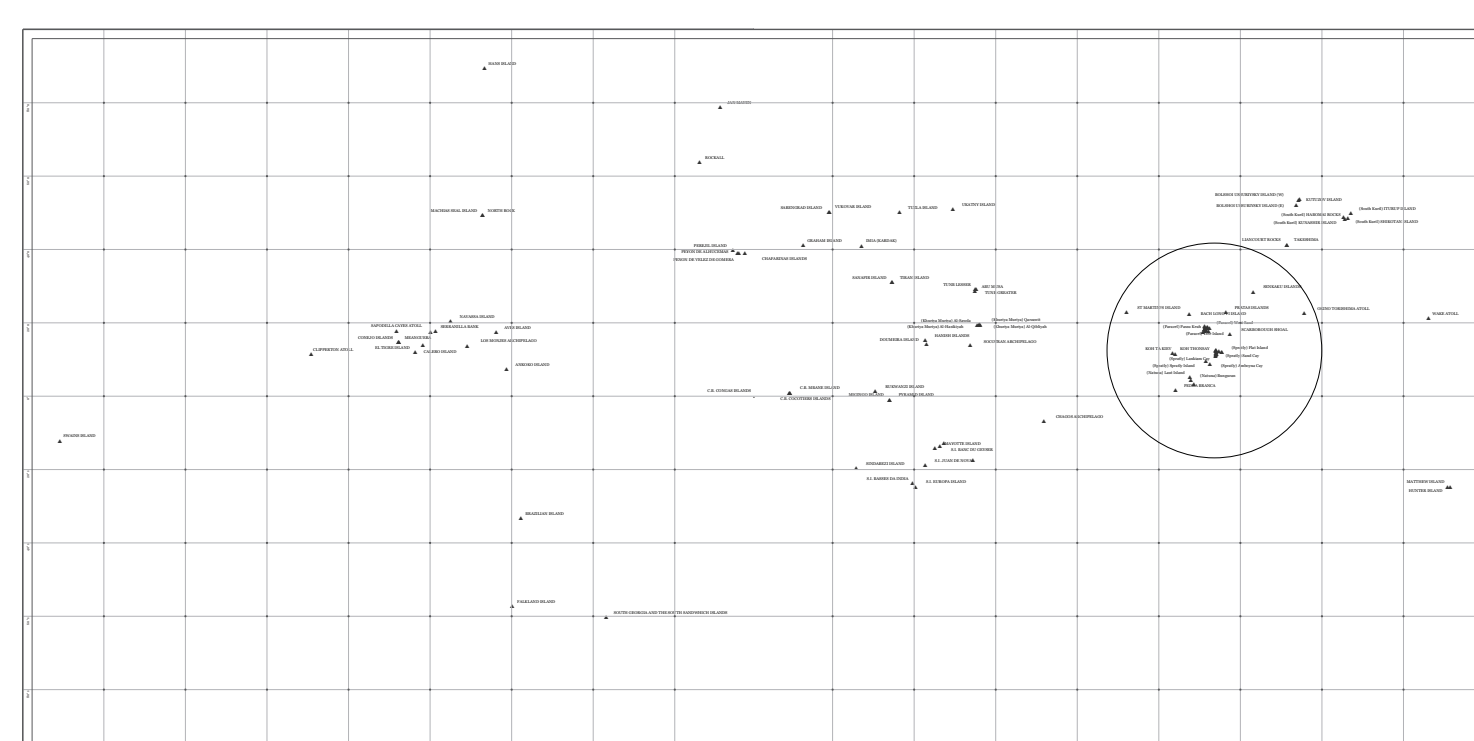


\*All drawings, maps, and data sets, were generated from a single Digital Elevation Model.

### Global Disputed Islands



### Territory, Survey, Cartography – South China Sea\*

The South China Sea is a rapidly changing environment, one that can be perceived as a manufactured landscape. It has, over the last decade, witnessed an intensification of human activity resulting in an overexploitation of resources and growing extra-territorial claims for sovereignty where the intricacies of deep-sea microbiology and geology resonate at a geopolitical scale.

Cartography is used as a medium to depict specific geographical forms, information, and complex data, providing a reading of a continuously changing reality. In this context, a trans-boundary landscape analysis is proposed to evaluate the shifting relationship between the reshaping of international, or supranational, influence on the region and forms of the inhabited territories.

As a resource, territory opens the possibility for different methods of exploitation. Like nature, space gradually loses part of its former dimension to misconceptions and surface evaluations to become measurable, quantifiable and exploitable. Territory is, from the start, inseparable from practices such as survey and cartography, that are meant to provide a panoramic overview of resources.

Is there a degree of control that allows both territorial forces, landform dynamism, and human activity to coexist? Can approaches to territory with constantly changing landscapes be based on conventional rules of borders? This proposal intends to question representation and the role of traditional cartography as a medium of expression of a reality. It advances possible guidelines which, from the scale of the sea, one can engage the ordinary to deal with the consistent challenges maritime features are passively suffering. Thus, it projects an objective understanding of the maritime political tensions of the South China Sea and describes the geomorphological and physical actions taking place in this highly disputed region, to in turn present a comprehensive view on the problematic.

### Select SCS Disputed Islands

