

**NIKOS  
KATSIKIS**  
*Geographies of  
Ecological Surplus*

in conversation with

Christian Schmid  
and Ilmar  
Hurkxkens



Cities and the positive externalities of agglomeration, have been widely recognized as generators of value. The latest UN Habitat stresses that agglomeration zones, although covering no more than 3% of the earth's surface, contribute more than 70% of global GDP. But the concentration of population and economic activities in a minor percentage of the planetary terrain, is directly interconnected, through a wide set of metabolic interdependencies, with the bio-geographical organization of the "other" 70% of the total land surface utilized. These extensive and often specialized "operational landscapes" of primary production (agriculture, mining, forestry), circulation and waste disposal, constitute the material basis of planetary urbanization. This contribution aims to unpack the spatial configurations of human and extra-human (natural, or technical) work, through which operational landscapes become active agents in urbanization processes, revealing urbanization as condition of constant geographical re-organization of social and ecological value.