



The Anthropocene Laboratory Newsletter

March 2024

Vol.1

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Welcome to our first newsletter! Since the informal launch of the A-Lab in October 2022 and the first recruitment in September 2023, we are now ready to share our exciting projects and progress, including the formal inauguration in February 2024!

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INAUGURATION

February 13, 2024

On Tuesday, the 13th of February, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences celebrated the inauguration of the Anthropocene Laboratory, its newest research programme. In the presence of H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden, distinguished guests and researchers, the event was opened by Hans Ellegren, Secretary General of the Academy, who highlighted the Anthropocene's unique challenges and the timeliness of the Laboratory's vision of a revitalised biosphere. Introducing the institute as a meeting place for intense interdisciplinary collaboration, Henrik Österblom, Director of the Anthropocene Laboratory, presented the Lab as a hub for respectful dialogue, exploring creative approaches to integrate perspectives from the natural and social sciences, humanities, arts, and other fields of knowledge. A series of presentations of ongoing projects and research then led to a round of comments and reflections, with attendees expressing warm congratulations and desires to collaborate. Funded by the Marianne and Marcus Wallenberg Foundation and the Marcus and Amalia Wallenberg Foundation, the Lab aims to drive groundbreaking research to address global challenges, catalysing positive change and helping to meet the increasing demand for science-based knowledge to facilitate pathways towards sustainability.





“The Empirics of Hope” is one of two main topics with which the lab has engaged since last fall. A first workshop on the topic was hosted in November, gathering 24 scientists from 14 institutions worldwide. This workshop was followed by a public seminar (November 9, 2023) with participants from the meeting, and internationally acclaimed author Rebecca Solnit, participating online.

HOPE - WORK IN PROGRESS

Three months after these activities in Stockholm, the Hope team continues to brew and solidify ideas for the journey ahead. We briefly presented the topic during the inauguration and many people in the audience were excited for what we are doing as a group.





Kicking off: the Intertwined Biosphere theme

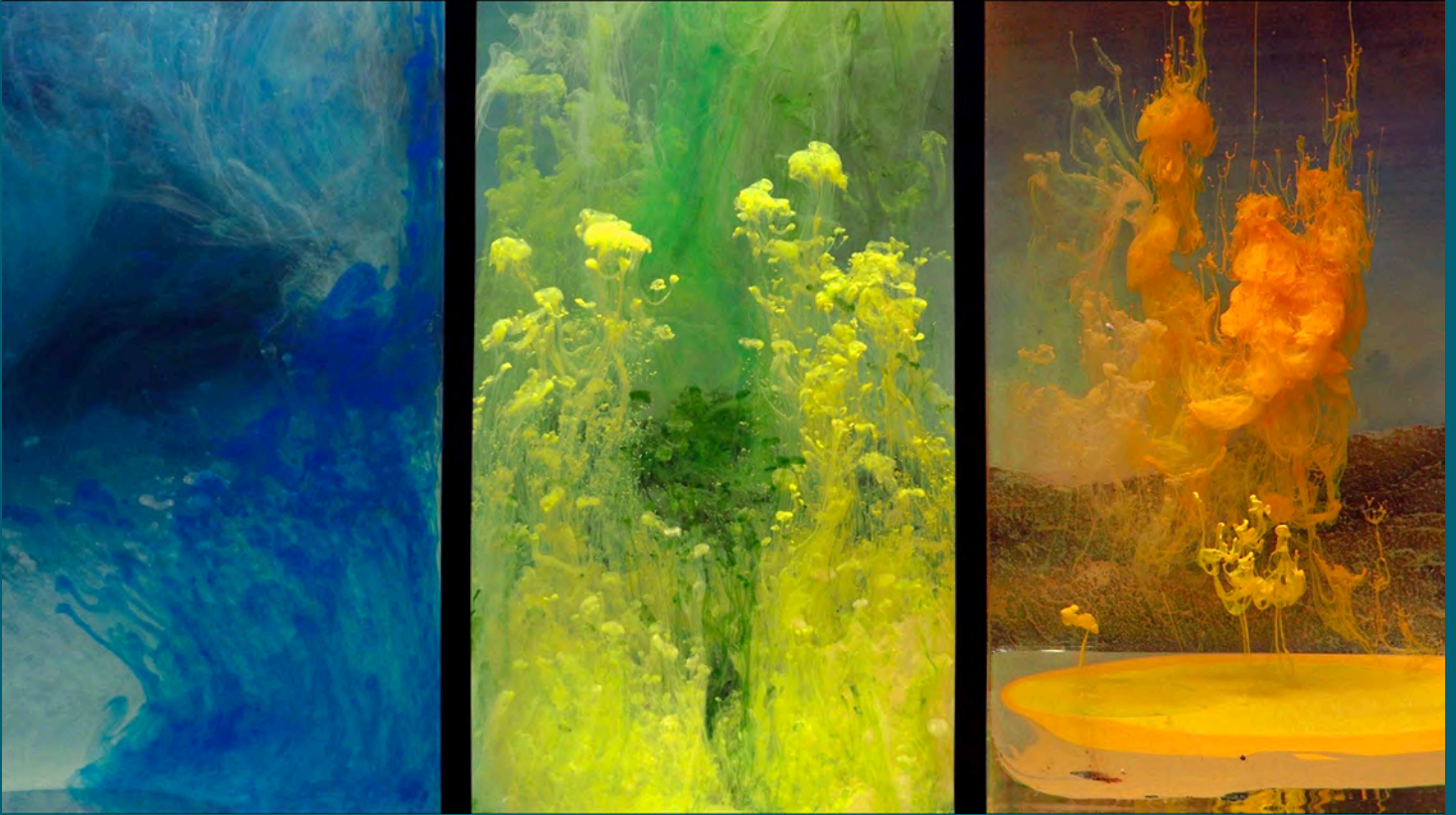
The other major theme at the lab revolves around “The Intertwined Biosphere”. How can we bridge an understanding of this topic across divides between scientific disciplines? How can we gain a better sense of life? And how can we better conceptualise humanity as part of the Earth System? These are some of the questions posted during an internal workshop for kicking-off the ‘Intertwined Biosphere’ topic this February.

During this 3-day workshop, the Anthropocene Lab team, together with 5 collaborators started developing a conceptual framework and research avenues for foregrounding humanity’s embeddedness in the biosphere.

As such, we laid down the foundation for the ‘Intertwined Biosphere’ project in which we aim to investigate how human life is intertwined and embedded within the biosphere. In the upcoming months, the Anthropocene Laboratory team is going to further develop this conceptual framework of the intertwined biosphere and work towards our next workshop in May.



COLLABORATION WITH ESTABLISHED ARTISTS



'TRAJECTORIES', STILL IMAGE FROM VIDEO PERFORMANCE BY TONE BJORDAM AND MARTEN SCHEFFER, 2023

The Anthropocene Laboratory strives to work across scientific disciplines and in collaboration between science and art. We are happy to have partnered with Tone Bjordam and Goldin + Senneby as a first step to engage with the arts and artists.

Goldin+Senneby

A Stockholm-based artist-duo Goldin+Senneby has over the years focused on inhabiting contemporary abstractions, from virtual worlds to offshore jurisdictions to financial algorithms. They will exhibit their work in collaboration with the A-Lab in 2025 at Accelerator.

Tone Bjordam

Norwegian artist Tone Bjordam works on transformation in nature, changes in society and in the human mind: geological, climatic and biological processes are central aspects of her artistic practice. She has recently provided film material to the film "Poor things" which won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival and also being Oscar nominated (<https://www.tonebjordam.com/>). For two years from February 2024, Tone leases her video and still images that are relevant to A-Lab. You will find her materials in our website soon.

Featured Publications

The journal *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* is publishing a special issue titled 'Bringing Nature into Decision-Making', on April 22, 2024, guest edited by Yadvinder Malhi, Gretchen Daily, Ian Bateman, Rosina Bierbaum, Sandra Díaz, Carl Folke, Steve Polasky and Kathy Willis. Members of the Anthropocene Laboratory are contributing to two articles in the special issue:

- Bebbington J, Blasiak R, Larrinaga C, Russell S, Sobkowiak M, Jouffray J-B, Österblom H (in press) Shaping Nature Outcomes in Company Settings. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*.
- Anderies J, Folke C (in press) Connecting human behaviour, meaning, and nature, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*.

In addition, this short Correspondence was published in *Nature* on February 13:

- Amon DJ, McCauley DJ, Blasiak R, Österblom H. (2024) Replace Norway as co-chair of High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy. *Nature*. 626: 480. DOI: 10.1038/d41586-024-00403-2.

Please contact us if you are unable to obtain access to any of these materials.

WELCOMING VISITING RESEARCHERS



Francisco Gelvez-Gomez, an Environmental Geographer from the School of Geography, Planning, and Spatial Sciences at the University of Tasmania has been working with us until June. His research interests lie at the natural and social sciences interface, and much of his work is focused on critical aspects of biodiversity conservation, the production of knowledge about the environment, and how this knowledge is shaped by and influences the world we live in.



Oscar Hartman Davies, an environmental and cultural geographer affiliated with the School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford, and the KTH Division of History of Science, Technology and Environment will be working with us until June. His research considers the environmental governance implications of digital sensing technologies. He also advises nature recovery organisations in the UK and Europe on participatory governance processes.

WEBSITE RENEWED anthropocenelab.se

Our new website was launched in late January. Now you can find more detailed information on our research projects, partners, scientific committee members and staff members. More exciting contents such as Tone's beautiful artworks will be introduced soon. Stay tuned!



'Sea Allegory', video installation, Tone Bjordam, 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS

Intertwined Biosphere workshop will take place from May 21 to 23rd.

Please contact the editor for questions and comments: kayoko.kumasaka@kva.se

Vision

A revitalised anthropocene biosphere

Mission

To advance understandings of the intertwined biosphere, and to leverage this knowledge to identify and enable novel pathways towards a sustainable and just future. Through respectful dialogue and interdisciplinary collaboration, we explore creative approaches that integrate perspectives from the natural and social sciences, humanities, arts, and other fields of knowledge. Our aim is to catalyse positive change and inspire a future where our relationships with the living planet are revitalised.

The Anthropocene Laboratory

Funders

The Anthropocene Laboratory is generously funded by two Swedish foundations, the Marianne and Marcus Wallenberg Foundation and the Marcus and Amalia Wallenberg Foundation.

Partners

The Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics and the Global Economic Dynamics and the Biosphere Academy Program (GEDB), both at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, and the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC) of Stockholm University, have been instrumental in forming and developing the international frontier of science for sustainability. These organisations are critical assets for the Anthropocene Laboratory and have decades of experience in performing scientific work that combines skills and competencies across disciplines as well as science for change. These are the home institutions for the Anthropocene Laboratory mentors.

We are also partnering with Accelerator, an exhibition space where art, science and societal issues meet. It is part of Stockholm University. The mission of Accelerator is to engage actively with society, producing exhibitions presenting international and Swedish contemporary art.