• Paper / Proposal Title:
WaterLand: designing in the threshold between land and water.

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• Abstract (300 words):
Living on water shorelines has been part of the origin and evolution of civilisations and cities. However, fear of water is just as deeply ingrained and intercultural as our need and love of water. The unpredictable river and ocean environments, governed by astrological cycles of floods and drought, have been domesticated along history, with a significant impact on ecosystems. As a result, delta cities and estuaries are dramatically exposed to the unpredictable dynamics of climate change, amplified without the natural protection inherent to water ecosystems, threatening inhabitation.

The paper is presenting the methodology of research and design developed in Design Studio 6 at the School of Architecture at the University of Newcastle (Australia). The studio is structured into three phases and operates as an integrated research studio that does not separate the study of site and forces interacting from the act of designing, thus erasing the limits between analysis and design phases. In phase one, students work both on-site and off-site, to collaboratively compile data articulated through a speculative cartography of past and present conditions and future predictions, together with the definition of the brief and a site. Phases two and three, involve the design and consolidation of students' ideas acquired from the previous stage. The proposed project is an outcome of research based on its environmental, social, economic and sustainable conditions for a new urban and architectonic scenario for Newcastle 2050-2100: a city archipelago and an amphibious architecture. A number of questions open new
scenarios for design: What are the new landscapes and architecture for a submerged city or an archipelago city? What are the operations that navigate a new urban scenario? What are the strategies for an amphibious Architecture? How can we use water more creatively in building design? How to fix, flood or float the projects?

KEYWORDS: design studio; methodology; design with water; speculative cartography; delta cities.

- Author(s) Biography (200 words each):
Irene Perez Lopez is a Doctor in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Madrid's School of Architecture. Her research interest is the based on the understanding of Architecture as the construction of the common, the Social Space. Her dissertation explores architectures in the limit between scales and disciplines through the Construction of a Theory of Bigness. Currently Dr Perez Lopez is exploring the implications of inhabiting the threshold between land and water, proposing methods and approaches to design and life with water as an instrument to re-thinking the design of the city.
Dr Perez Lopez ran her own architecture, urban, and landscape design practice, completing design, competition, and consulting services on an international domain since 2005. She led TerritorioMayor, the Centre for Urban Studies at Mayor University of Chile, and is President and co-founder of the Pan-American Observatory of Landscape, Territory and Architecture OPPTA - a non-profit international organisation focused on the protection, restoration, recovery and reconstruction of urban and rural environments impacted by the effects of human-caused environmental pressures and Climate Change.
Dr Perez Lopez is Senior Lecturer at the School of Architecture and Built Environment at the University of Newcastle (Australia) and has previously taught at the Bio Bio University, Mayor University of Chile, Salamanca University, and the School of Architecture at the Polytechnic University of Madrid ETSAM-UPM.