

SITUATING SANDS IN SINGAPORE



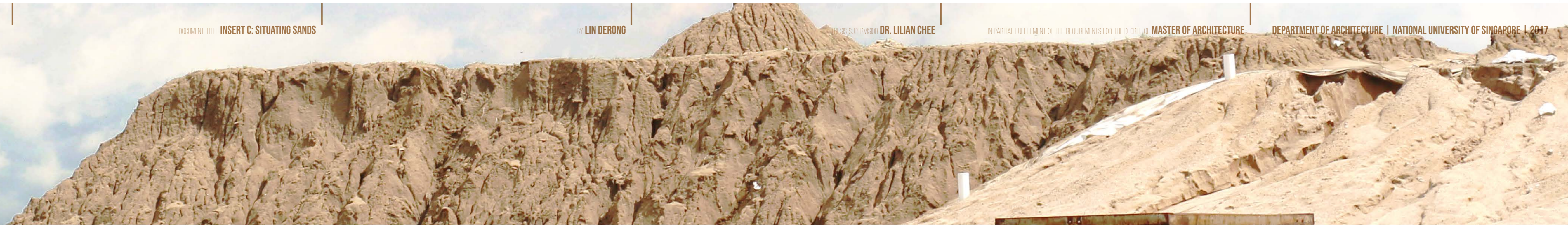
DOCUMENT TITLE INSERT C: SITUATING SANDS

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE | NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE | 2017



SITUATING SANDS IN SINGAPORE

As an island state without hinterland and natural resources, Singapore stockpiles emergency inventories of imported sand in response to the rising and diminishing economic demands and international geopolitics. Enormous sand dunes and desert-like landscapes emerge strategically around Singapore to uphold national security, albeit our unsustainable appetite has been heavily criticised internationally. Although the immense scale at which sand is circulated is made discreet, these stockpiles cannot be hidden from the public eye. Given that most of our encounters with sand are either associated with the beach or with a playground, the massiveness of the dunes is unfathomable for the average Singaporean such that the socio-political and economic significance of sand cannot be grasped easily.

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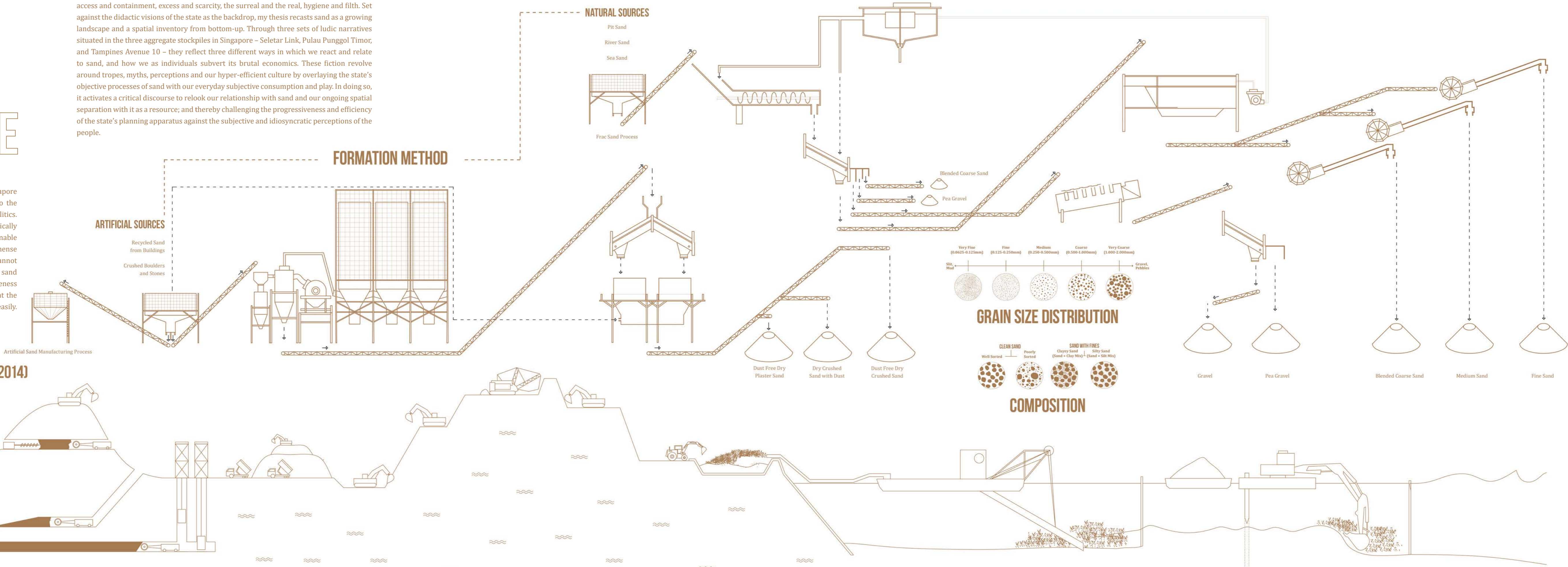
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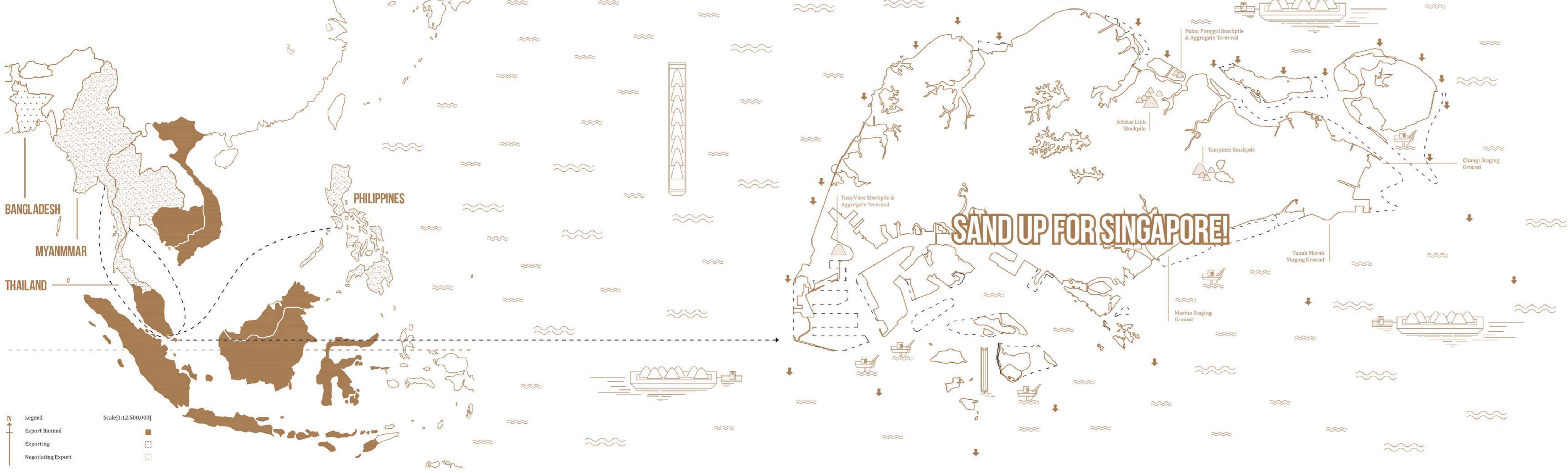
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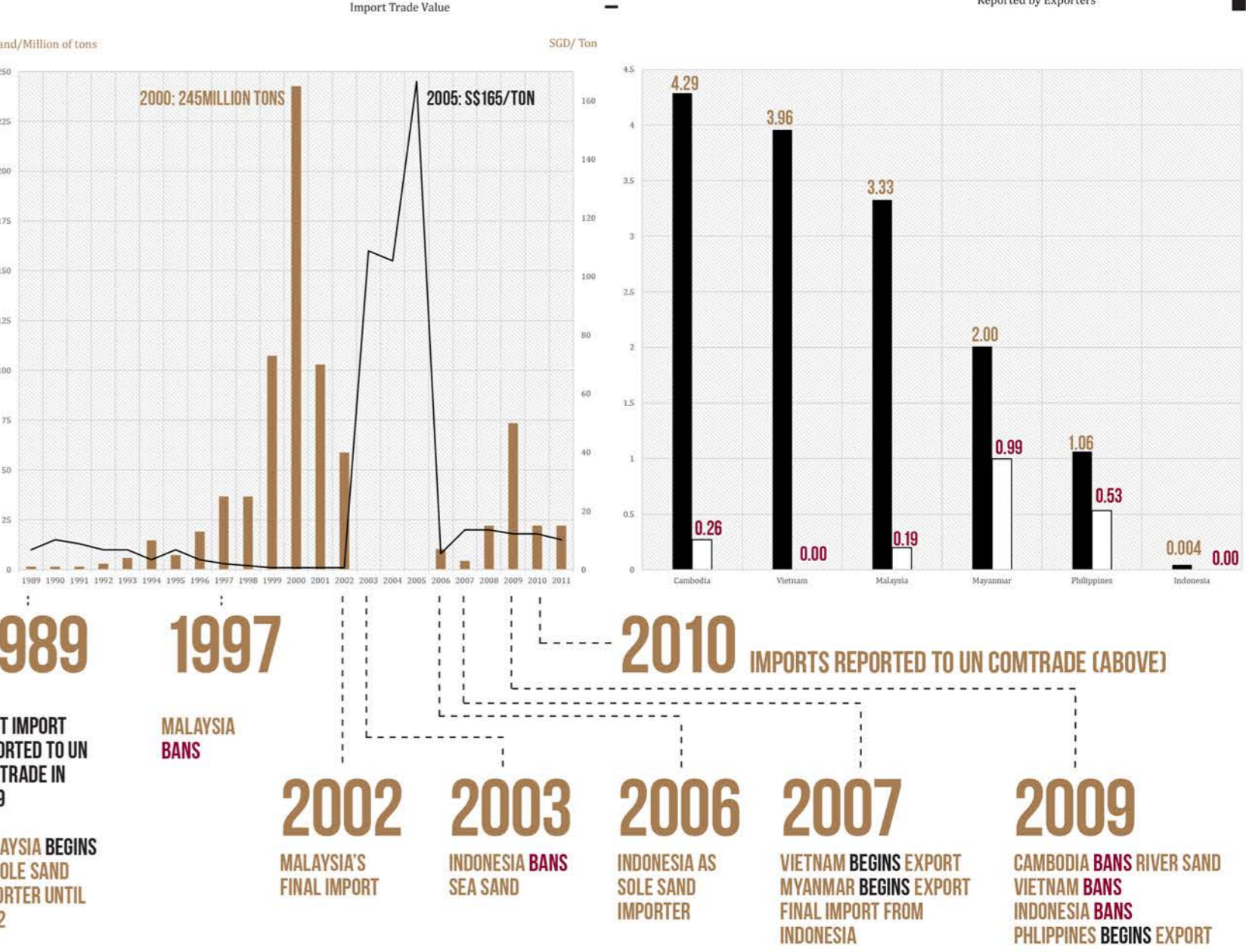
Juxtaposing against the state narrative of sand as a national aggregate, my thesis takes an interest in the rich human context of sand – one that is tactile and emotive. It seeks to unravel sand as a commodity that oscillates between matter and material, common-folk and state, access and containment, excess and scarcity, the surreal and the real, hygiene and filth. Set against the didactic visions of the state as the backdrop, my thesis recasts sand as a growing landscape and a spatial inventory from bottom-up. Through three sets of ludic narratives situated in the three aggregate stockpiles in Singapore – Seletar Link, Pulau Punggol Timor, and Tampines Avenue 10 – they reflect three different ways in which we react and relate to sand, and how we as individuals subvert its brutal economics. These fiction revolve around tropes, myths, perceptions and our hyper-efficient culture by overlaying the state's objective processes of sand with our everyday subjective consumption and play. In doing so, it activates a critical discourse to relook our relationship with sand and our ongoing spatial separation with it as a resource; and thereby challenging the progressiveness and efficiency of the state's planning apparatus against the subjective and idiosyncratic perceptions of the people.



SINGAPORE COLLECTING SAND



SINGAPORE'S SAND IMPORTS SINCE 1989

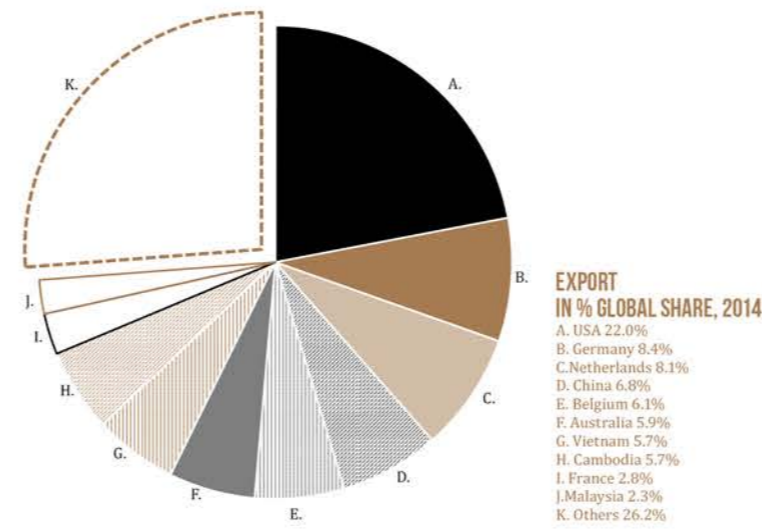


GLOBAL TOP 10 PRODUCERS IN MILLIONS OF TONS

1. CHINA 2500
2. INDIA 300
3. USA 170
4. TURKEY 155
5. BRAZIL 150
6. RUSSIA 140
7. IRAN 130
8. VIETNAM 120
9. SOUTH KOREA 110
10. INDONESIA 100

GLOBAL TOP 10 EXPORTERS IN MILLIONS OF USD

1. USA 460
2. GERMANY 160
3. CHINA 150
4. AUSTRALIA 130
4. BELGIUM 130
4. NETHERLANDS 130
7. VIETNAM 120
7. CAMBODIA 120
9. FRANCE 68
10. MALAYSIA 57



GLOBAL TOP 10 IMPORTERS IN MILLIONS OF USD

1. SINGAPORE 300
2. BELGIUM 220
2. CANADA 220
4. NETHERLANDS 120
6. JAPAN 120
6. GERMANY 100
7. CHINA 80
8. USA 60
9. FRANCE 55
10. ITALY 85

