

**6S 2022 Sketch Groups Template
Staccato Project Design**

Use this sketch -- either quickly or more comprehensively -- to draw out an ethnographic research design -- for your own project or just for practice. Do this sketch many times for different kinds of possible projects -- thinking of it as calisthenics for ethnography.

For the 6S 2022 workshop, select one of the sites|initiatives|problem-domains below to design a project for -- thinking first about different types of projects that could be done for the site|initiative|problem-domain you have selected, then about a specific project design, filling in the graphic below. Don't describe your own primary project. This is an exercise in rapid research imagining that you should spend about three hours on -- honing your capacity for "analysis as craft." The sketch can be done individually or collaboratively (the latter is more fun). Feel free to reach out to members in your group if you want to do this collaboratively. Responses can be roughly drafted and in bullet points. Fill in as much as you can in the allotted time, purposely working fast. Prioritize work on "Overview / Research Questions," "Methods and Data Resources" and "Theoretical Frames and Data Analysis." All of the sites|initiatives|problem-domains we've listed as options somehow relate to climate change. We chose options within the climate change problem space so th at the collection of proposals the group comes up with points to an array of STS research possibilities within any particular problem space.

TITLE

The (warmer) future of labor in tropical commodity chains

RESEARCHER/S

ABSTRACT, INTELLECTUAL MERIT, BROAD IMPACT

Climate change is transforming the possibilities of labor. This research analyzes how knowledge production about labor and climate change in tropical agri-food chains are "doing" the future of work. The emerging literature on labor and the increase in temperature focuses on evaluating "positive" and "negative" effects, by arguing that the less productivity and labor supply is an issue that would contribute to more inequality. However, this research argues that the future of labor is not settled, and that less labor productivity and supply can be an opportunity for other configurations of labor, especially in critical food supply chains. Following different tropical commodities that are key for the current food industry (cocoa, coffee, sugar, rice, palm oil, and tea), I ask what imaginaries about their work and the future of labor in the food industry do the actors involved in tropical agri-food commodity chains have? The research will contribute with a comparative analysis of how labor is valued differently in distinct tropical crops, and across the value chain (from agriculture to retail). Methodologically, the research hopes to contribute with a critical analysis of how work is studied, and how it translates into projections of the future in different modes of knowledge. The work with different actors also seeks to generate dialogues about the future of labor and co-create stories that open up alternative possibilities. While climate models are an important way of making the future, they are not the only way. This research seeks to contribute with a collaborative methodology to make stories of the future with different stakeholders.

OVERVIEW / RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Recent research indicates that climate change will have negative repercussions on the possibility of working in certain regions of the planet (Dasgupta et.al2021). According to this research, current climatic conditions are already negatively affecting labor effectiveness in tropical countries, and these will increase with the rising temperatures. This projection of the future of labor considers the decrease of labor to be "negative" and with direct relation to the increase in poverty and inequality. It also directs attention to addressing the risk through interventions that facilitate work under the climatic conditions of the future. But is that desirable or the only vision of the future? This question is critical in tropical countries because they are key producers of crops upon which the food industry depends: coffee, tea, cocoa, palm oil, sugar, rice. Some of these products are staple, others become ingredients for manufactured food products, and others are specialty crops. This production, and therefore the labor involved in the supply chain, is valued differently. Furthermore, it's not settled how the different actors involved in the food industry are evaluating and thinking about the future of agricultural and industrial labor in light of the warming temperatures. Following feminist and postcolonial STS studies, and political ecology, this research asks:

- What imaginaries about their work and the future of labor in the food industry do the actors involved in tropical agri-food commodity chains have?
- What forms of knowledge production are being generated about labor and climate change in tropical agri-food commodity chains? Who is producing this knowledge and how? What knowledge is considered, and how is it translated into sociotechnical imaginaries of the future of labor in the commodity chain?
- How are different forms of labor valued in the tropical agri-food value chain? What labor is excluded? What labor is considered more valued in the "future" of tropical agri-food supply chains?
- How do people working in tropical agri-food chains (from raw material to the final consumer) perceive the relationship between temperature and work? How are workers in tropical agri-food chains perceiving (if any) temperature changes and their labor experience?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

LITERATURE REVIEW

METHODS AND DATA RESOURCES

- Multi-sited ethnography on tropical supply chains. The research will focus on different regions where coffee, cacao, tea, palm oil, rice and sugar are produced. Each supply chain would have an interdisciplinary team of scientists working in climate change, labor, food, and agriculture. The research will "follow" each commodity from the agricultural site of production towards the end consumer (final retail stage).
 - Participant observation
 - Interviews
- Workshops – storytelling (and maybe climate modelling?) about the future of labor with different "stakeholders" of the commodity chain.
- Interviews with experts and scientists focused on climate change and agriculture, and labor.
- Climate and labor datasets

THEORETICAL FRAMES & DATA ANALYSIS

- Feminist postcolonial STS to frame how the “tropics” and labor became a site of study and production, and how knowledge about labor/management is part of slavery and plantation histories. But also, to analyze the potentials of ethical and political transformation by attending to other modes of knowledge.
- Trouillot – geography of imagination, and geography of management
- Jasanoff - Sociotechnical imaginaries and co-production
- Feminist postcolonial political ecology to analyze labor through historical materialism and embodiment/subjectivity, and environmental change as both political and biophysical processes.
- Methodological explorations of storytelling and climate futures – how working in collaborative co-creation of stories could be a useful way of envisioning, and enacting change.

PLAN OF WORK

CHALLENGES AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

VALIDITY AND EVALUATION

PREPARATION AND WORK THUS FAR

REFERENCES

DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN

FURTHER NOTES

POINTERS

- **Make sure to come up with a title (though this is hard and always feels -- and is -- reductive).**
- **The abstract should describe your project significance, aims, methods, expected findings/contributions (intellectual merit) and expected societal implications (broad impact). Describe each in a sentence.**
- **In the Overview / Research Questions, try to articulate the scales, systems or objects that will be foregrounded in the project, and its context|location (geographic, ecologic, geopolitical, discursive, etc). Include both theoretical and empirical questions, and a description of the types of data you will generate and mobilize. End with a few statements about what the project will push *against* (methodological nationalism or essentialist constructs of identity or place, for example).**

- In the Literature Review section for a literature review, describe two to four topical literatures that you will build on and contribute to through this research. See [Annual Reviews](#) for ideas but reach for [bibliodiversity](#).
- In the methods section, describe *what you will do, where and with whom* -- and the different kinds of data and insight these activities will produce. Consider, for example, how you might include multisited ethnography ([Marcus 1995](#)), a tale of implosion ([Dumit 2014](#)), tactile analytics ([Patricia Alvarez Astacio 2021](#)), drawing as analysis ([Rachel Douglas-Jones 2021](#)), or archive ethnography ([Fortun et al. 2021](#)).
- In the section for theoretical frames, describe the basic theoretical insights that you can mobilize in your study design, data collection, analysis, and writing. You could mobilize understanding of “the subaltern,” for example, or Foucaultian ideas about discourse and subject formation. This can be a long list with very cursory descriptions. Note that this section is not usually included in a proposal submitted to funders -- but should be part of your thinking and dialogue with collaborators
- In building your references, reach for bibliodiversity and a transnational field of reference.

sites | initiatives | problem-domains for 6S 2022 April 26 Workshop

- [Melting Siberia](#)
 - Troianovski, Anton and Chris Mooney (photo and video by Michael Robinson Chavez). 2019. “Radical Warming in Siberia Leaves Millions on Unstable Ground,” Washington Post. October 3. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/national/climate-environment/climate-change-siberia/>
 - Struzik, Ed. 2020. “How Thawing Permafrost Is Beginning to Transform the Arctic,” Yale Environment 360. January 21. <https://e360.yale.edu/features/how-melting-permafrost-is-beginning-to-transform-the-arctic>
- [Climate Change and Combo Disaster in the United States](#)
- [Climate Change, Labor Productivity and Politics](#)
- [USAID's Climate Links](#)
- [World Bank's Climate Change Knowledge Portal](#)
- [WHO et al Environment and Health Compendium](#)
- WHO, UNDP, UNEP and UNICEF have partnered to create a new compendium of 500 actions aimed at reducing death and diseases driven by environmental risk factors, the first such resource to unite this expertise from across the UN system.
- [Climate Change and Social Media](#)
- [World Economic Forum on Climate Governance](#)