

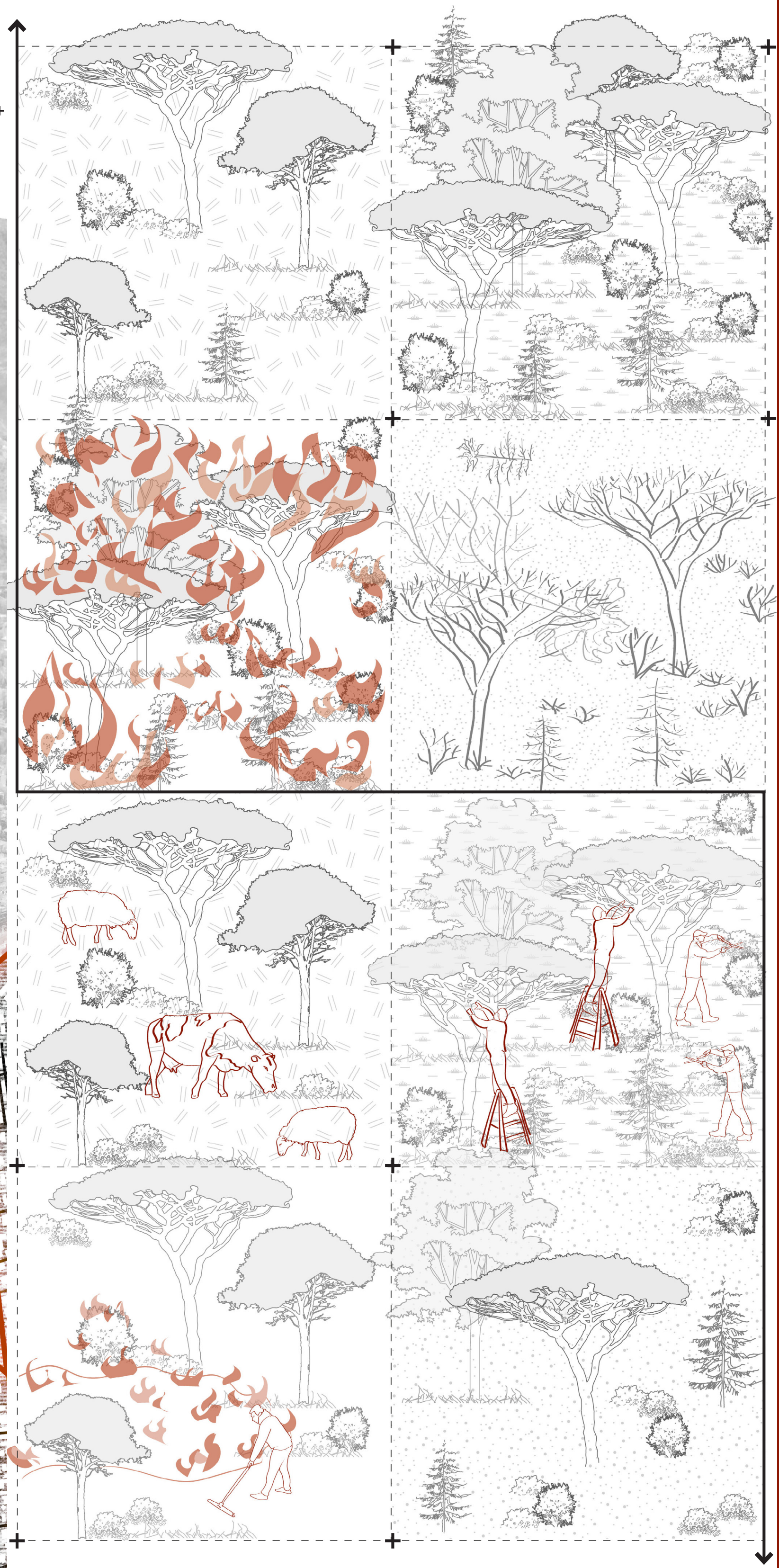
Oikos of the Pyrocene

Ecology / Economy in the Age of Megafires

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FROM WILDFIRE TO PYRODIVERSITY



ABSTRACT

In the past 50 years, severe wildfires have devastated the landscape of Mount Ymittos, posing a threat to the municipalities of Athens that form its boundary. The flames consume its vegetation as well as change the chemistry of its rocky terrain. Soil erosion, debris and floods impact the city due to its scarred condition. **However, in an increasingly warming world, fire should be seen as an ally instead of an enemy.** Contemporary academia challenges our understanding of fire-prone habitats and turns to indigenous fire regimes to draw a new paradigm of coexistence. This study focuses on shaping a pyro-symbiotic future for Central Ymittos by creating a landscape mosaic that is cultivated by fire rotationally, enhancing the habitat's biodiversity as it allows vegetation to flourish and reproduce.

FINDINGS

Mount Ymittos' landscape penetrates the public realm, adapting to the needs of surrounding land use, and inviting people to an everyday escape. **Stewardship of the land is given to local social groups that provide educational and environmental services, in order to develop an innovative paradigm of forestry maintenance.** This pyro-symbiotic landscape requires a new paradigm of coordination between stakeholders. Decision-making should happen as a bottom-up process, where local social groups are in charge of important responsibilities. The state should support and coordinate these, while the inhabitants of the periphery should be adequately informed regarding the ongoing processes. Social hubs are created on the Mount and hold responsibility to use and maintain the landscape, as well as benefit from it. Managed burning practices is their jurisdiction, along with visitor activities, product collection and service exchange.

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