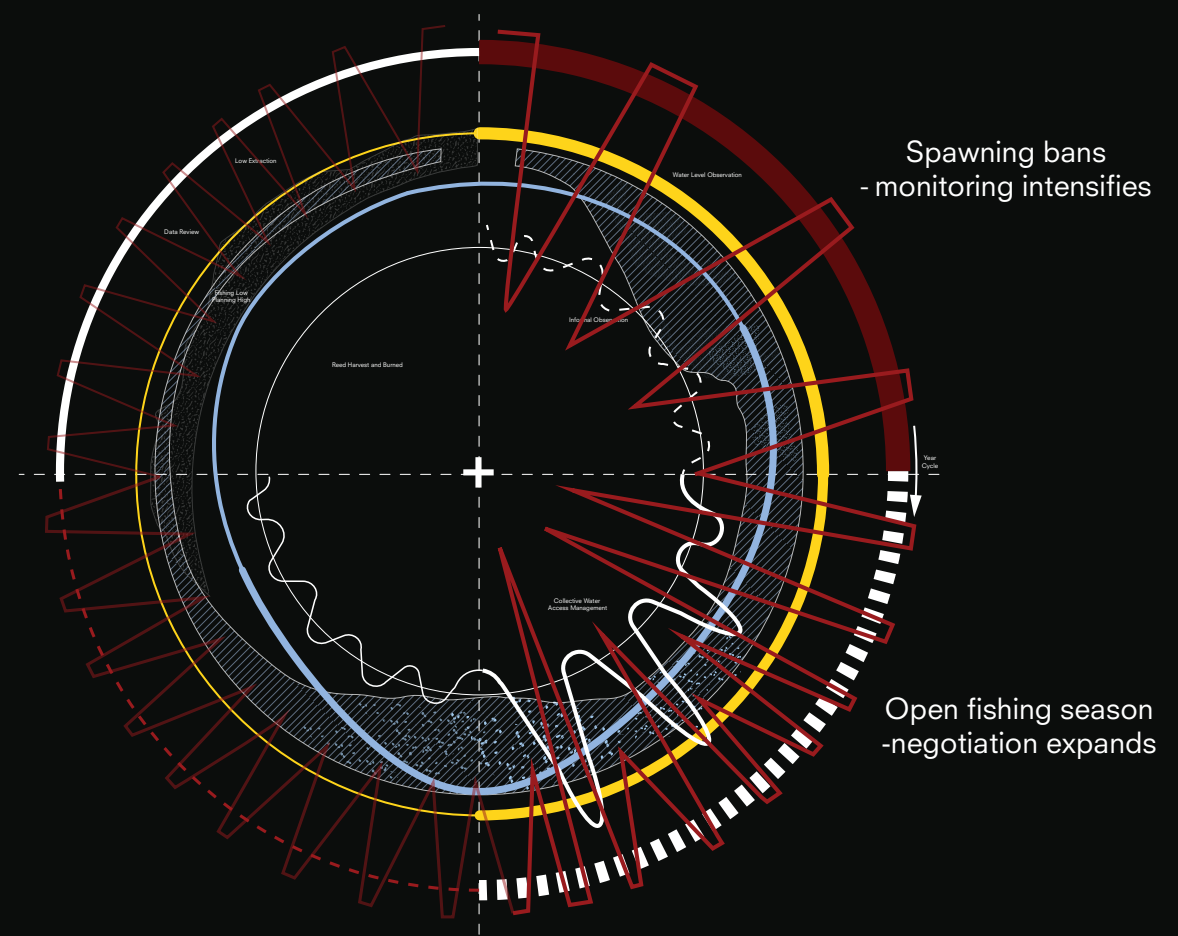


COMMUNITY INTENSITIES



- Locals' Agency (Water)
- Reed Harvesting and Burning
- Farming (Cattle Keeping)
- Community Agency
- ▬ Friction- Local Resistance
- Governance Intensities

FISHING
Policy Pressure and Local Resistance

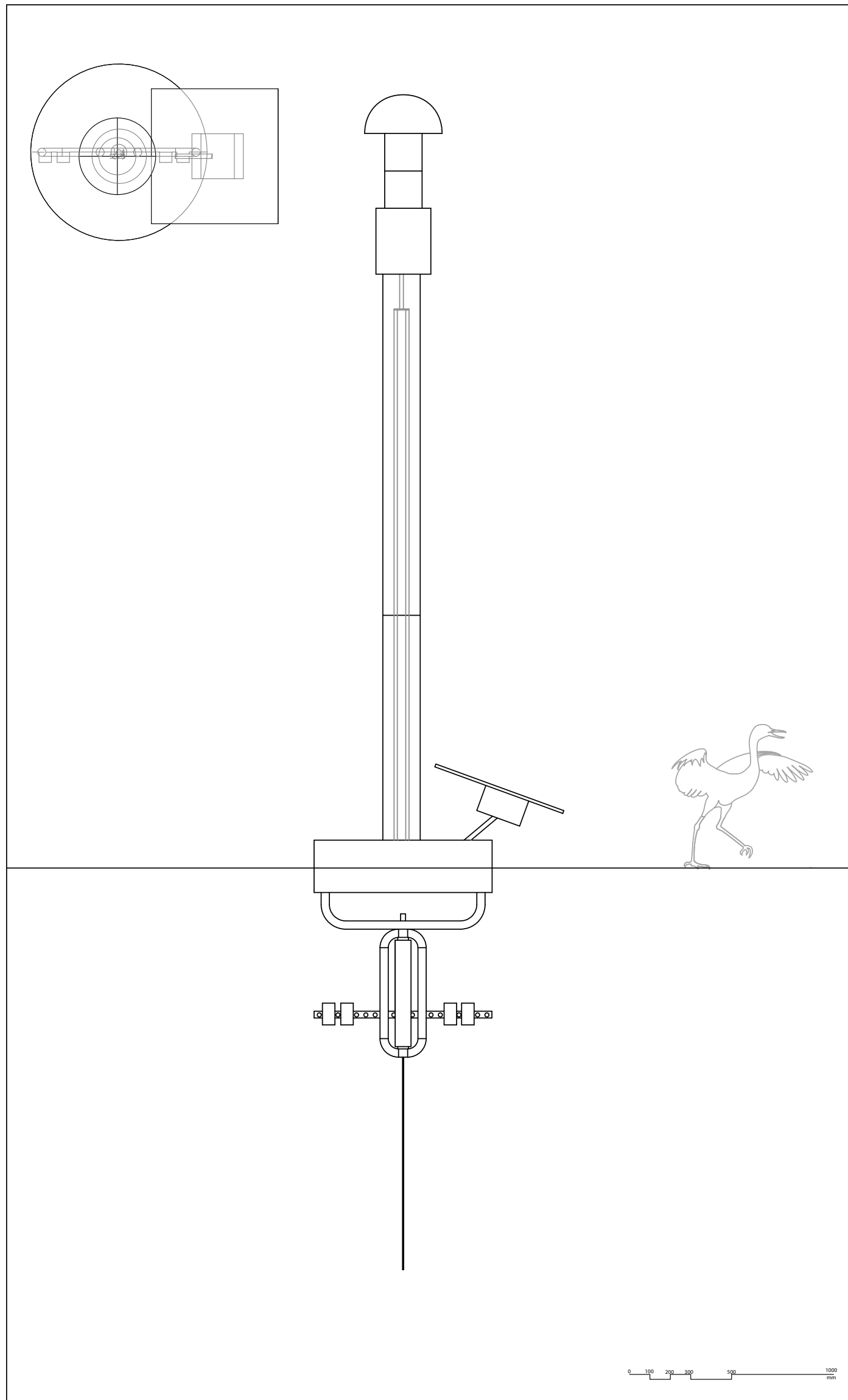
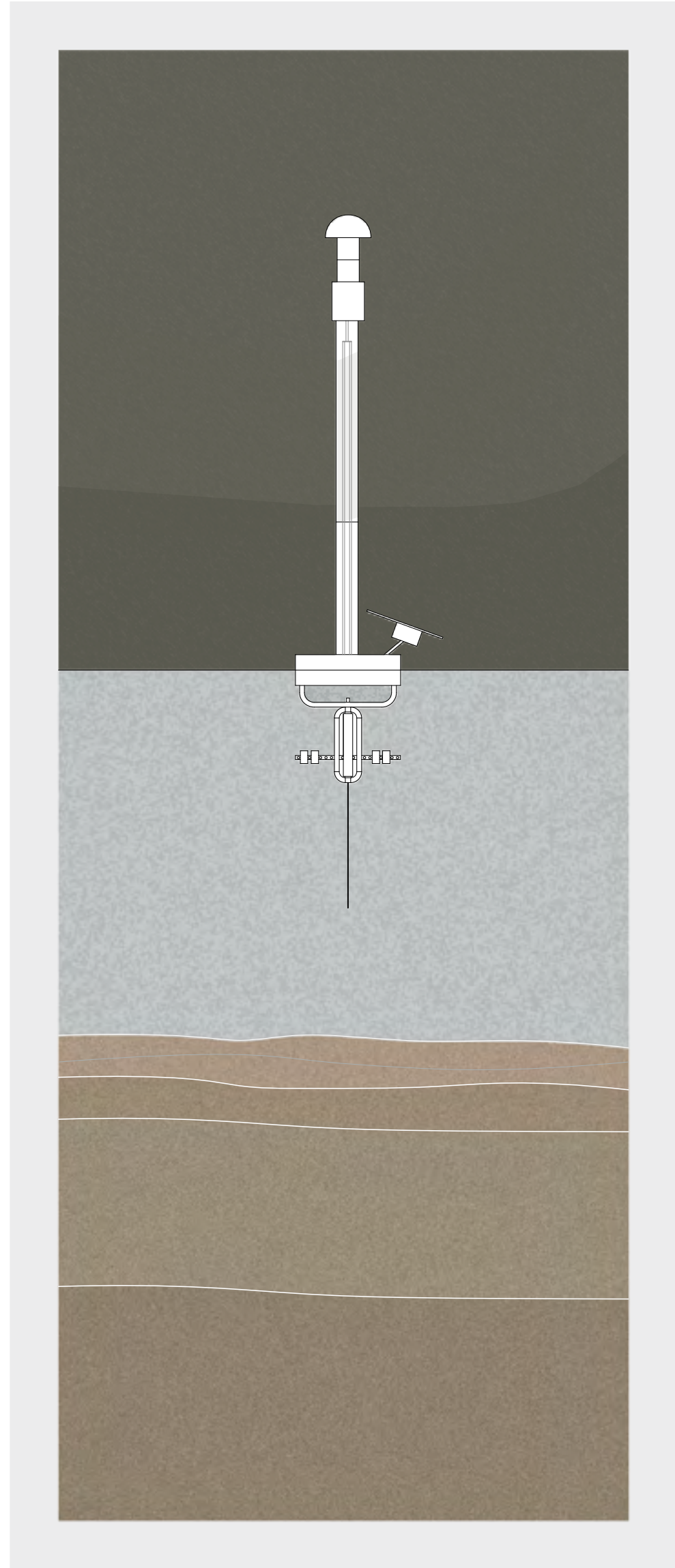


FARMING (CATTLE KEEPING)
Local Agency- Remote Monitoring

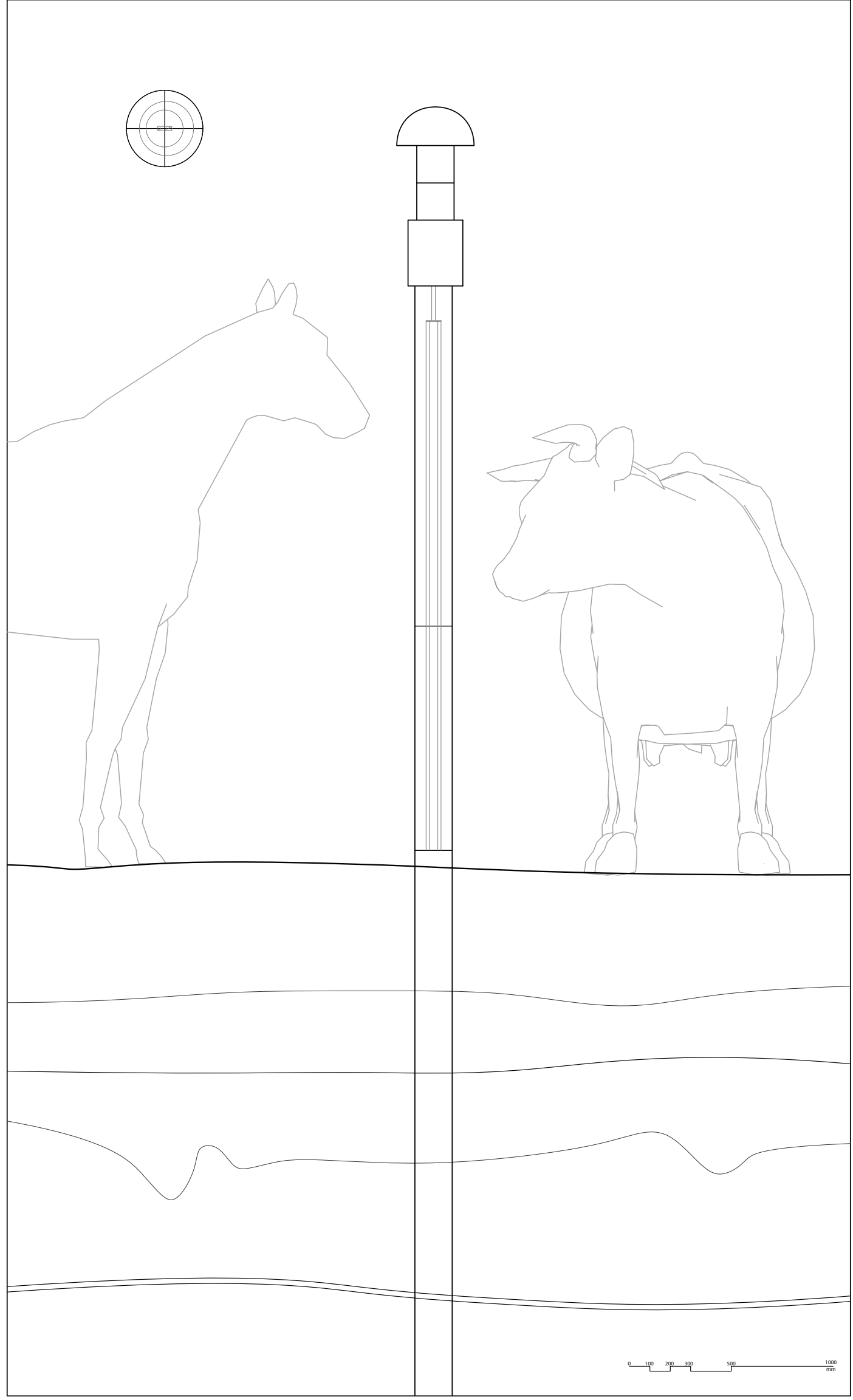
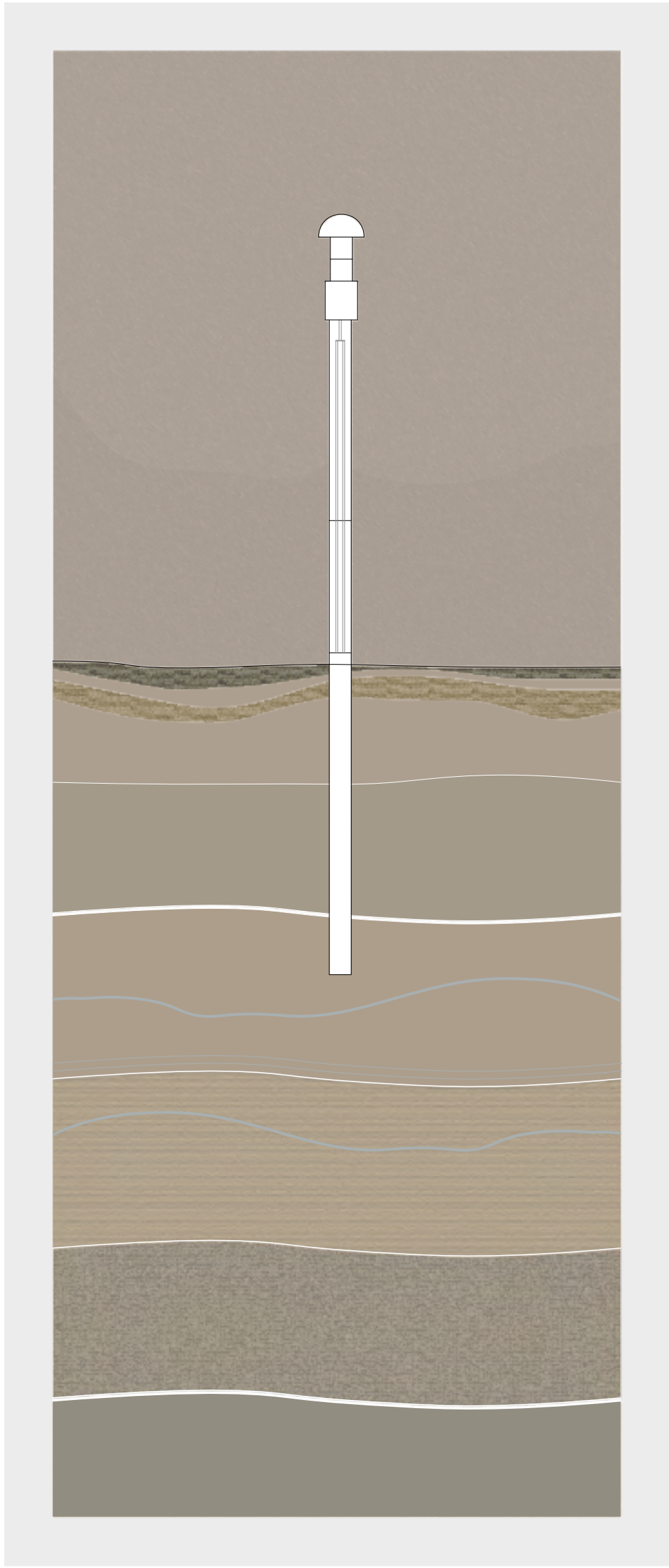


OPERATIVE
PRACTICES OF MONITORING









+ D

+ C

**ARCHITECTURE AS
MONITORING DEVICE**

**FISHING FOR
A LIFETIME**

+ A

the dock



delta's commons

the church



Fig. 09: Church in Letea
Source: Leupold Film Production, 2016

the café



Fig. 10: The Village Café
Source: Leupold Film Production, 2016

the dock



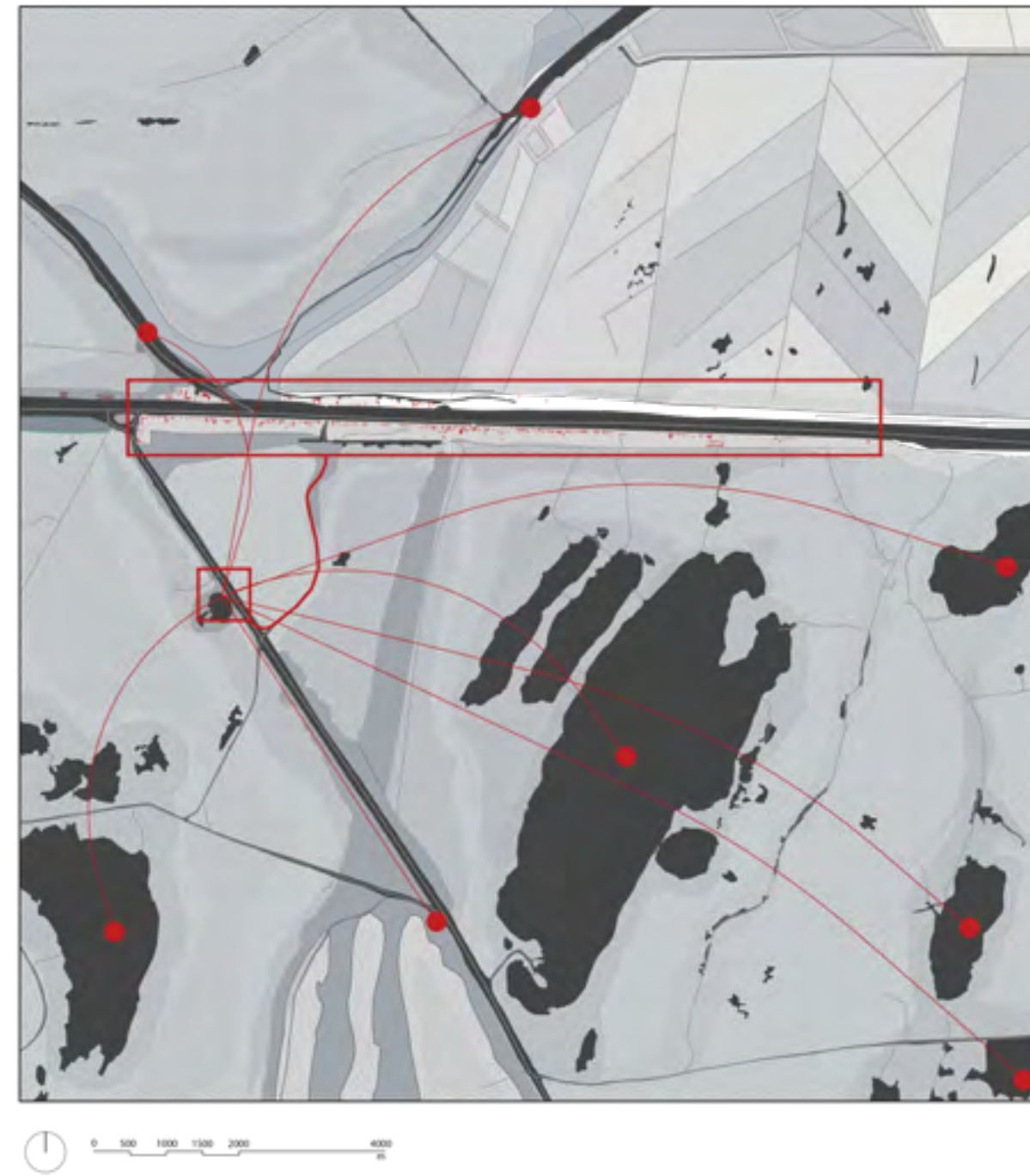
Fig. 11: Structures of the Delta (1937)
Source: *Arhitectura* 1906, 2022

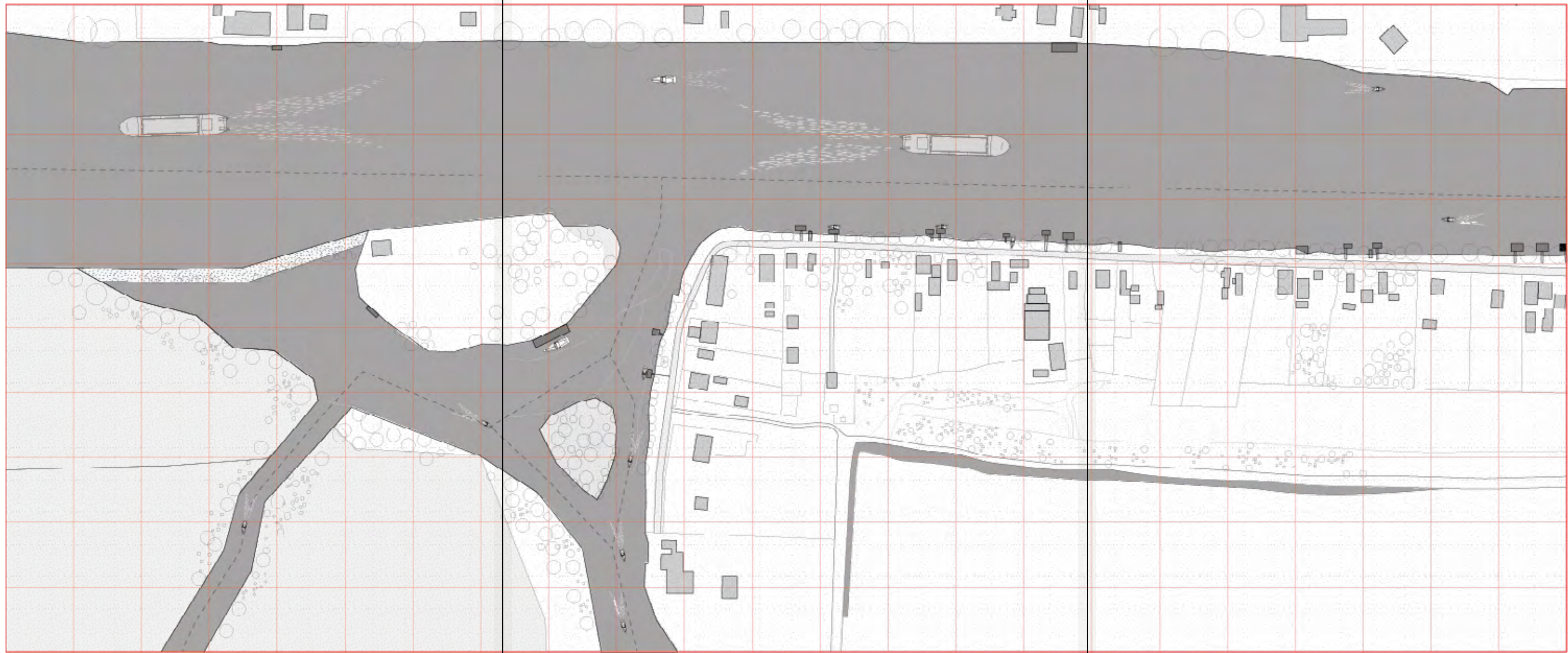


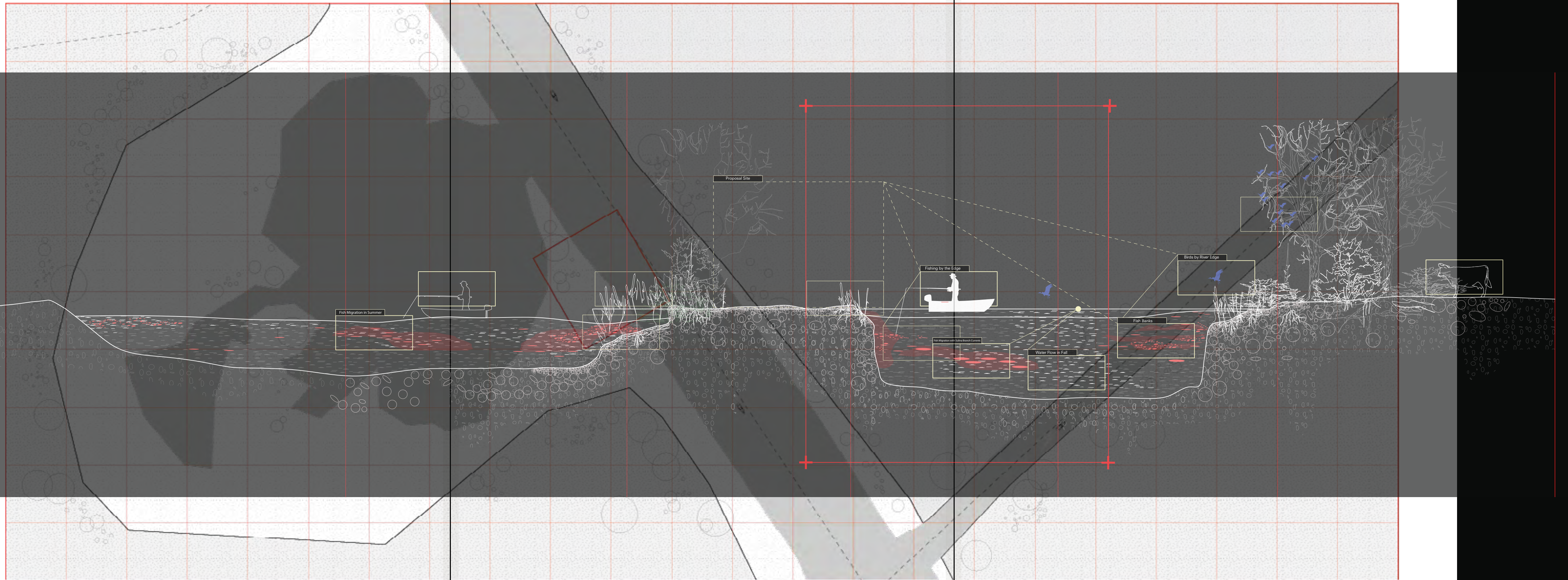
the dock

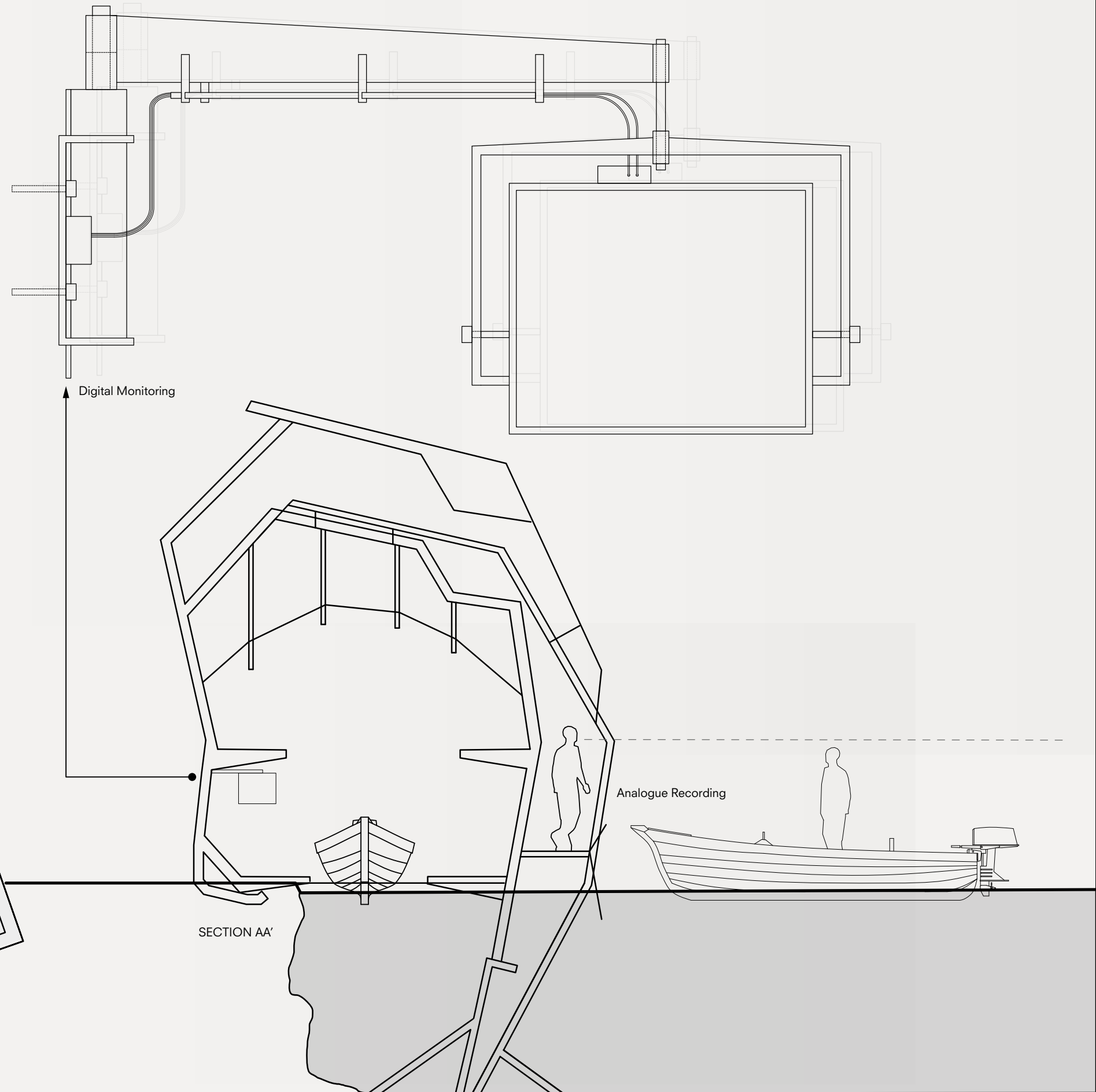
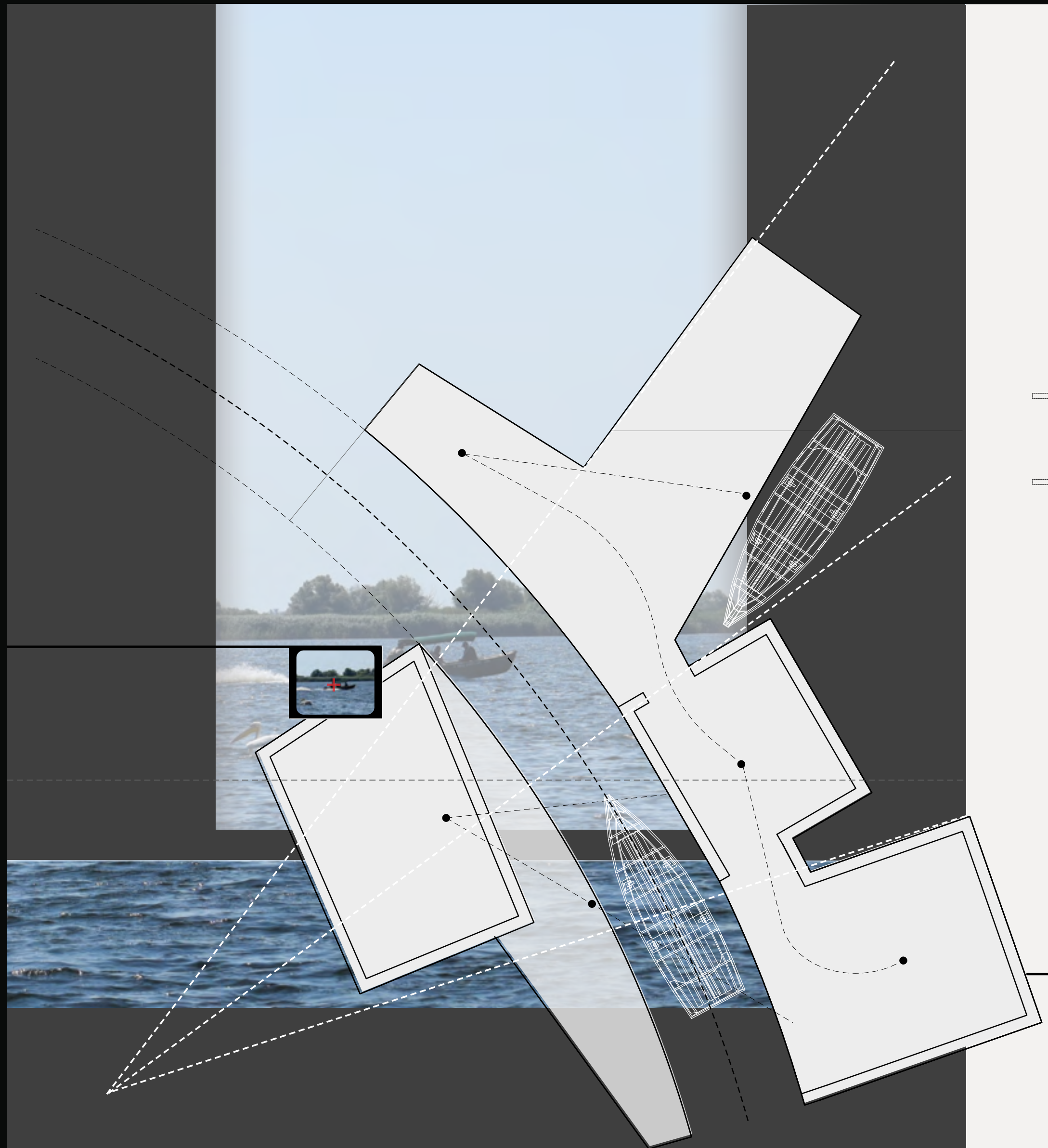


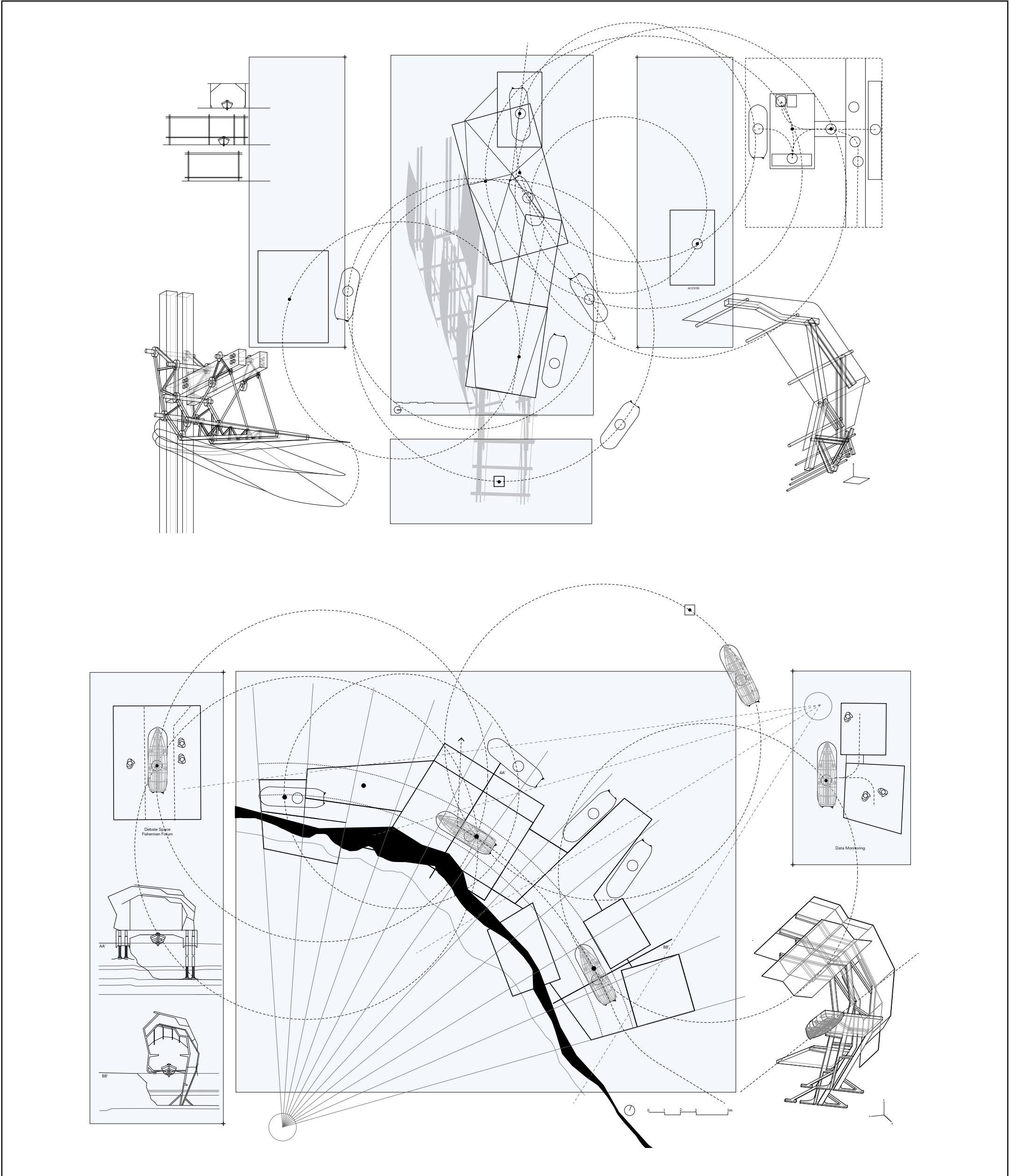
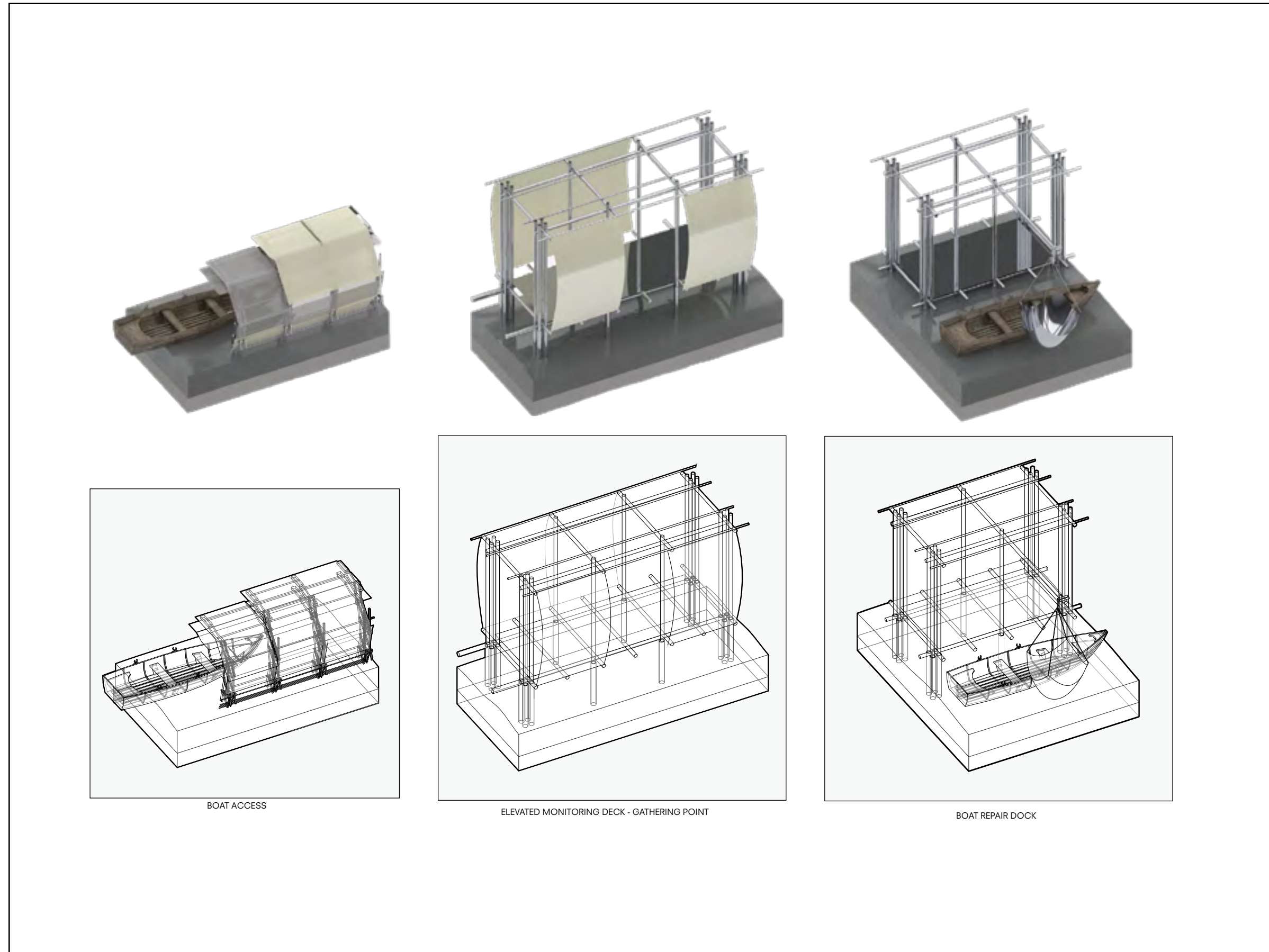
dock structures in Crişan





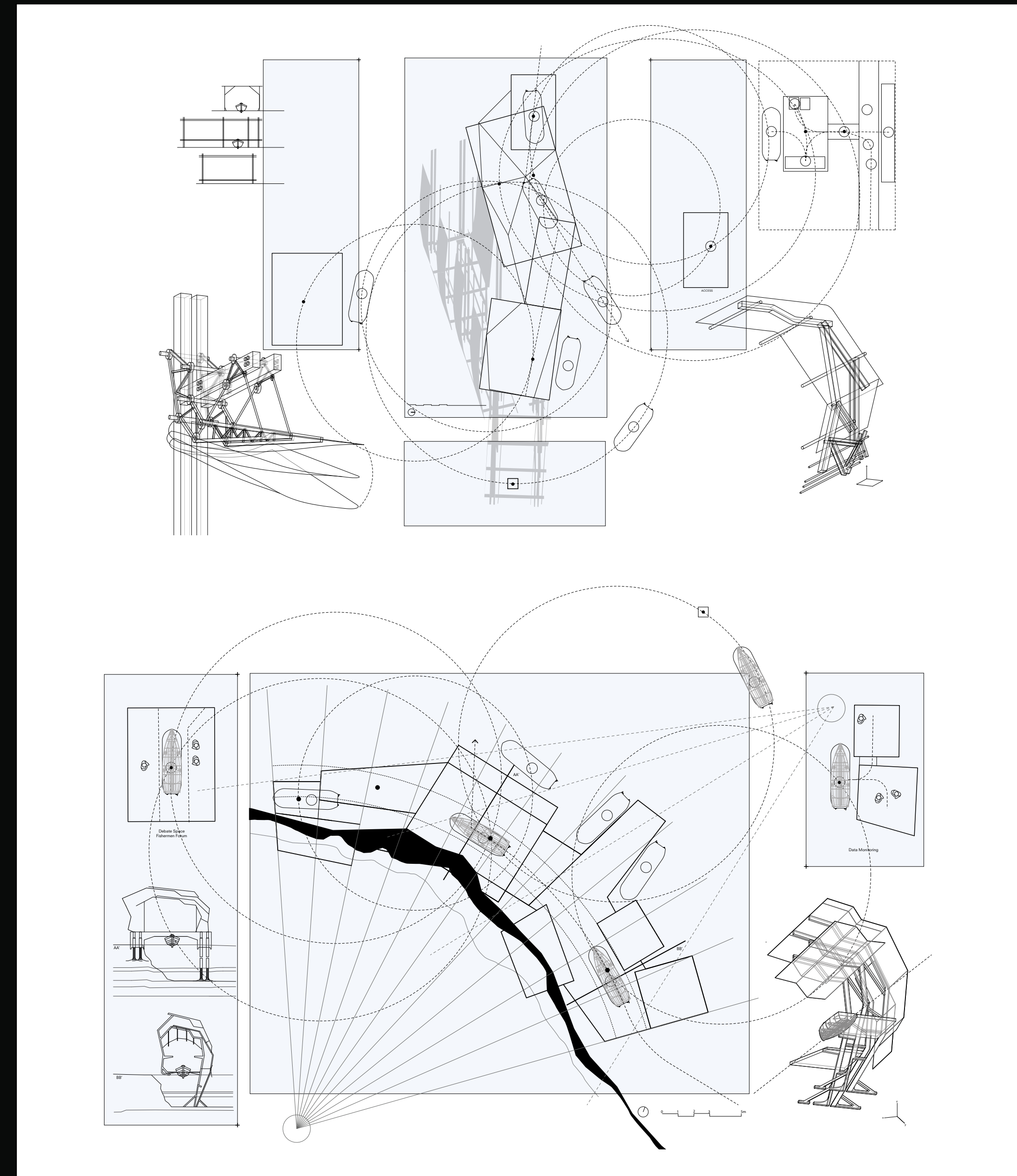


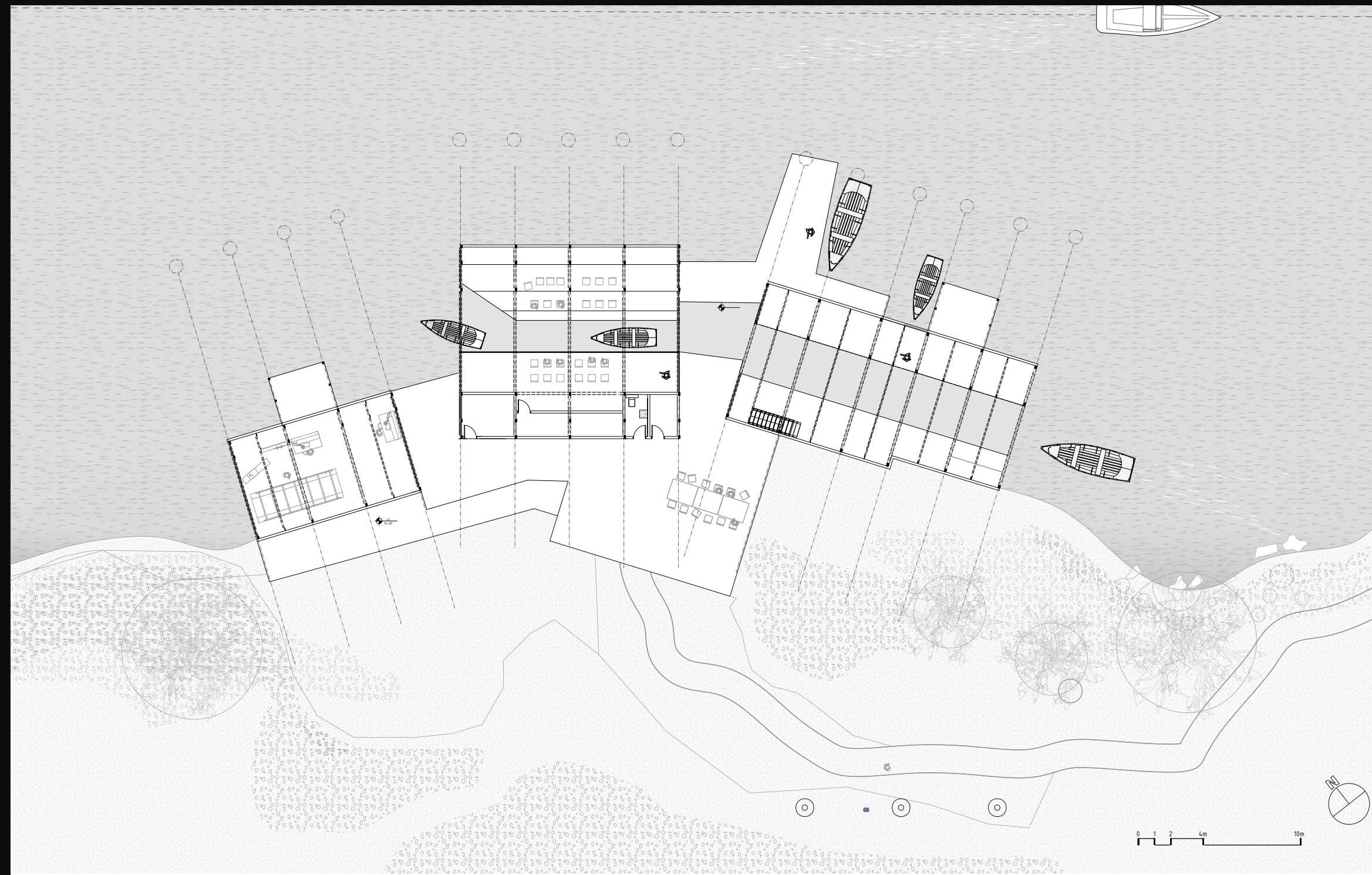






Render : Fishing Monitoring Satellite

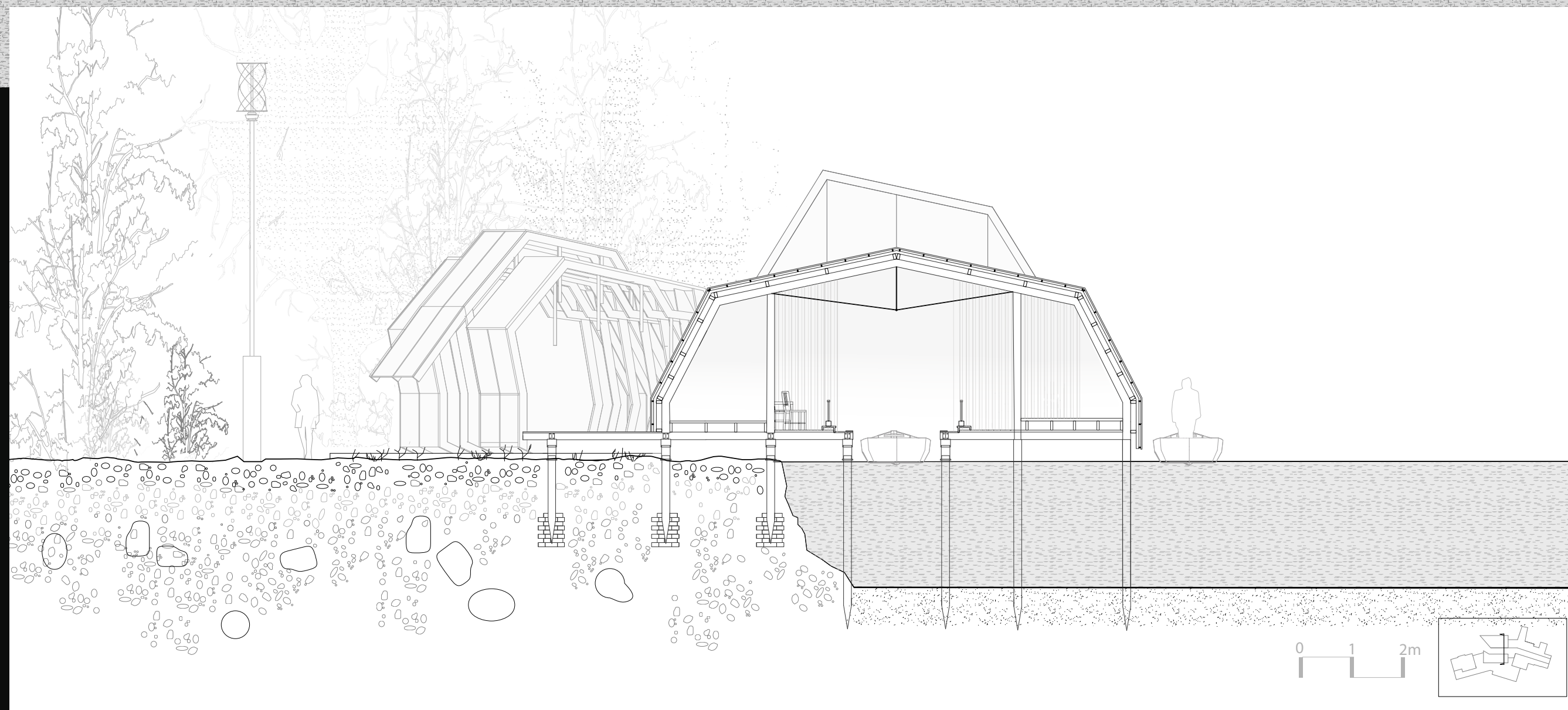
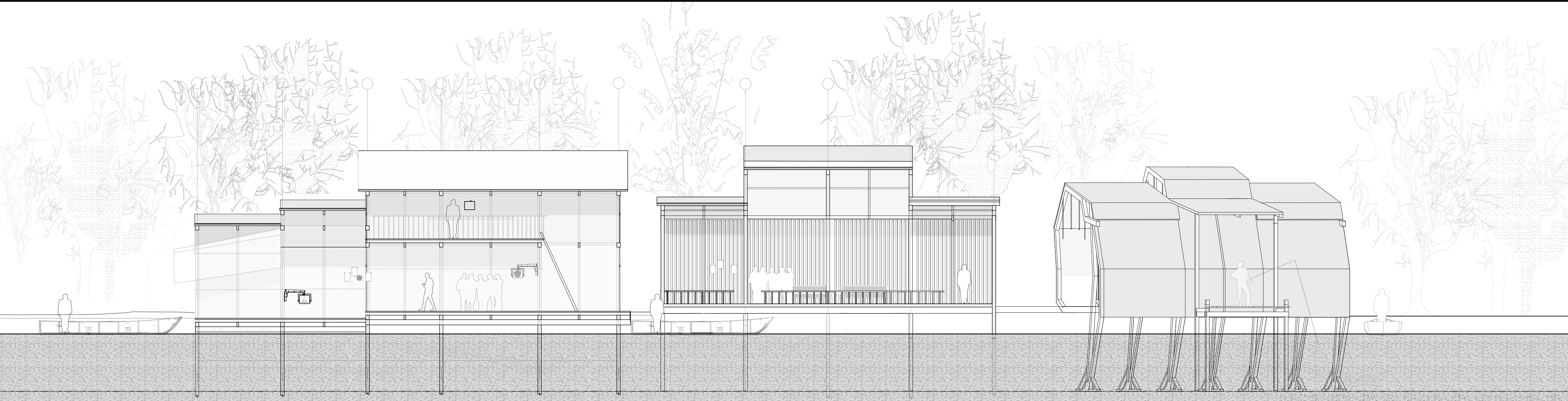


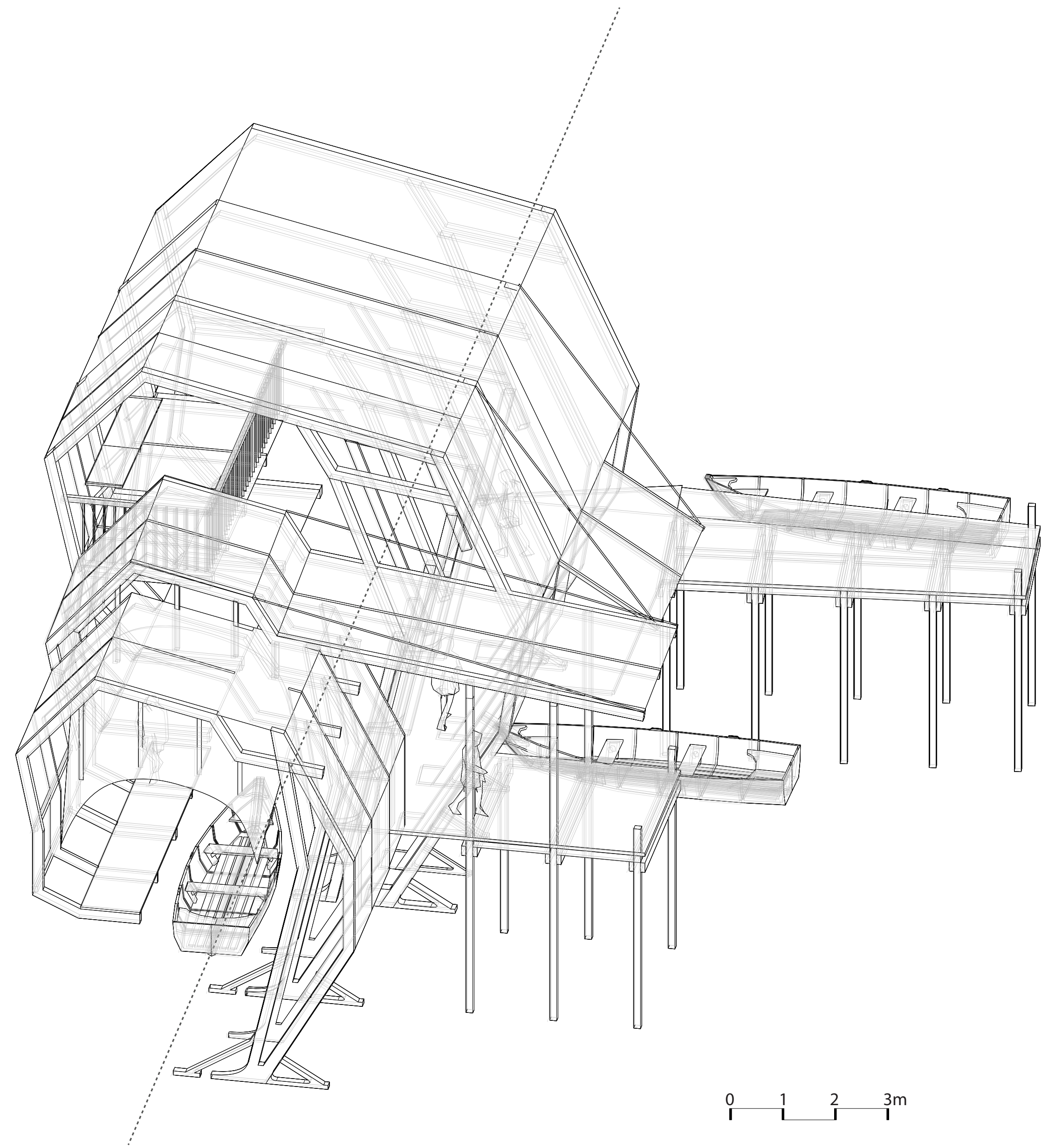


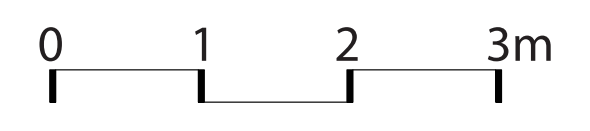
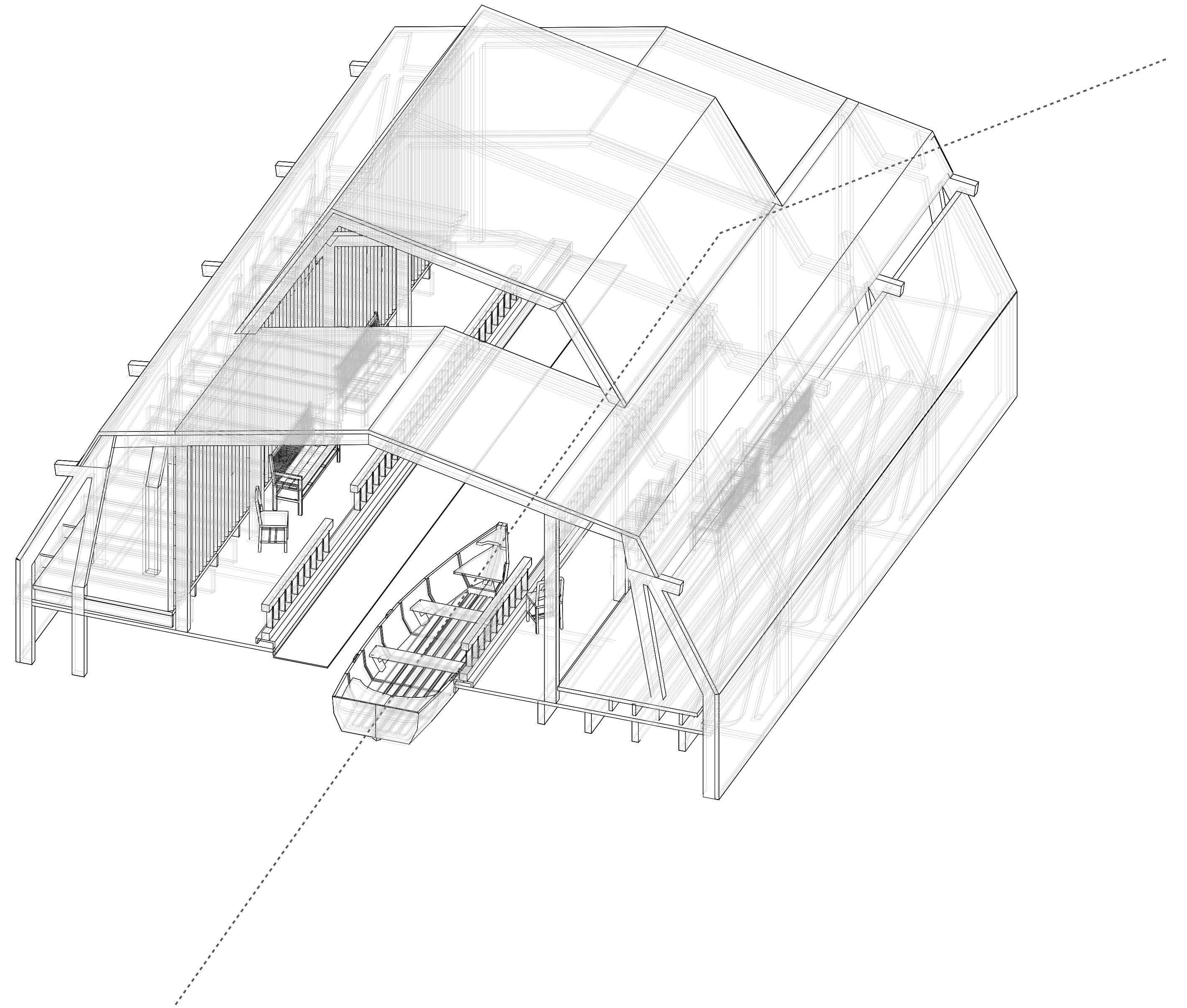
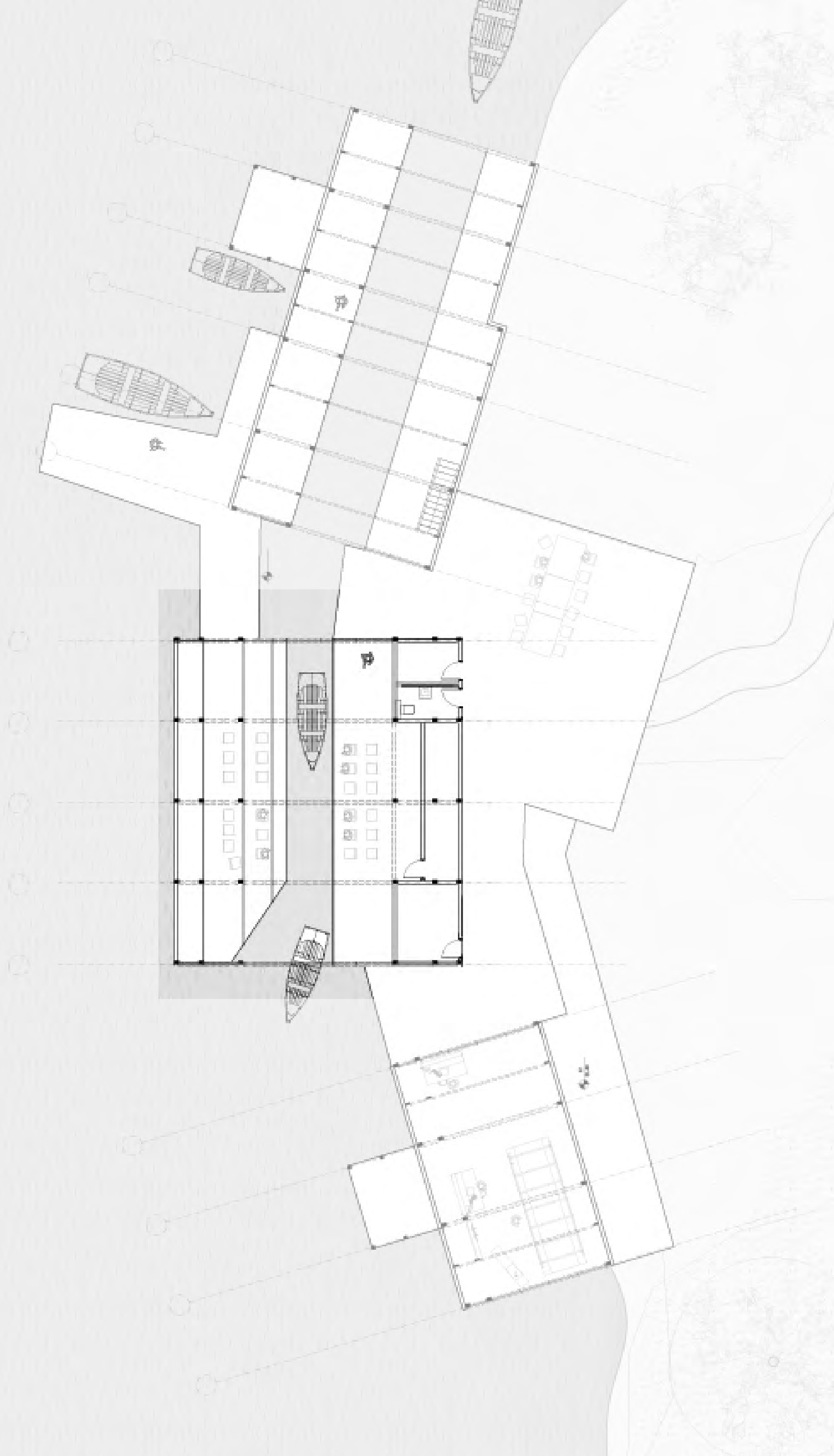
GROUND FLOOR



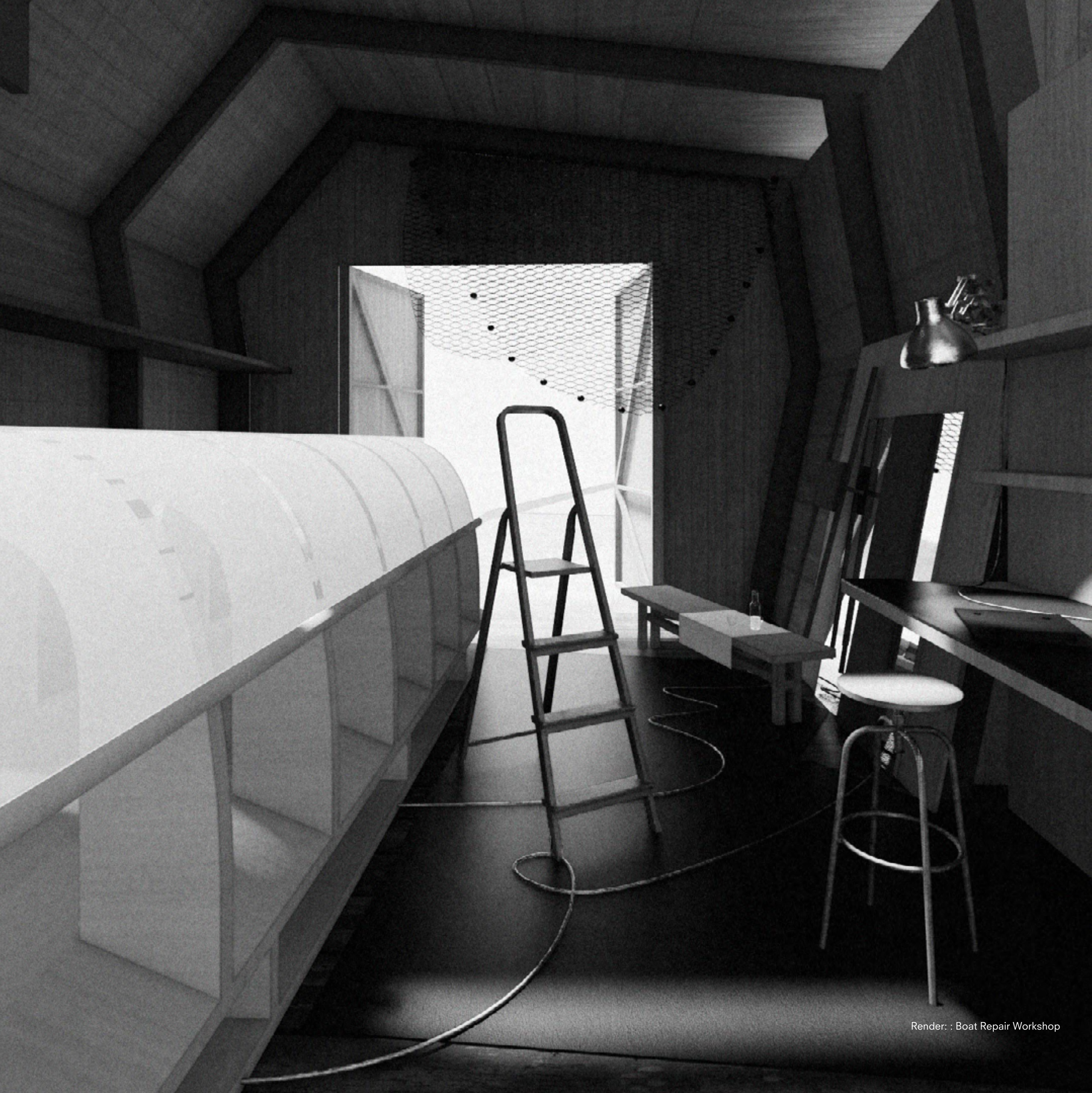
MEZZANINE FLOOR



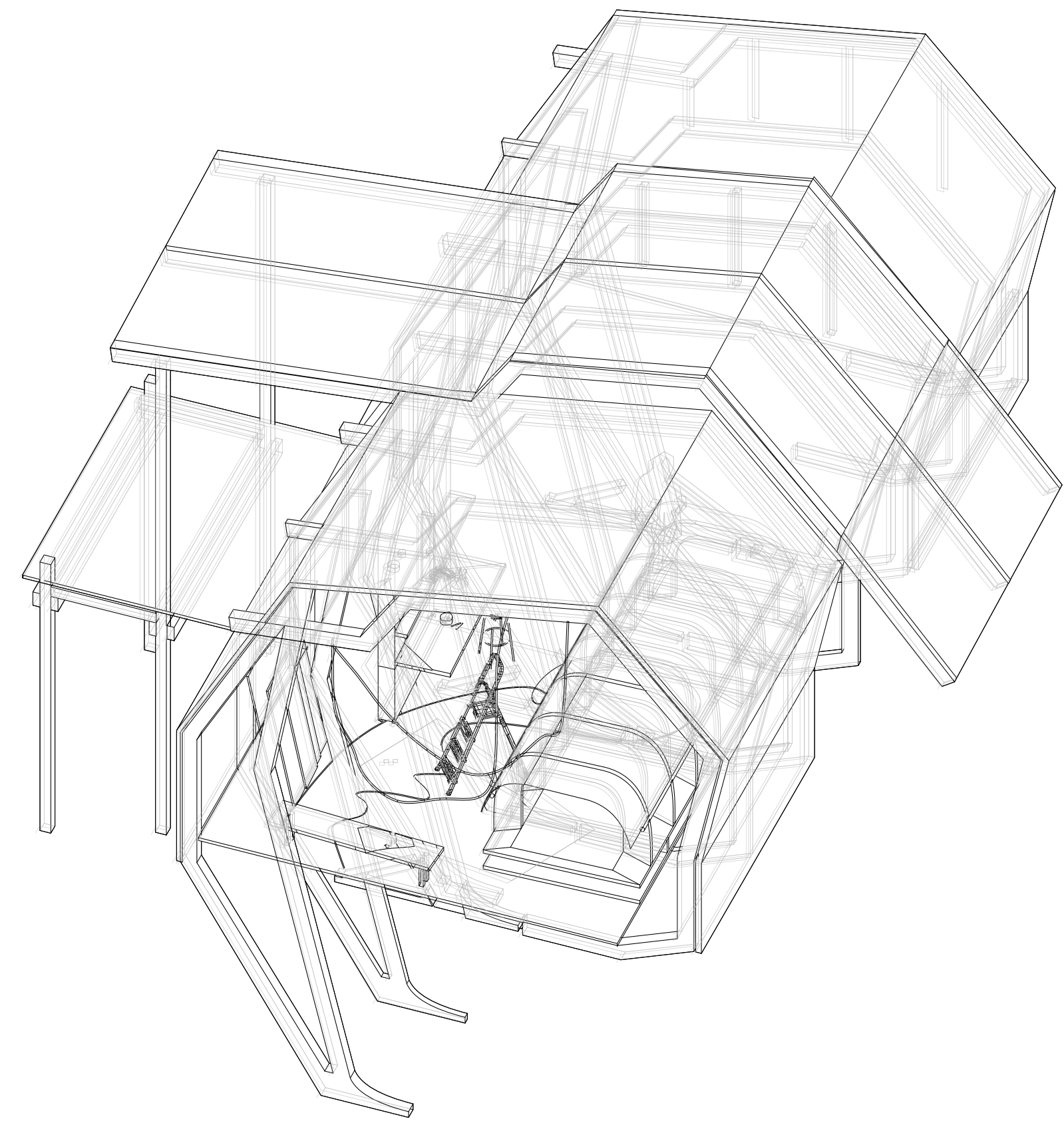




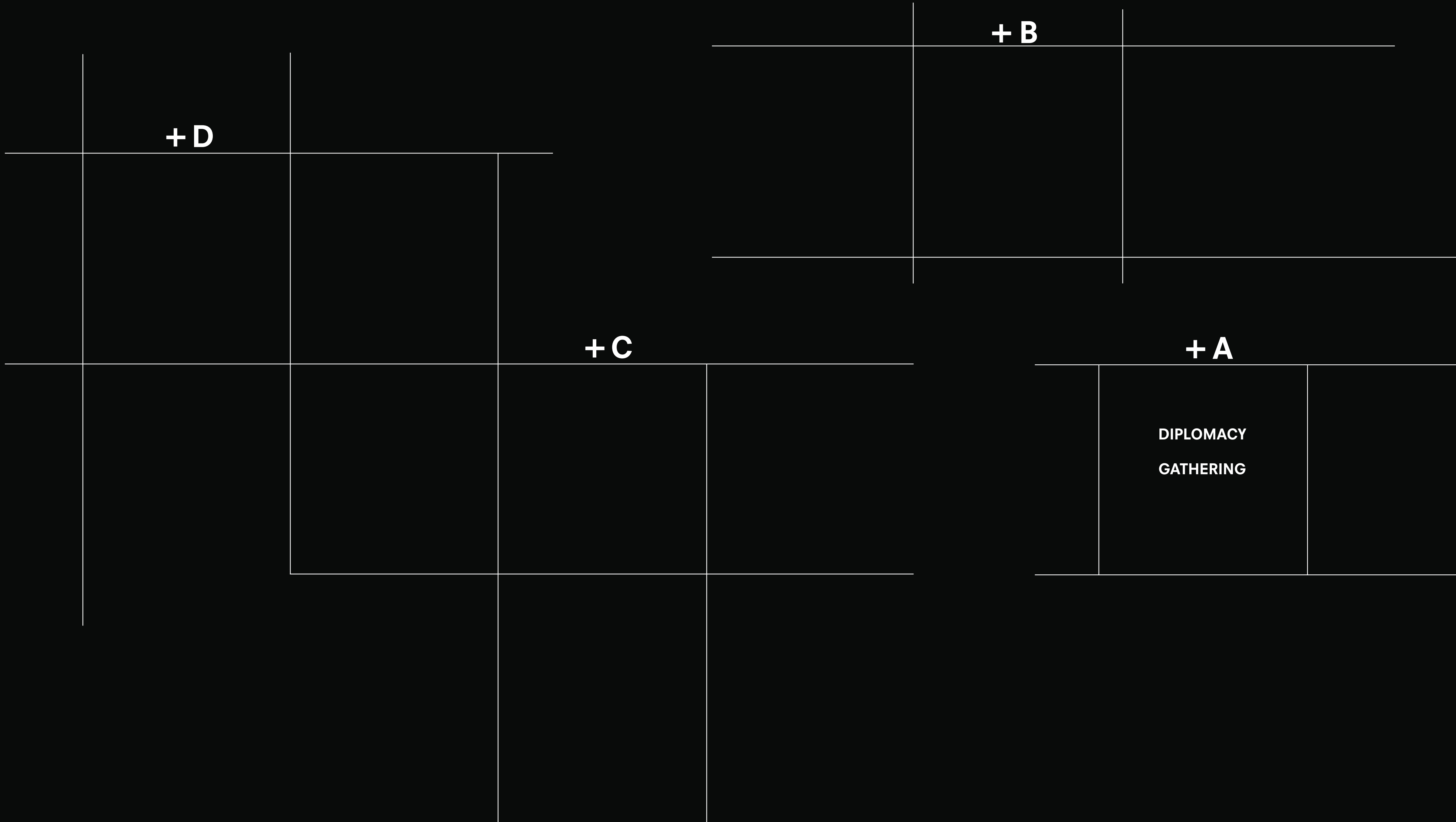




Render: : Boat Repair Workshop



0 1 2 3m



+D

+C

+B

+A

DIPLOMACY
GATHERING



PROGRAM: DIPLOMACY WITHIN THE DELTA



Fig. 12. View of Sulina port city 1906
Source: Filip, 2022

SITE: DELTA'S PORT CITY- SULINA



Fig. 13: Sulina's Fish Canning Factory (1950's)
Source: Adevarul, 2025



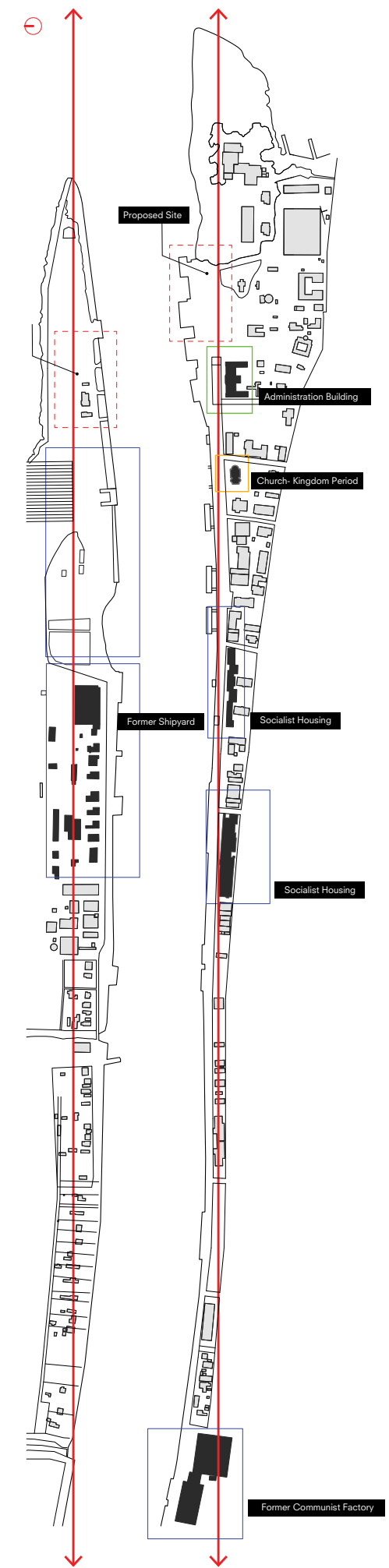
Fig. 14: Sulina's Industrial Era (Water Treatment Facility Workers)
Source: Arhitectura 1906, 2022



Fig. 15: Sulina Port
Source: Danube Culture / Teofil Mihailescu (n.d.)



Fig. 16: The Sulina Waterwork 1931
Source: Ardeleanu, 2023



Sulina's persistence as a port city | The fall of industries and the grey heritage



Fig. 17: Sulina's Fish Canning Factory
Source: Nenea hartia, 2012



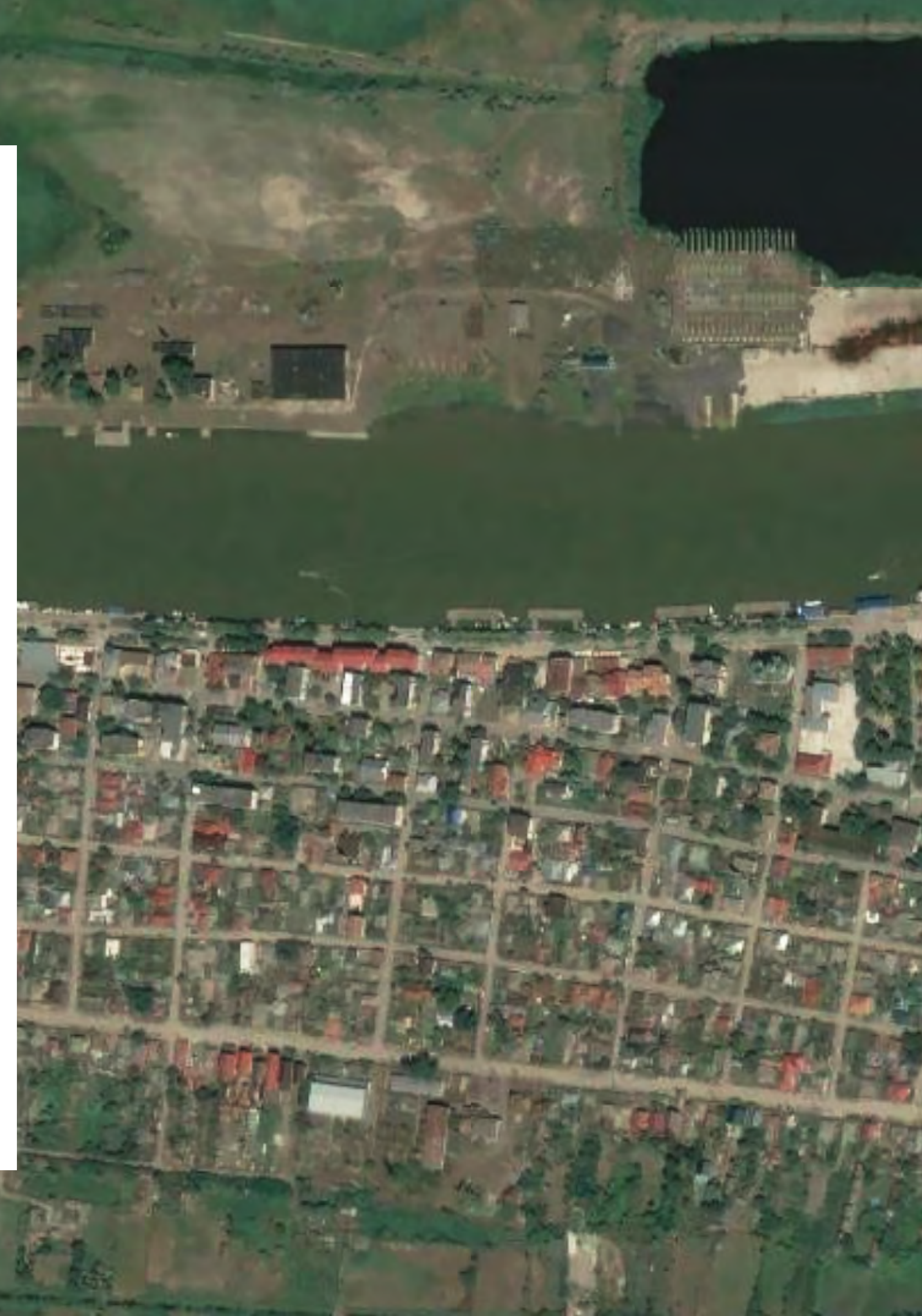
Fig. 19: Sulina's Fish Canning factory
Source: Jacop La Forgia, (n.d.)



Fig. 18: Sulina's Public Library (Neglected Building)
Source: Puterea.ro, 2023



Former Shipyard





THE SHORE EDGE AS RECORDER OF PROCESSES

HOW TO CONSTRUCT DIPLOMACY FOR THOSE WHO LIVE RADICALLY OTHERWISE?

HOW CAN A FORMER FISH FACTORY MAKE POLITICS?

THE SÁMI PARLIAMENT

first opened October 9th 1989 in Karasjok
by H.R.H King Olav V



Fig. 20: Sámi Parliament (tent structure)
Source: Jan Helmer Olsen / Sametinget, 2000



Fig. 21: Sámi Nomads
Source: Meisterdrucke / Heritage Images (n.d.)



Fig. 22: Sámi Parliament Inspired by Indigenous Structures
Source: Sametinget (n.d.)

**How can architecture operate in situated zones of
conflict without defaulting to ethnocentric logics?**

GOVERNANCE
IN REMOTE ZONES



Sulina's Fish Canning Factory



Fig. 23: Interior View
Source: F-81-KMA Blogspot, 2012



Fig. 25: Fish Canning factory
Source: Wikimopia, (n.d.)



Fig. 24: Interior View
Source: F-81-KMA Blogspot, 2012



Fig. 26: Facade
Source: Strile ProTV, 2014

FORMER FISH CANNING FACTORY AS GREY HERITAGE



SITE: GATHERING POINT AND URBAN REGENERATION



FACTORIES CURRENT STATE (JULY 2025)

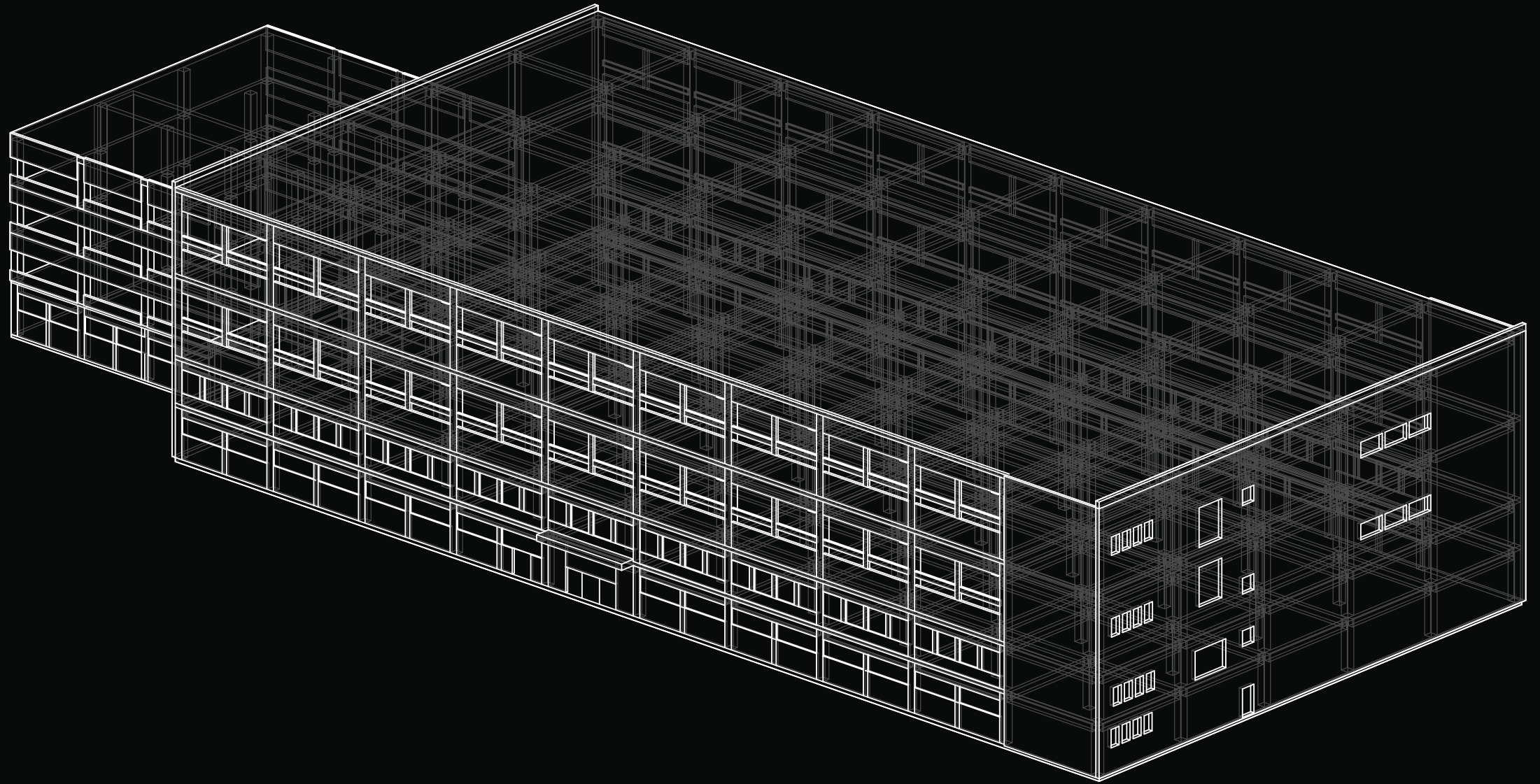
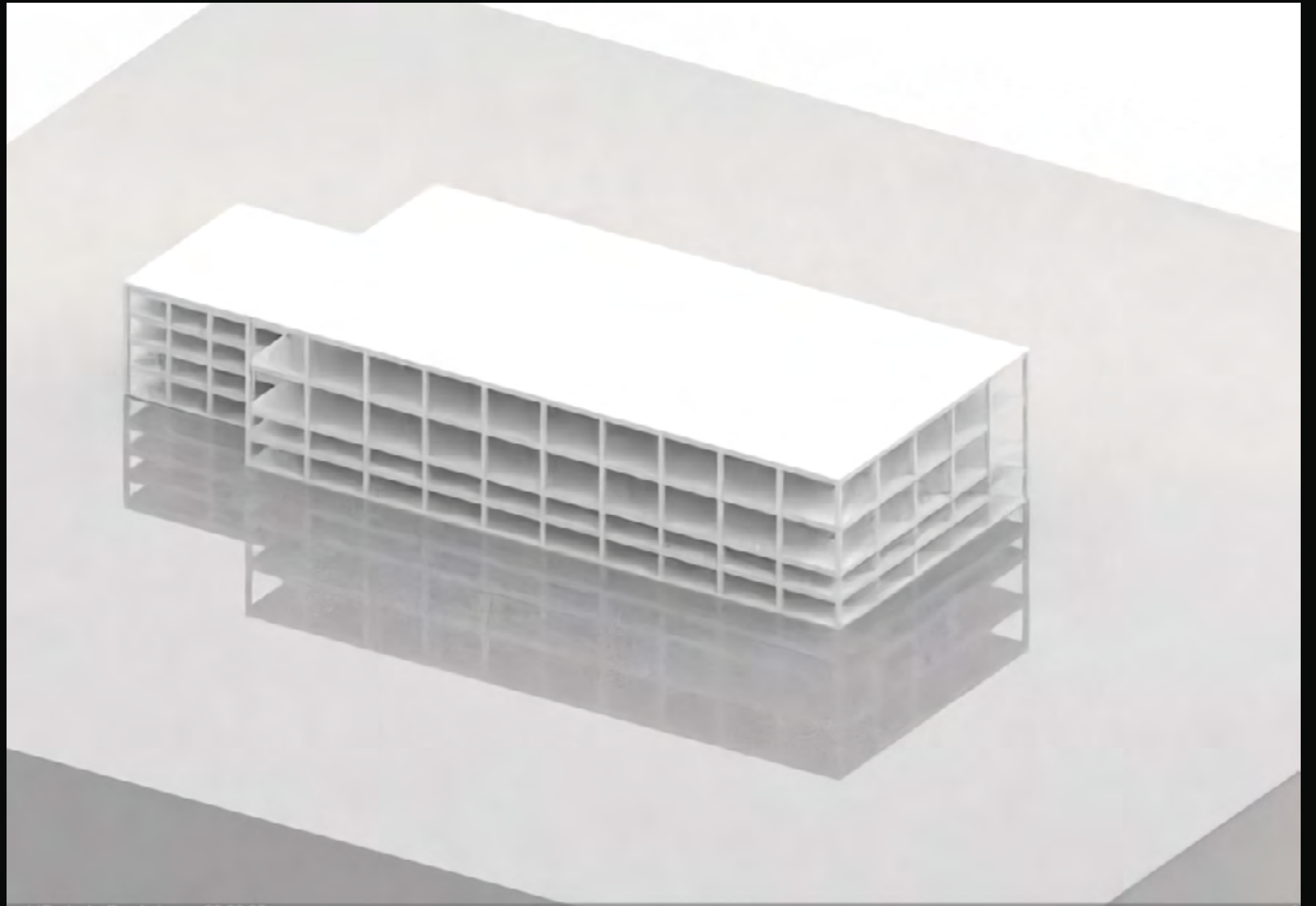
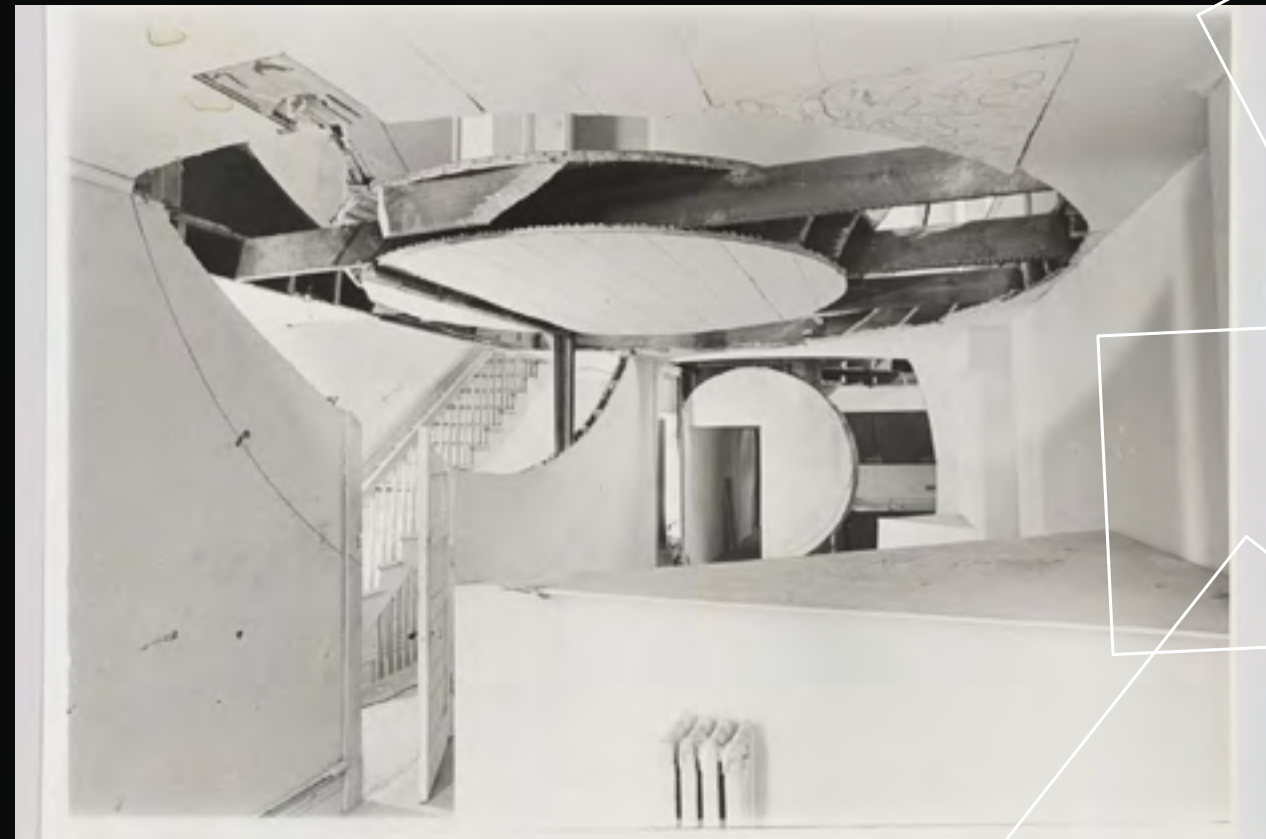




Fig. 23 Interior View
© 2012 K&M Architects

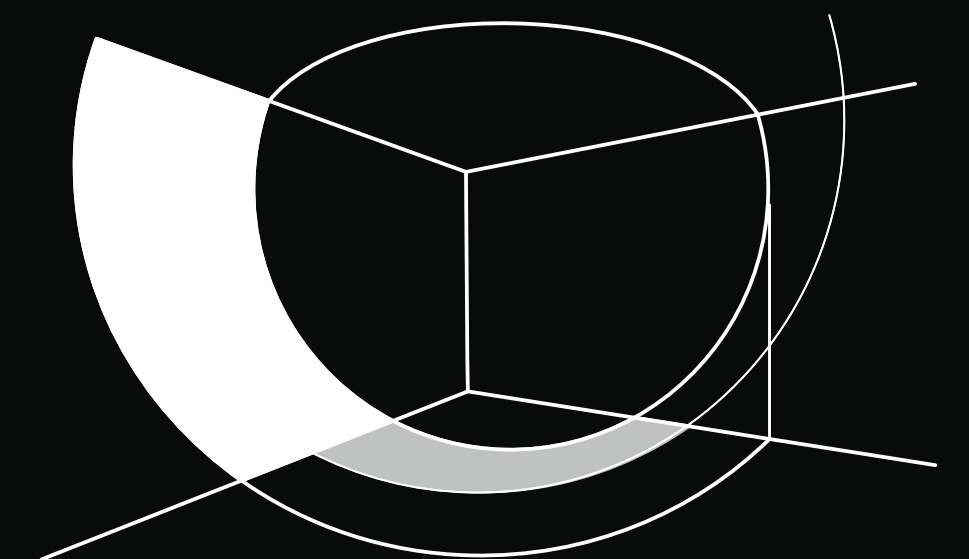
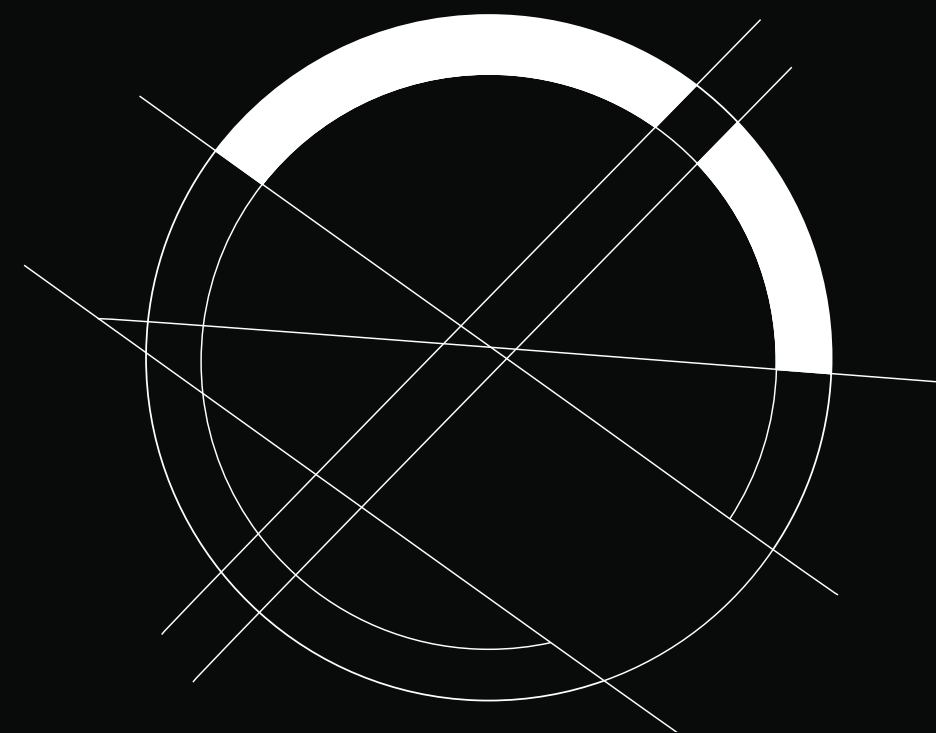
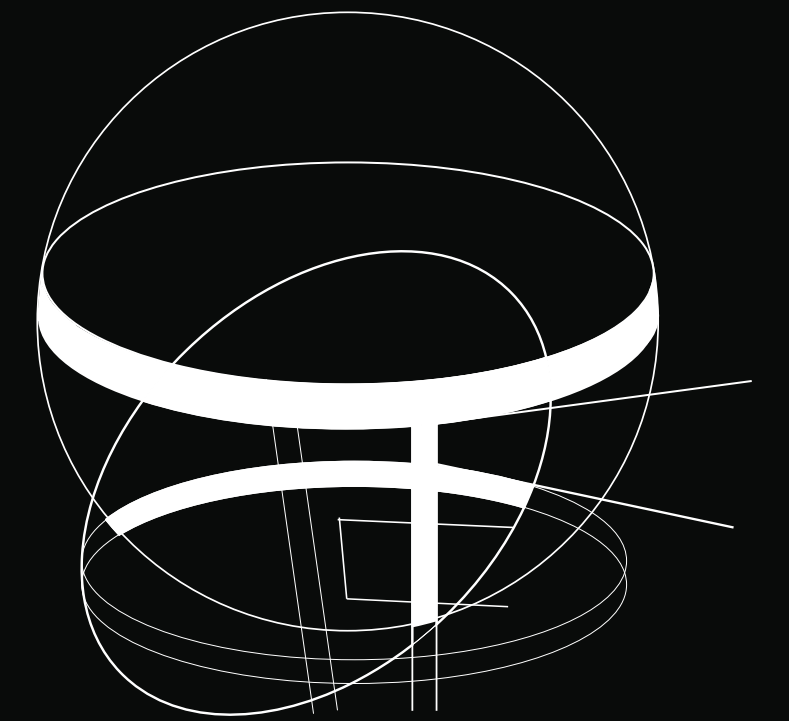
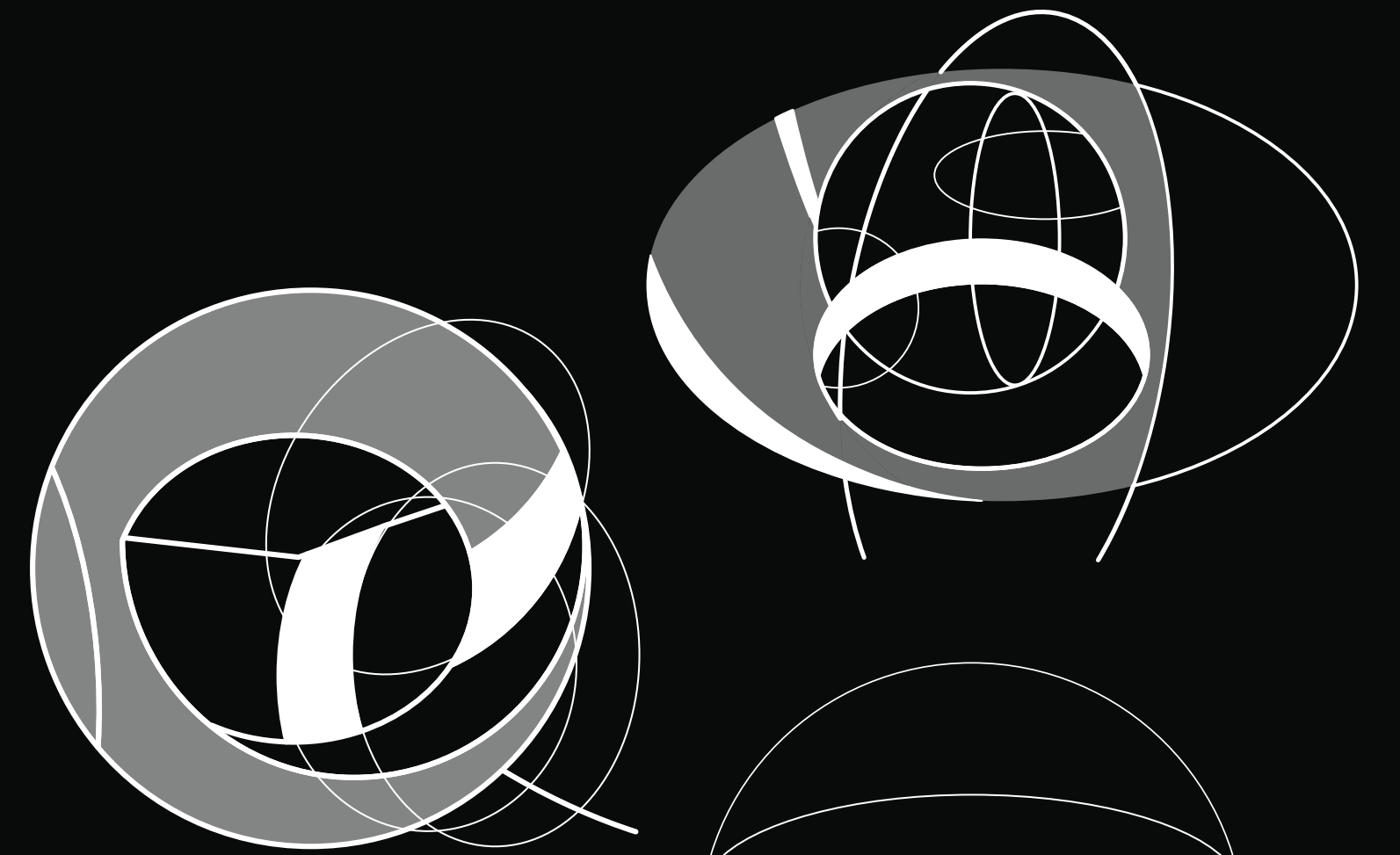


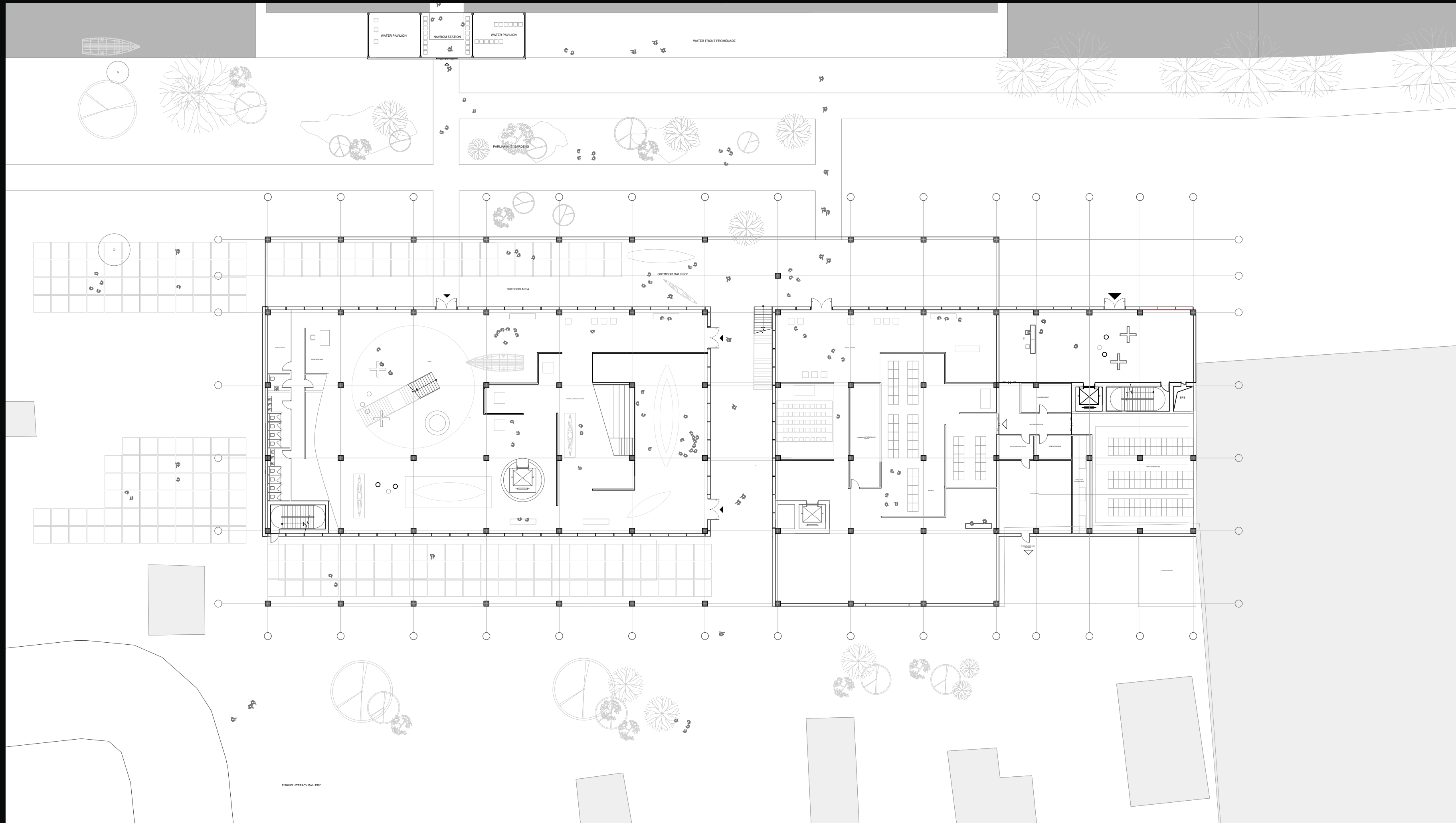


MATTA CLARK
[ANARCHITECTURE AS A MULTIPLIER OF DEBATE]

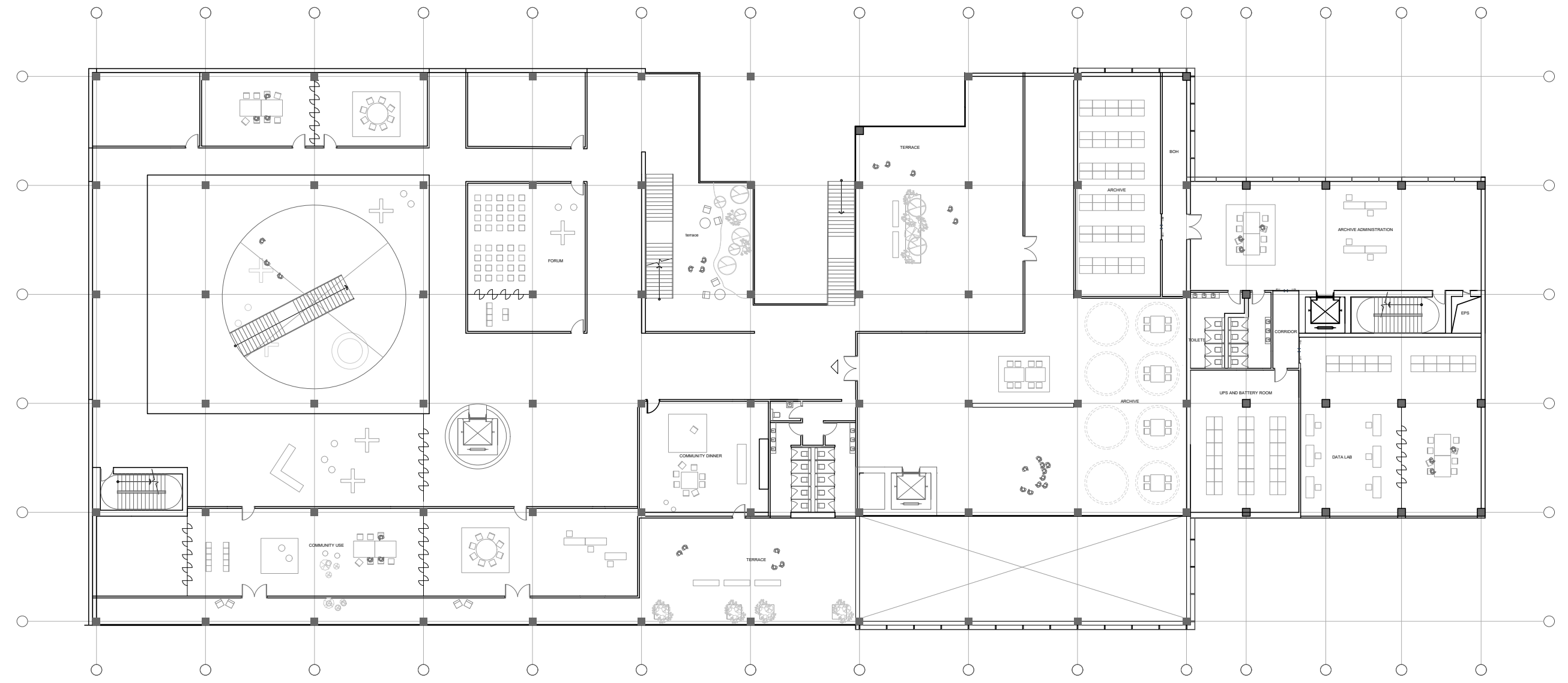
[dissolving the geometry of a building that's there with another geometry that is even more precise]

[the refusal to let the solid, the "up", the "down", the "in" to dominate over the void or the outside]



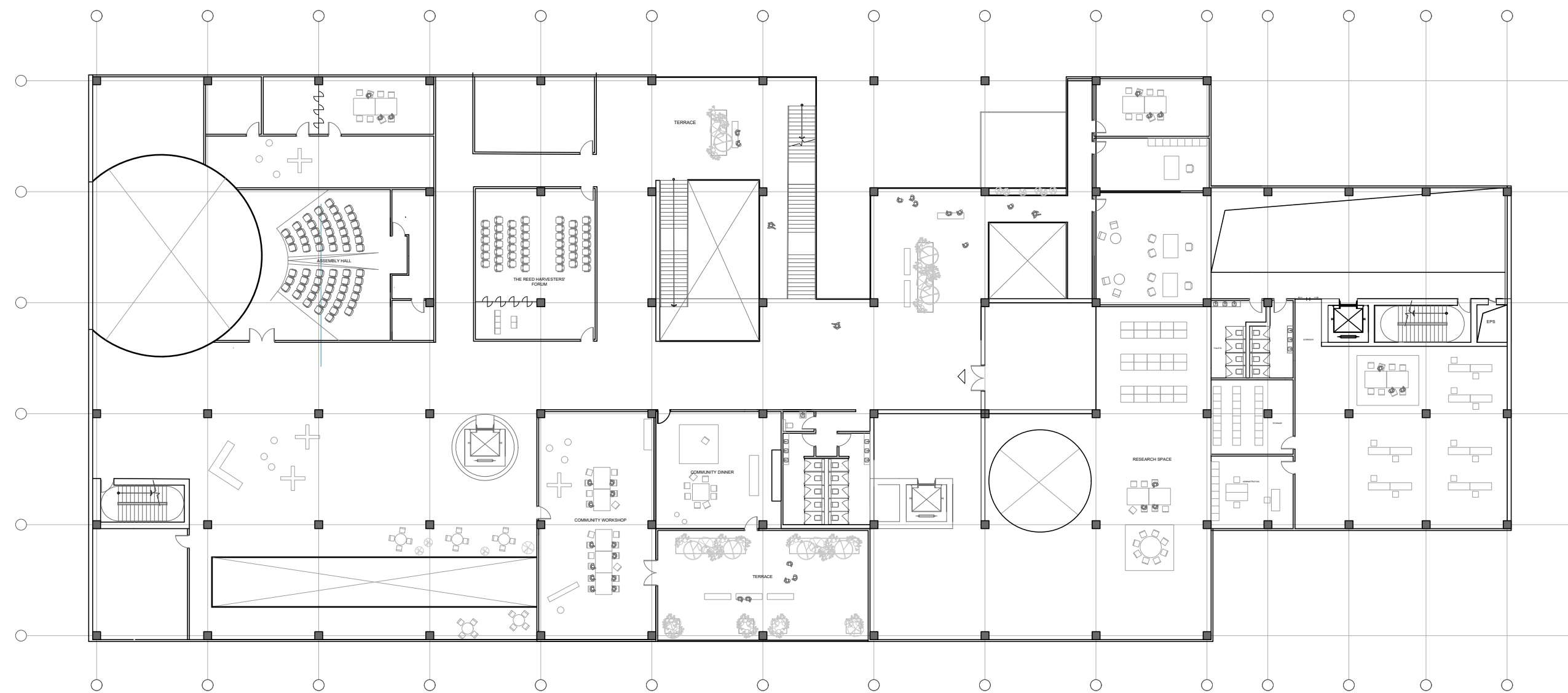


GROUND FLOOR



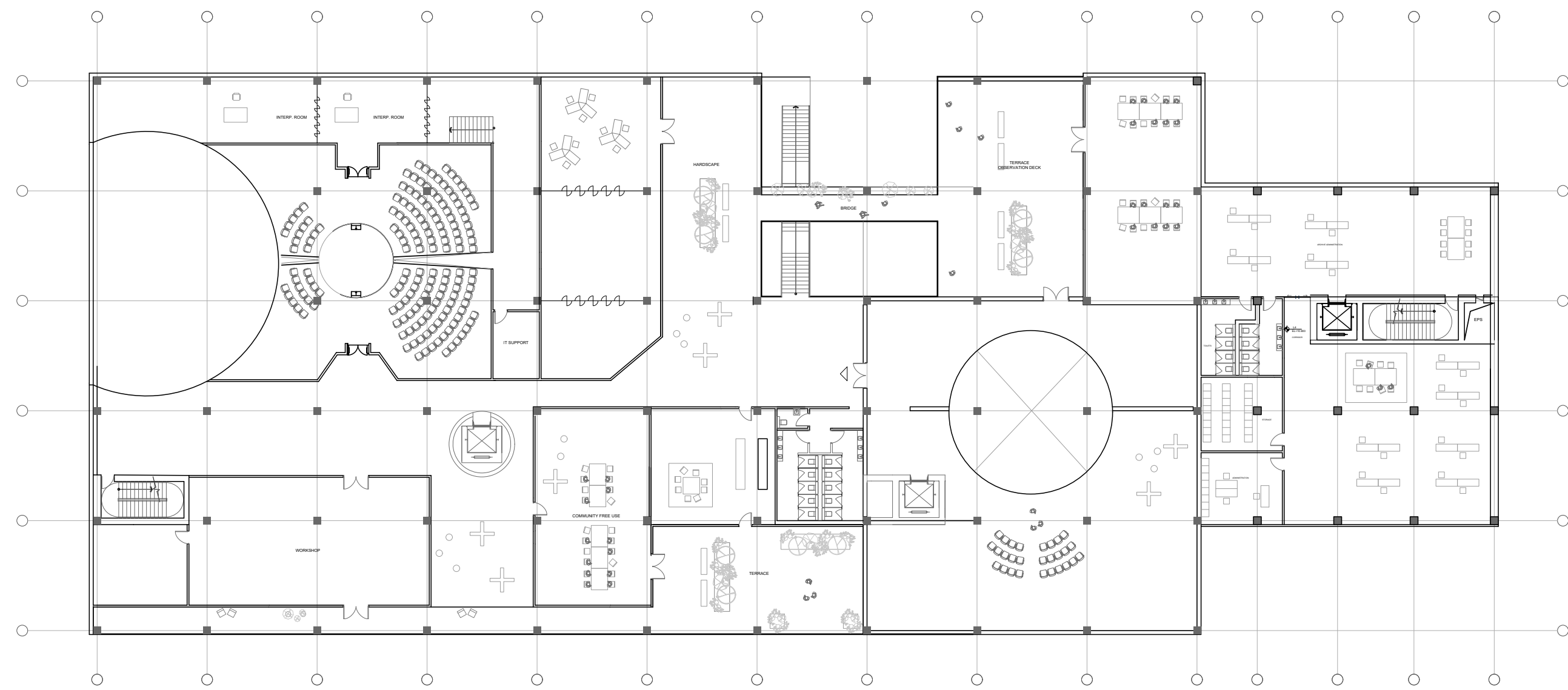
FIRST FLOOR (L2)





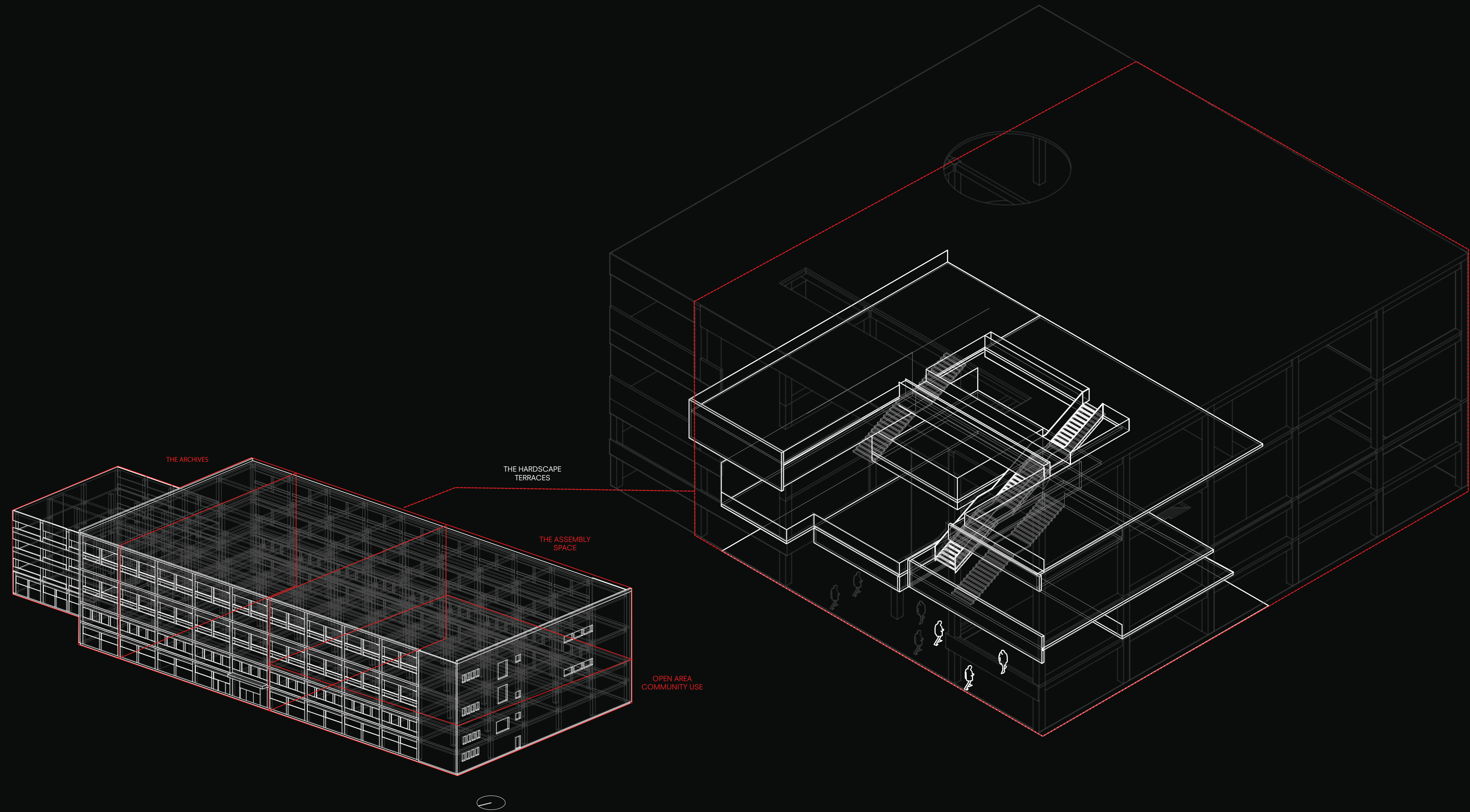
SECOND FLOOR (L3)





THIRD FLOOR (L4)





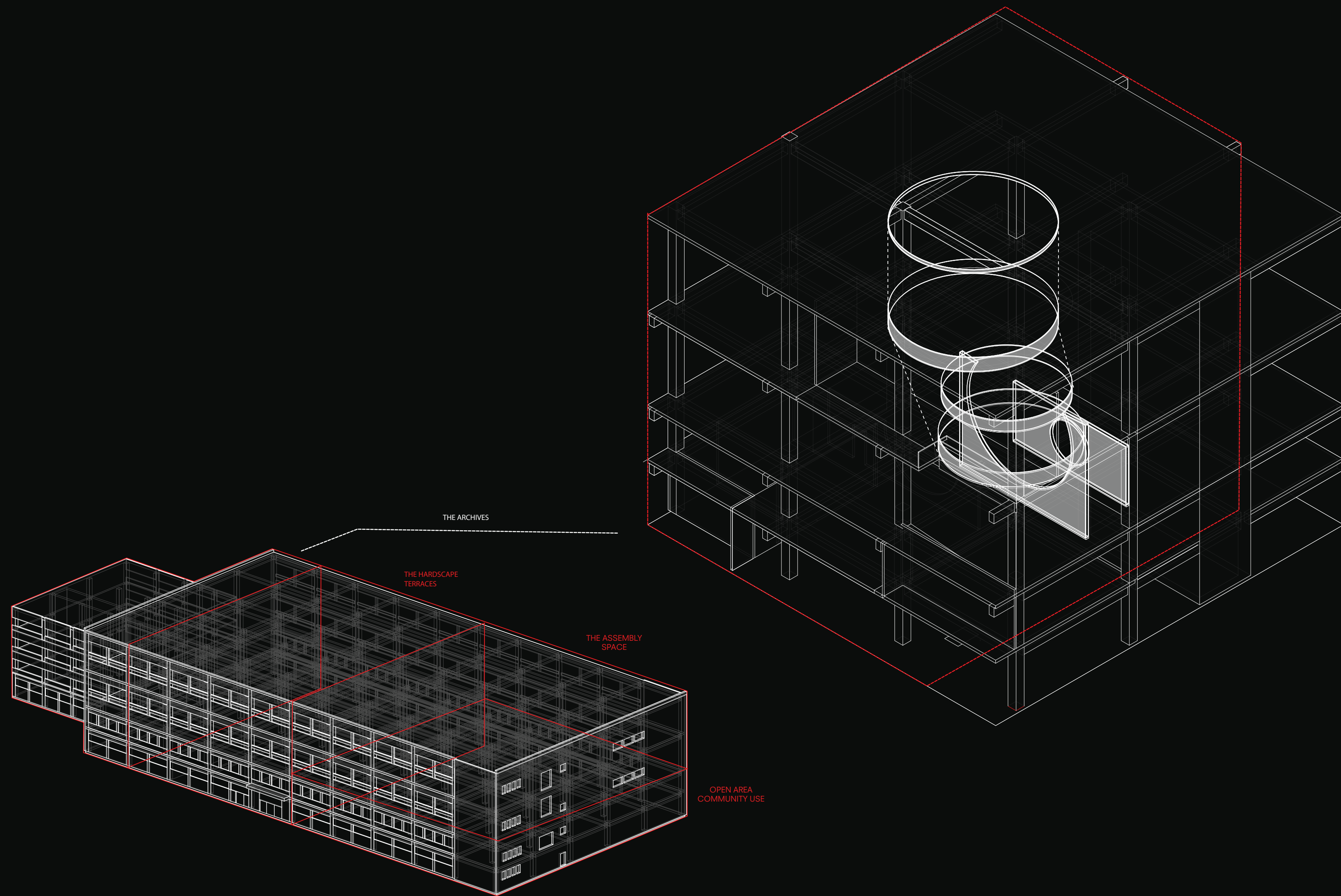
CUT 1: THE HARDSCAPE

TERRACES SERVING EGRESS CIRCULATION





Linear Cut
Hardscape



CUT 2: THE ARCHIVE (CONICAL INTERSECT)

VOID CONNECTING THE VERTICAL ARCHIVE

Cut 2: Conical Intersect

Forum

Free Use

Research + Administration

Physical Archive

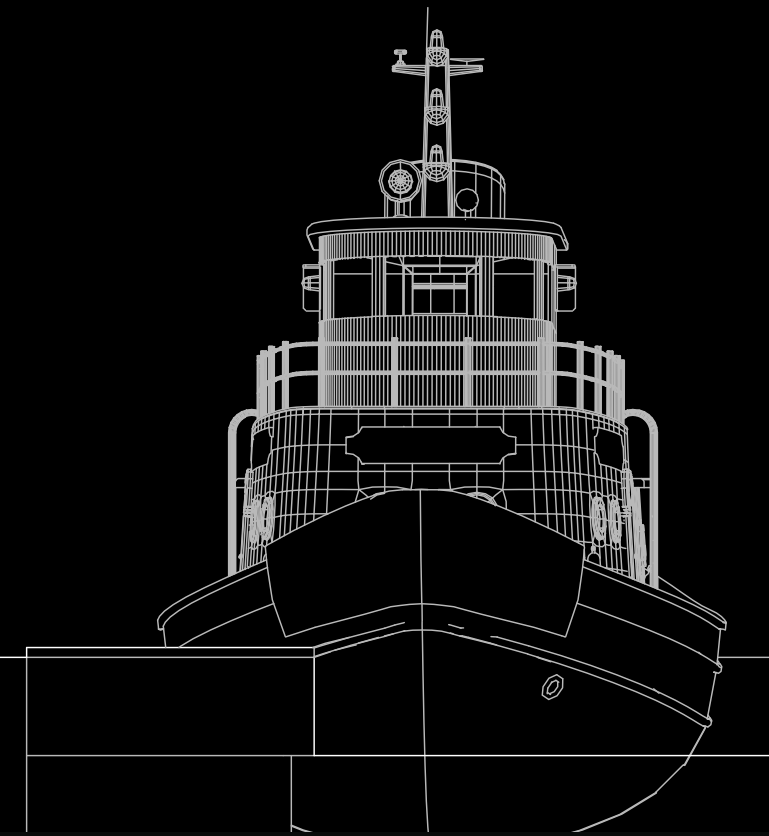
+20.100mm

+13.700mm

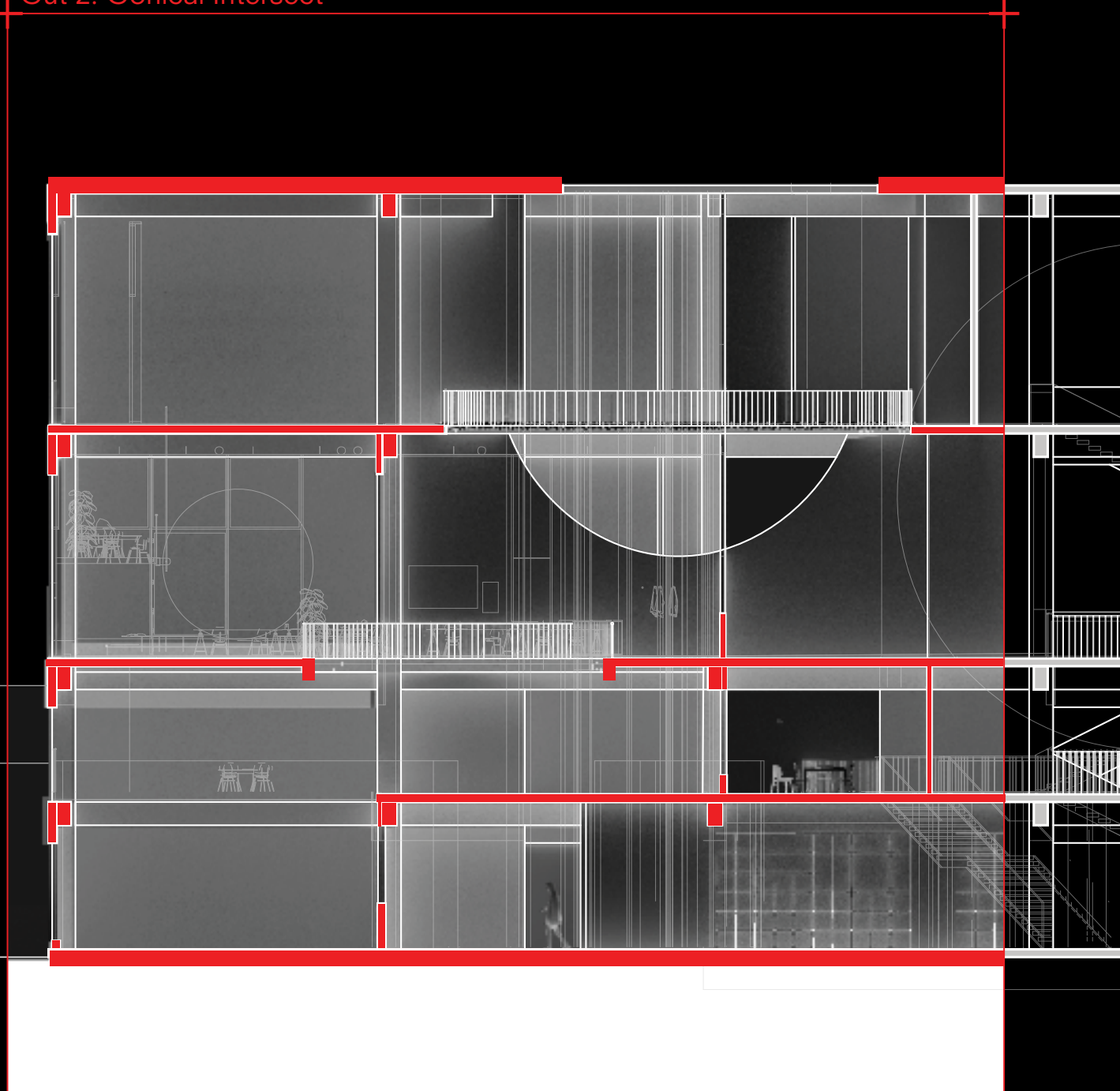
+7.700mm

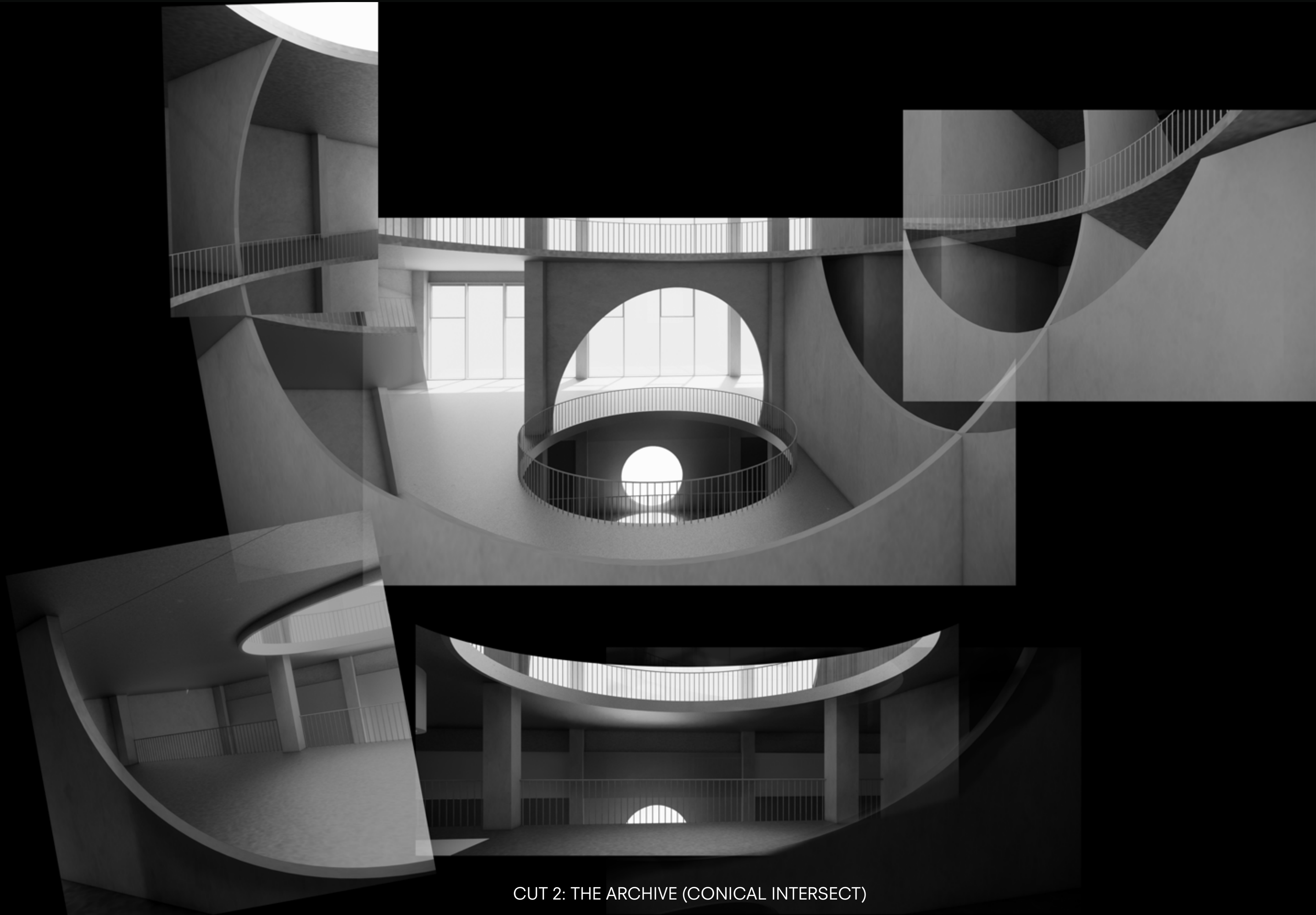
+4.200mm

-0.000



Cut 2: Conical Intersect





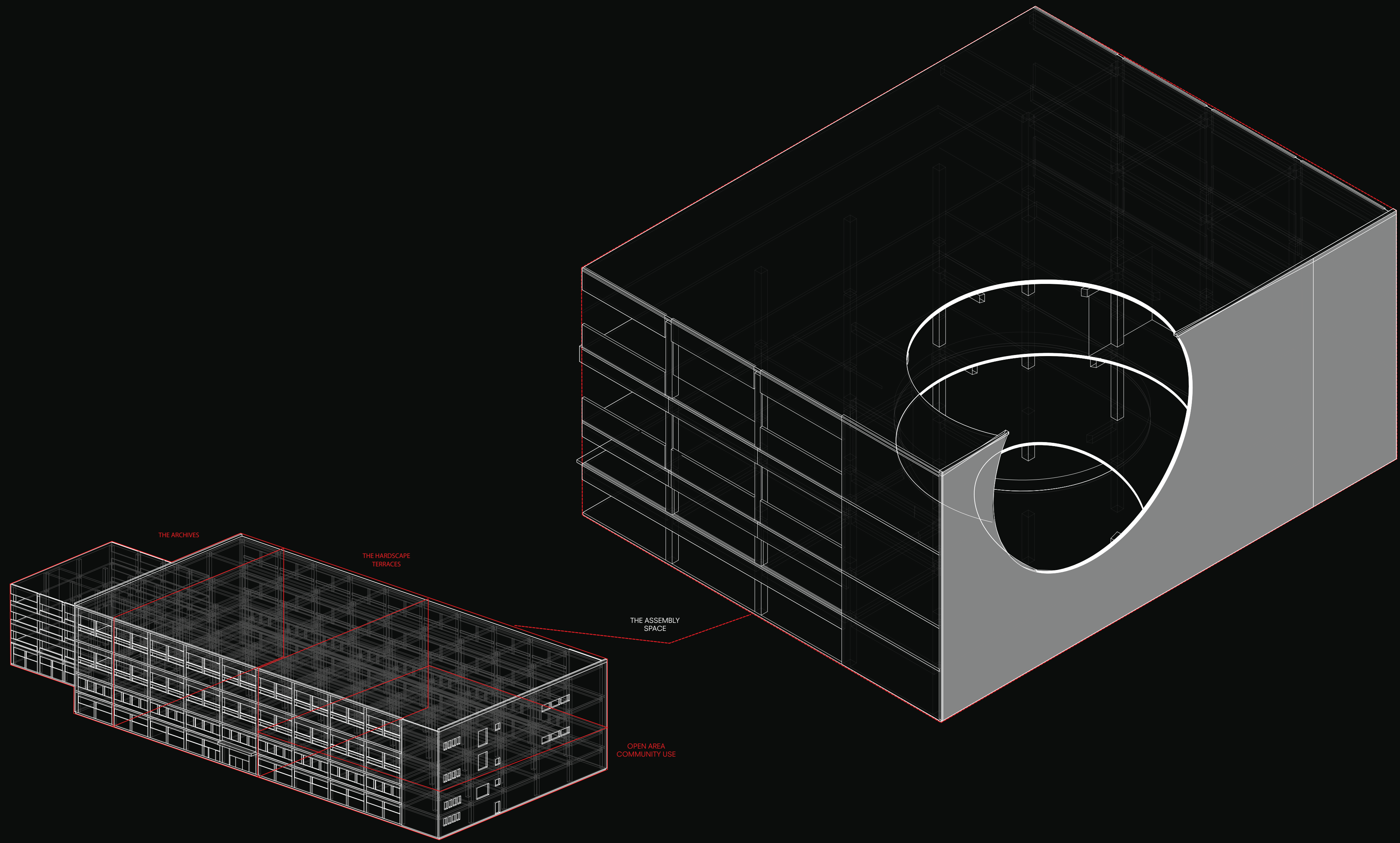
CUT 2: THE ARCHIVE (CONICAL INTERSECT)

VOID CONNECTING THE VERTICAL ARCHIVE



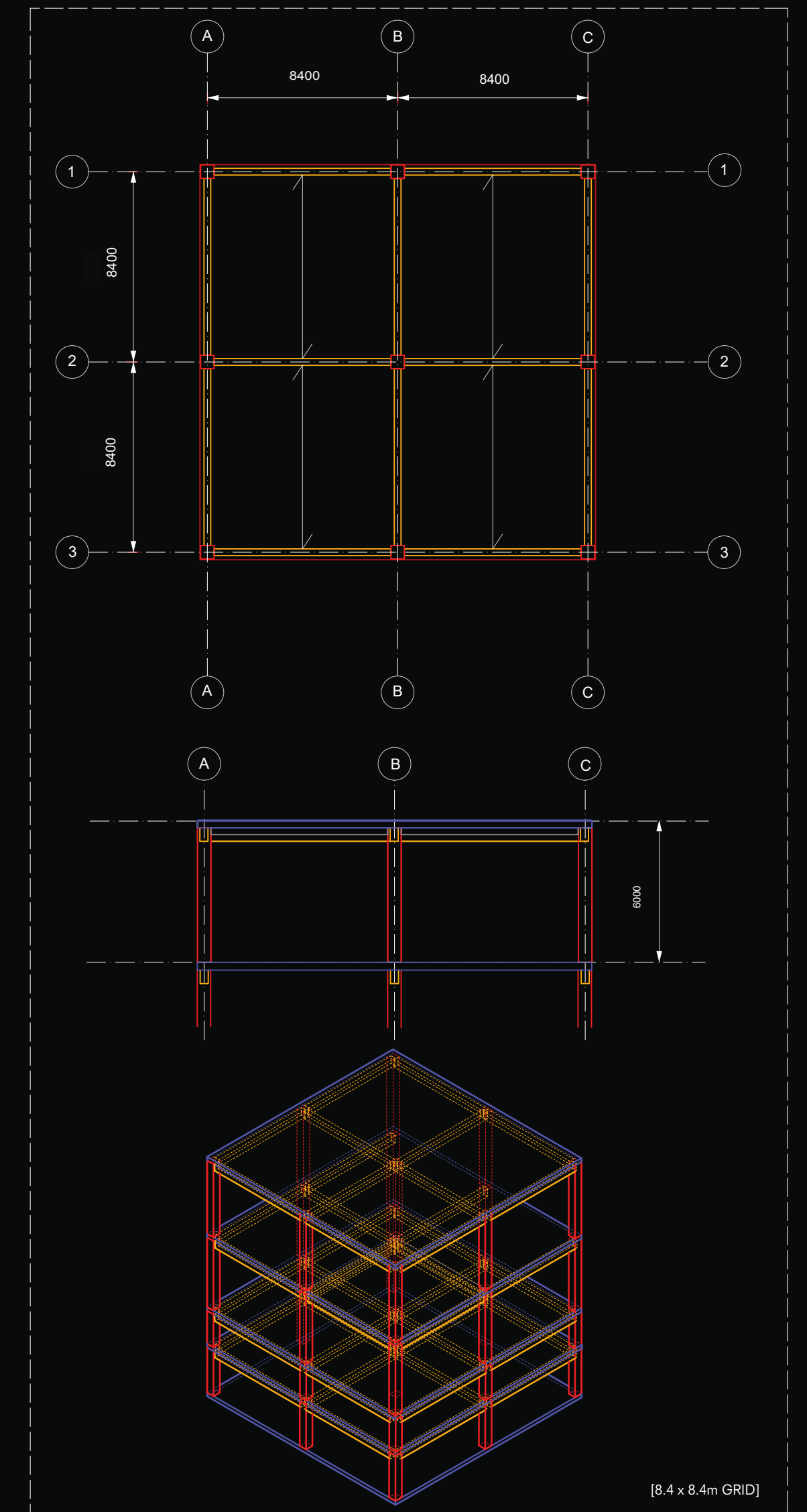
SEDINTA
MONITORIZAREA
IGRIȘTEI CRUCAN
CASĂRIAN
DELTA DUNĂRII

The Research Space
(1st floor)



CUT 3: THE ASSEMBLY SPACE

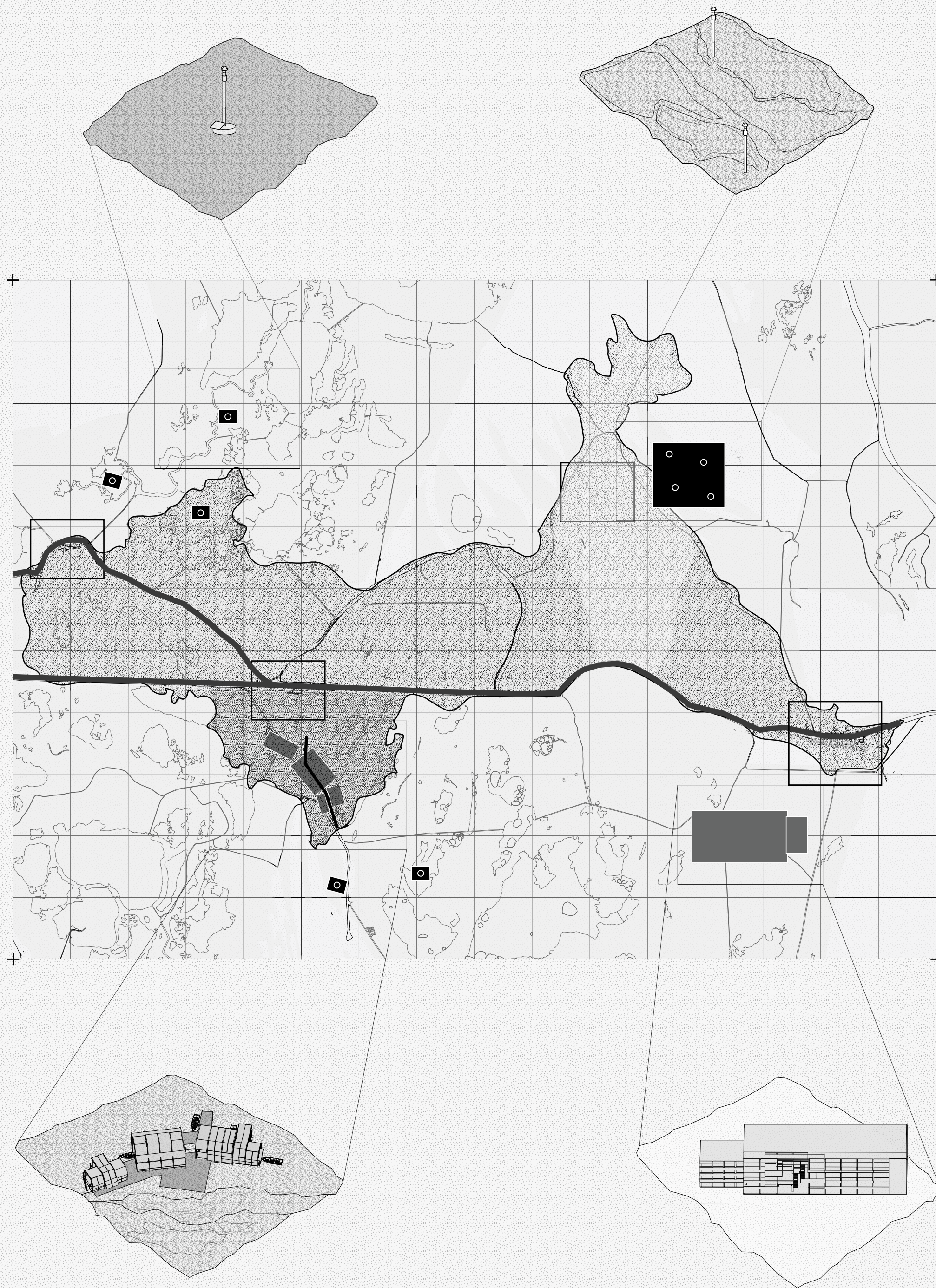
VOID CONNECTING ASSEMBLY HALLS | CONICAL INTERSECT



Profanation of Assembly

The Community Dinner
as Assembly Space

What if environmental governance could only exist through the spatial and social practices it seeks to regulate?



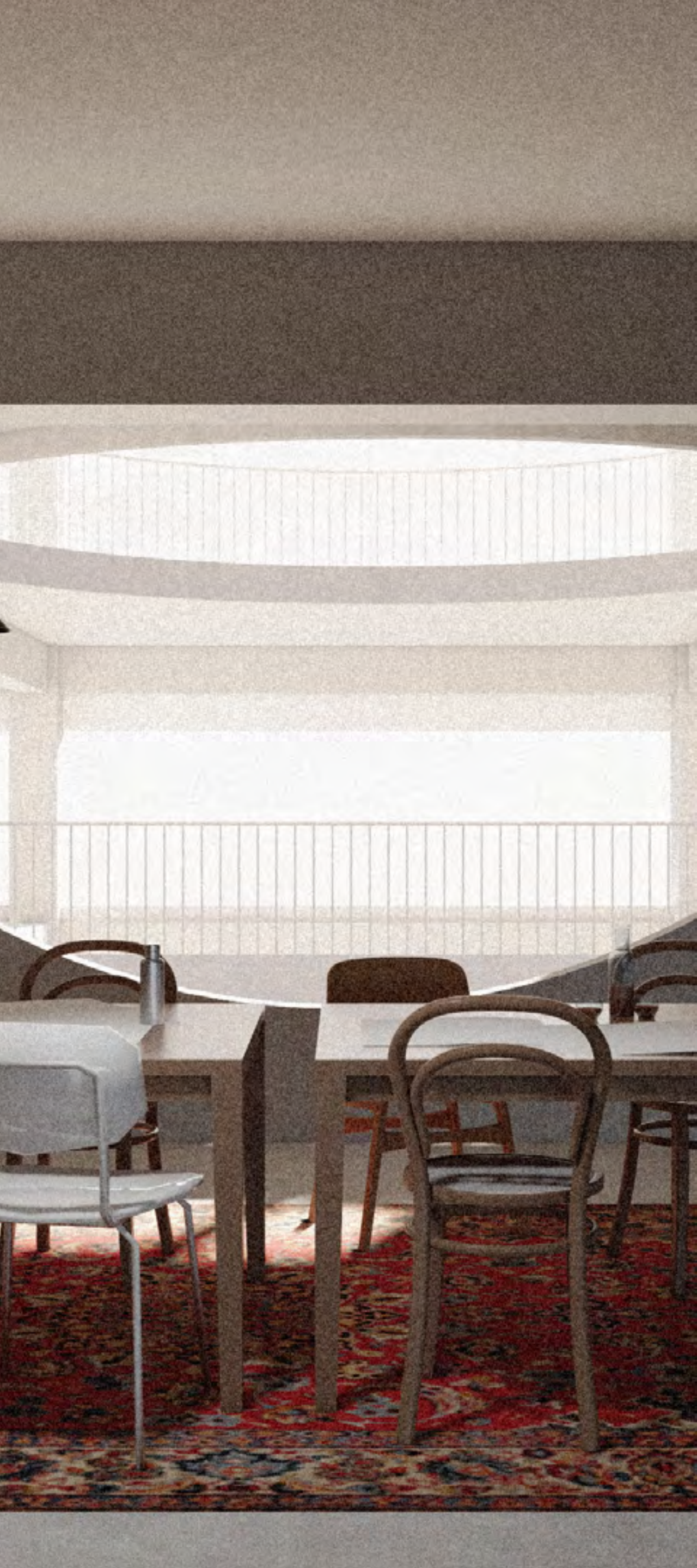
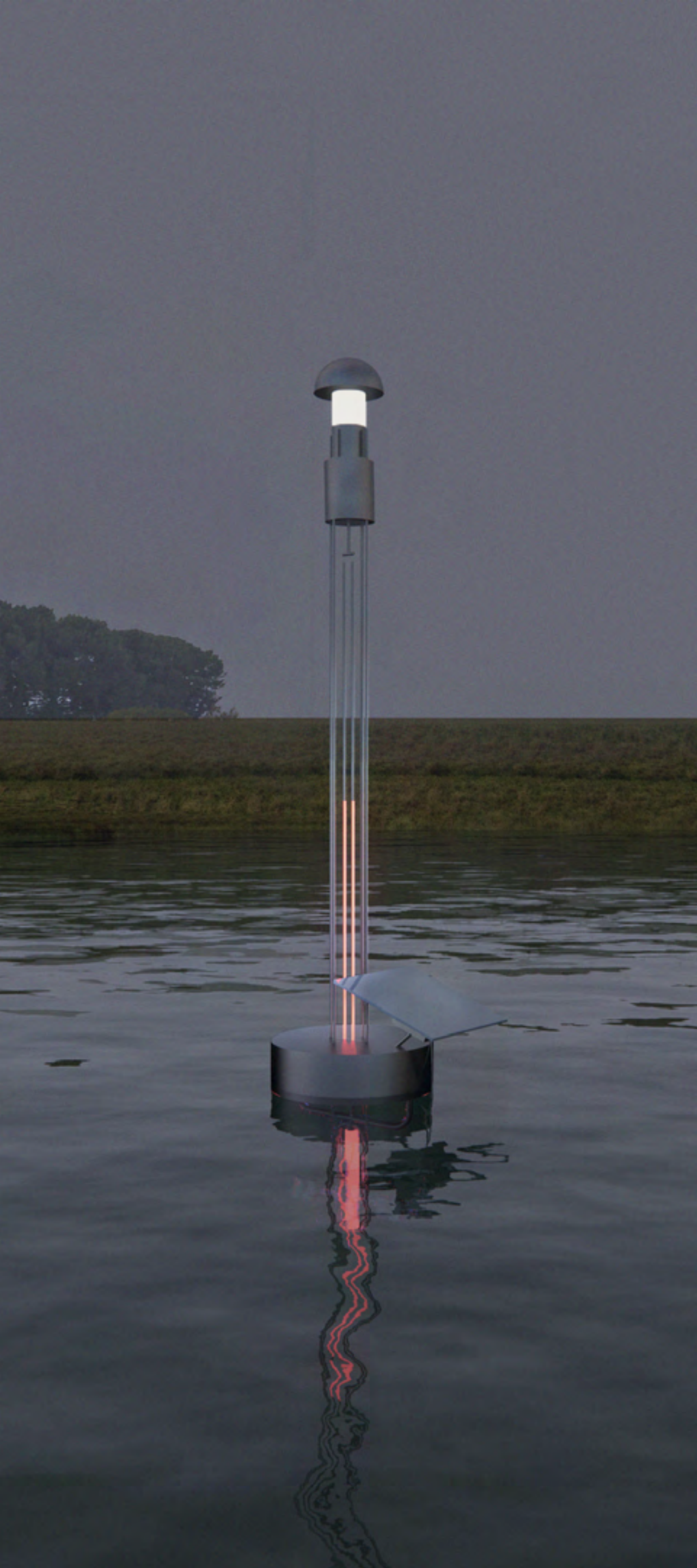




Fig. 27: Local in their courtyard, in Letea
Source: Letea Film (n.d.), The Noise of Letea.



Fig. 28: Local in their courtyard, in Letea
Source: Akyia Media Productions (n.d.), Captivi in Timp



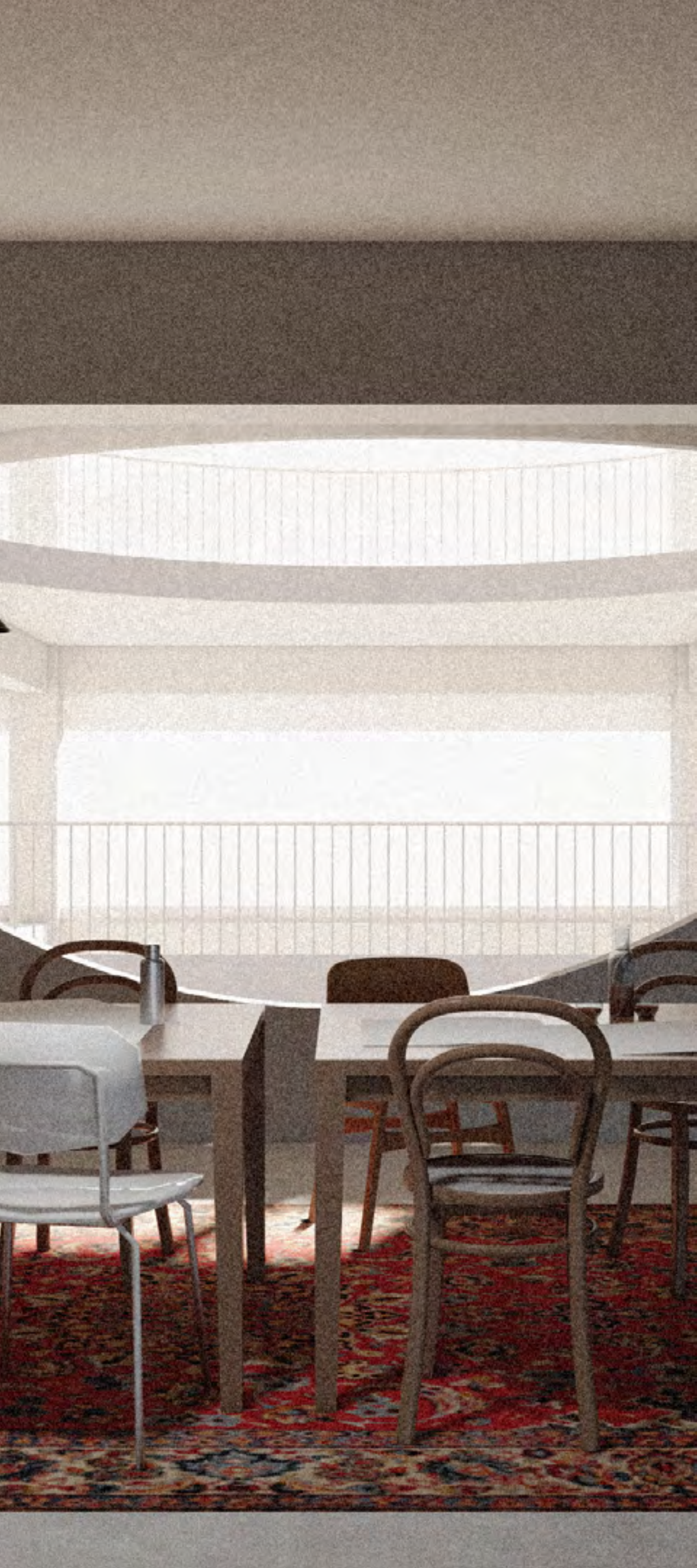
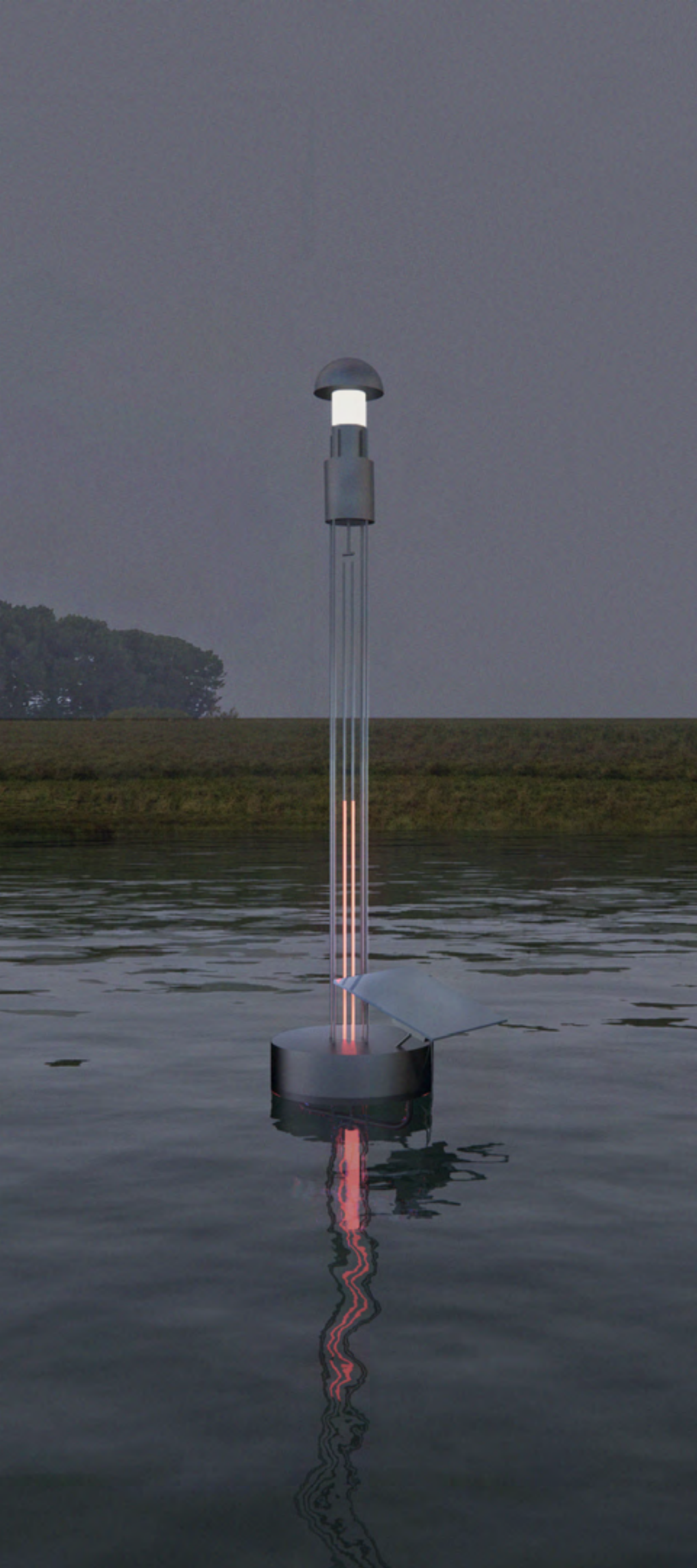
Local waiting for the public boat service in Sulina. 2025

EXTRACTIVE PRESERVATION

Interfaces of Profanation, Power and Ecology
in the Restricted Zone

THANK YOU!

A warm thank you to all the people who supported me throughout this year of research: my tutors, my colleagues, my family and my friends. A special mention to all the people I have encountered in the Danube Delta. I am dearly thankful fo your invaluable insights into this beautiful place and wish the best to the future of it and its inhabitants.



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