Anticipation, Automation, and Accumulation: Smart Earth Technologies in Environmental Governance
American Association of Geographers annual meeting 2023, Denver, CO USA
Format: We are planning for both in-person and virtual sessions

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The embrace of Smart Earth technologies to gather, analyze, and distribute real time information about nature, people, and markets is reconfiguring environments and environmental governance (Bakker and Ritts 2018). Technologies such as artificial intelligence, satellite imagery, mobile applications, and blockchain - combined with financial technologies (fintech) - make it possible to digitize and commodify nature in new ways. In turn, this sets the scene for redesigned or newly proposed markets and focuses attention on new objects of governance. Thecompulsion is to move rapidly towards sophisticated forms of accounting, prediction, and automation in environmental governance and decision-making. However, this raises critical questions about the players involved, whose knowledge counts and who/what governs, how, and for whom (Adams 2019, Bakker and Ritts 2018). There is a need for political ecology analyses of the everyday practices of utilizing and maintaining data infrastructures and their socionatural materiality (Nost and Goldstein 2021). Papers in these sessions will critically examine the historical, ecological, political, and economic contexts in which specific Smart Earth technologies and practices are embedded; how techniques of automation and accounting are brought into being; the ways they reconfigure nature around data production (Gabrys 2021); the crises from which they stem and their internal contradictions; how they are governed and for whom; what forms of knowledge they privilege; and how they foster the impulse to predict and open new realms for capital accumulation.

We invite those interested in participating to complete this form by October 31st. Please also be sure to indicate your interest in either the in-person or virtual session. We will respond ahead of the AAG's abstract submission deadline of November 10th. For more information, see: https://www.aag.org/events/aag2023/