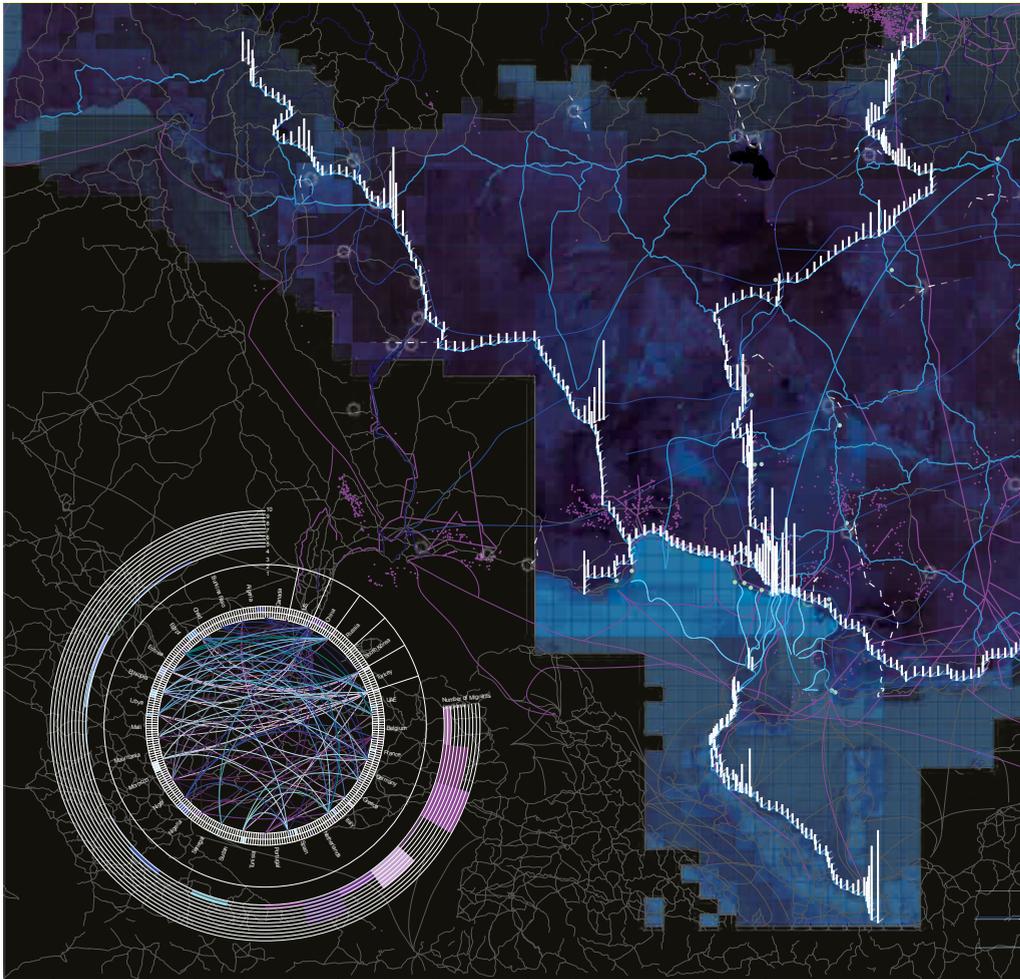


Politecnico di Torino. Department of Architecture and Design - IT

# Sustainable Architecture

Camillo Boano



Our proposal stems from a first-year MSc design studio in Sustainable Architecture, where over the last three years, 140 students from around the world have explored architecture's relationship to the Anthropocene through research-by-design projects combining theory and practice. The studio revolves around one key question: what is the architecture of a non-extractive, non-racist, non-singular life? This question invites both concrete and conceptual reflections on the extractive, racialized, and toxic mechanisms embedded in spatial planning.

Rather than seeking to “solve” climate collapse through form and function, the studio encourages students to stay with the trouble and imagine future forms of inhabitation through “otherwise” to capital and carbon logics. These “otherwise” emerge from the present's contested conditions, not hypothetical pacified futures. Student projects are thus spatial investigations forming an atlas of contested geographies, where precarious forms of life arise through frictions.

Students conduct research-by-design on contested territories of their choice, often linked to their positionality or ethical concerns. The studio unfolds in two phases: first, mapping the complexity of human-nonhuman relations and ecological histories through multispecies, multiscalar, and multitemporal cartographies; second, developing imaginative yet grounded design proposals—small-scale interventions, infrastructures, or hacks of spatial regulatory frameworks. These speculative scenarios prefigure entanglements and spatial arrangements that help imagine non-extractive architectures, rooted in what is already there. Here, imagination resists solutionism, offering an ethical stance concerned with other assemblages of life that transcend calculative sustainability metrics.

The studio aligns with EAAE pedagogical aims in several ways. First, it positions research-by-design as central to translating complexity into spatial narratives and tackling urgent

questions on architecture, environment, and politics. Second, it critically examines architectural education's tools and premises—challenging market logics, solutionist mindsets, and positivist future prefigurations. Third, it adopts innovative pedagogies: the classroom becomes a safe haven for critical thought, resisting market-driven demands. Students benefit from external guest lectures, rich discussions, and a seminar on Political Ecology and Space, with collective readings and open debates on the world's state.

The studio's objectives are ethical and pedagogical. Ethically, it argues that architectural education in the Anthropocene must move beyond technical solutions for climate disruption. Technological innovation alone cannot address architecture's complicity in the Anthropocene's conditions; rather, critical spaces are needed to question technology's instrumental use, which often overlooks the intangible or incalculable aspects of life on Earth. Pedagogically, the studio fosters independent, inclusive, and experimental learning. We encourage horizontal discussions on topics beyond architecture, offering diverse perspectives and tutoring modes.

Students experiment with outputs beyond canonical drawings—for instance, producing artifacts that add layers of meaning through other media that can be listened to, watched, or touched. The studio itself acts as an ecology of exchange, blurring boundaries between academia and practice. The staff's diverse backgrounds—from architecture and planning to humanities and social sciences—redefine practice beyond building, embracing fields like development aid, exhibition design, or social history that share architectural research concerns. Ultimately, the studio seeks to foster a radical architectural education for the Anthropocene, where practice and pedagogy are inseparable ends.

