

INTRODUCTION AND SITE

The site for this design sits at the interface between the Port of Le Havre and the Natural Reserve of the Seine Estuary. It encompasses several landscape typologies; from industry to agriculture to wetland. At an initial glance it is a landscape of much contrast and conflict; the boundaries of the afore mentioned typologies are currently incredibly harsh, and with the current sector of industry looking to expand further, it could seem that nature is fighting a losing battle with man. However, through experiencing the landscape it is clear that the relationship between these two entities is far more complex.

WHAT IS NATURE?

Before looking to work with the relationship between man and nature, the question of what is nature must be answered. The definition of this nature used for this design is as follows:

- Nature is not something we can define as it is not an object or a thing that can be pinned down
- Man is a part of nature- if we step back and disassociate ourselves with it, it is easy to forget our impact on it
- If we decide to 'protect' nature, we are picking and choosing what part of nature to protect; we are putting things in a box and labelling it 'nature', like in a museum. However, this diminishes its existence as a changing and evolving system, and it is not something we can have control of or power over.
- Nature is messy- there is death and destruction, as well as birth and life

AVOID
PROSPECT

REDUCE
SUPPORT

COMPENSATE
SYNERGISE

Current European policy states that if the expansion of industry involves moving into ecological sites, then the rule of Avoid, Reduce, Compensate must be followed. The result of this is that if industry damages ecological land, then they must compensate the authority either in land or in money. However, this entirely separates man from nature; and the mindset must be changed if we are to exist within one system. Instead, this design proposes a new system of Prospect, Support, Synergise.

PROSPECT

- Looks at what the landscape was in the past, what it is today and what it could be in the future
- What would happen to the landscape if we do not intervene at all? Should flood prevention schemes be built, or instead should man adapt to the inevitable and natural change in water levels
- How do we adapt our mindset to work as a part of nature as a greater system?

SUPPORT

- Using the word support, rather than protect accepts responsibility of us as a part of the greater system of nature. It is not something that we can box away and guard, but instead we need to work from within to establish how we can co-exist
- We must design AS nature, rather than for or against it

SYNERGISE

- 1+1=3; combining forces to create something new and mutually beneficial
- Nature and man working as one to meet their needs, making progress together

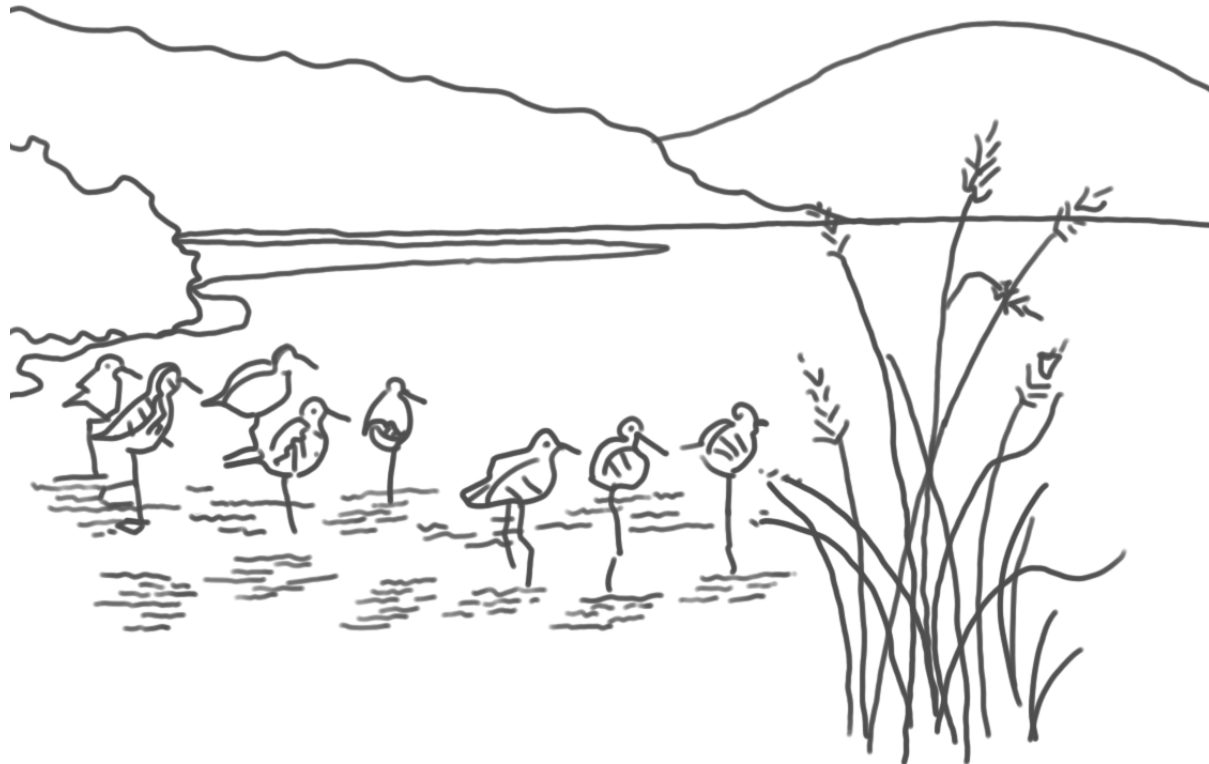
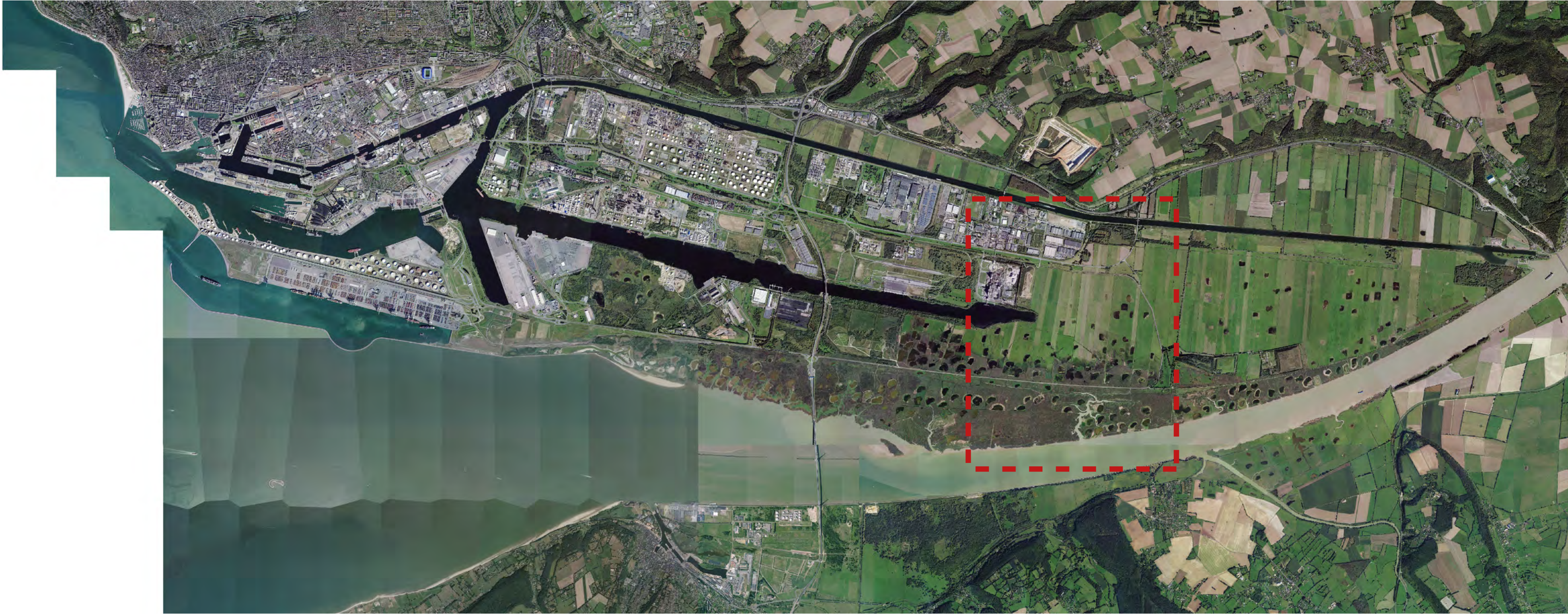
SYNERGY

When considering the clients of the site, the design considers the relationship between the different ecosystems present on the site, and how each of these in turn relate to the landscape.

Ecosystems were analysed with the question of what they provide to the landscape, and what they need in return.

Upon analysis of these ecosystems, the synergy between all of the elements is evident. When problems are created by one system, they are solved by another. For example, wetlands form a natural source of flood protection to benefit the urban areas, which in turn provide management to allow these wetlands to continue to flourish

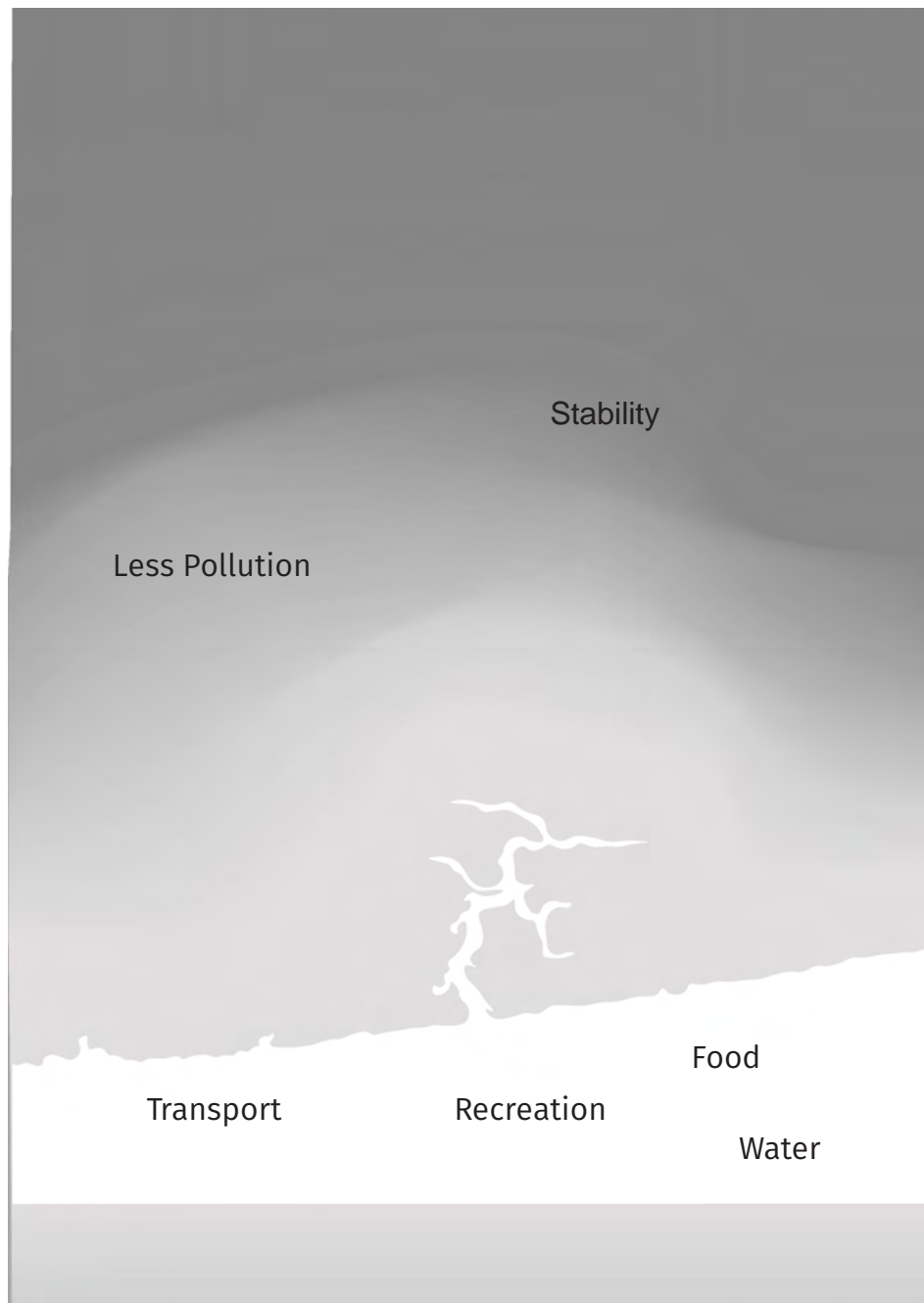
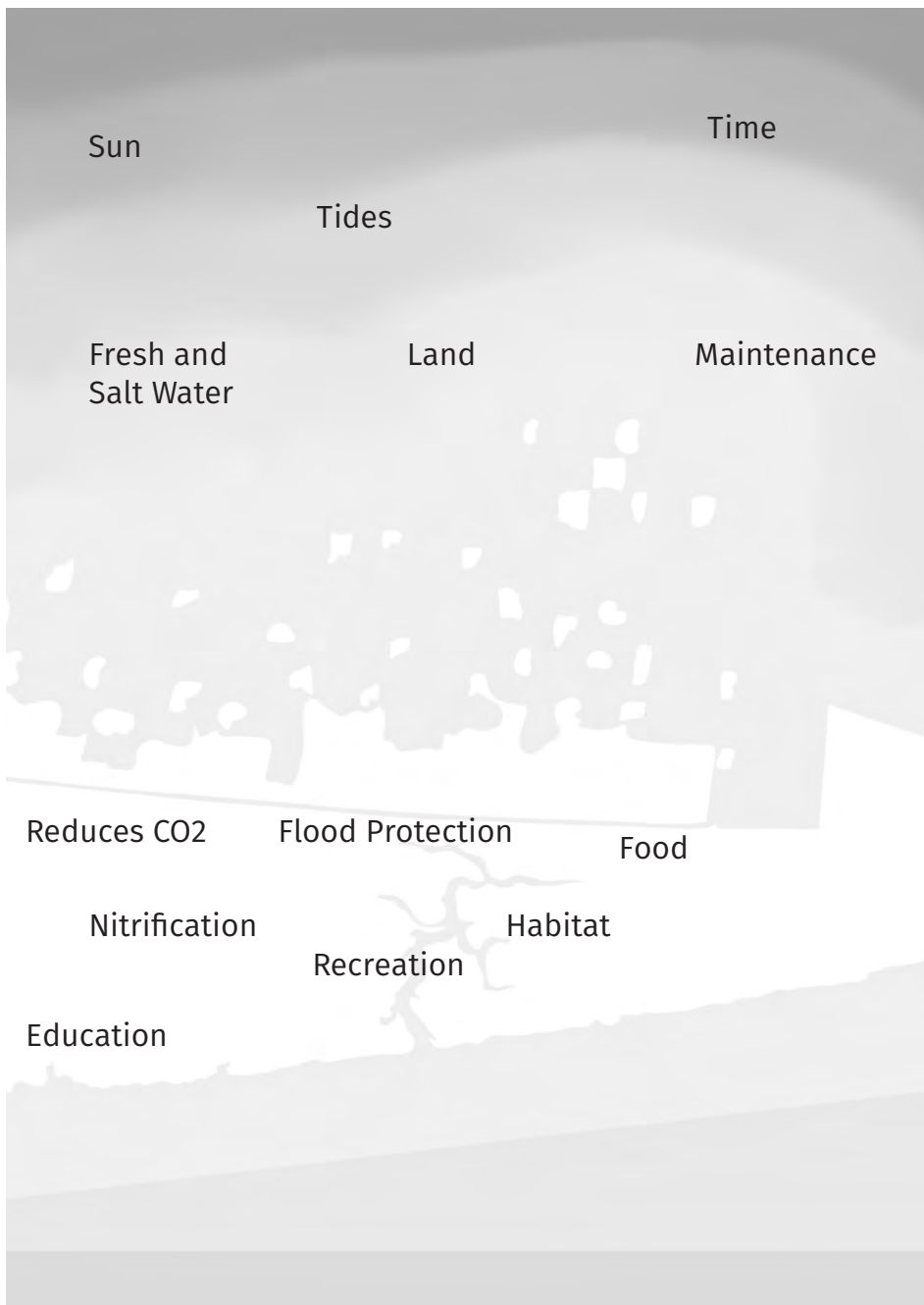
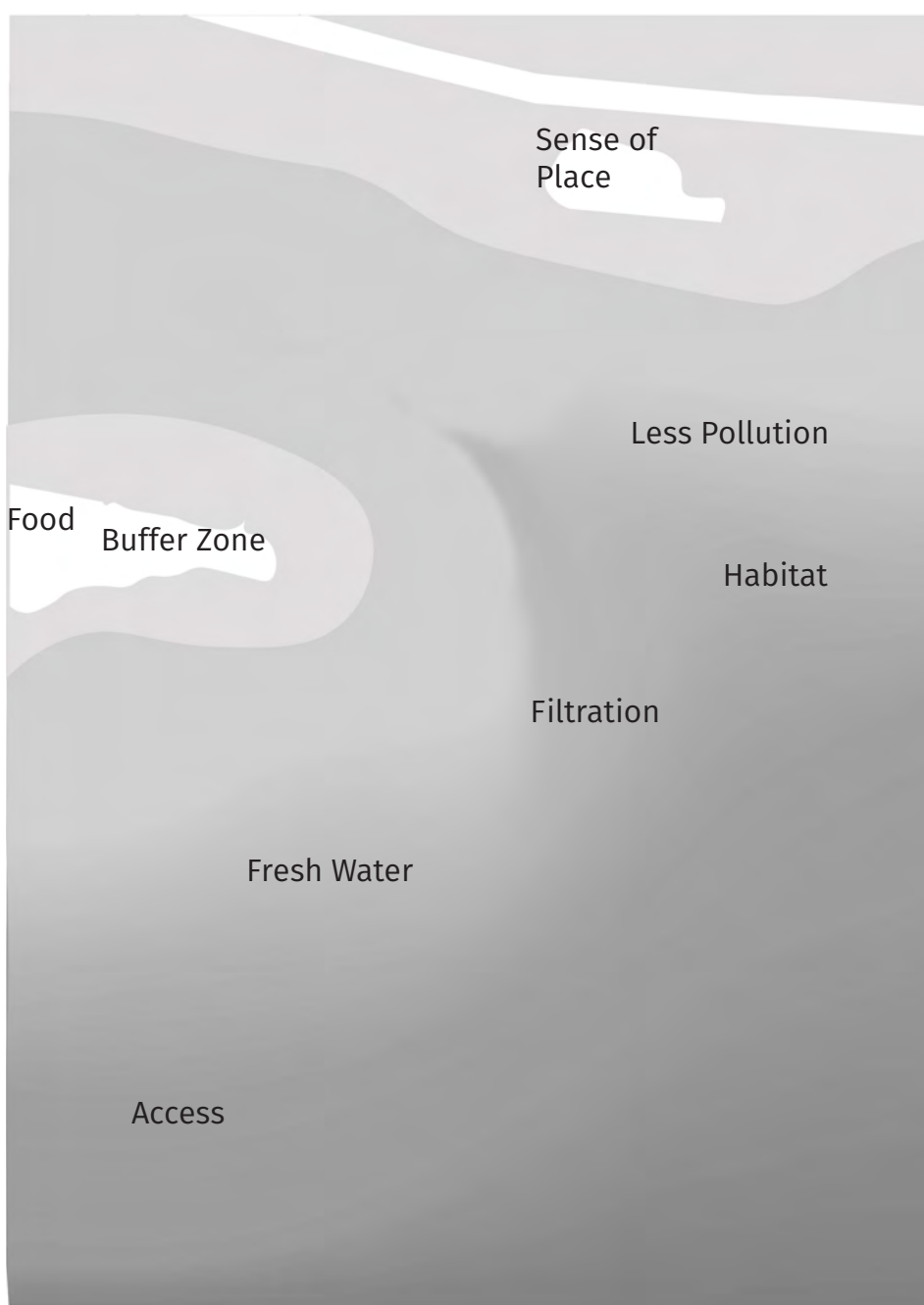
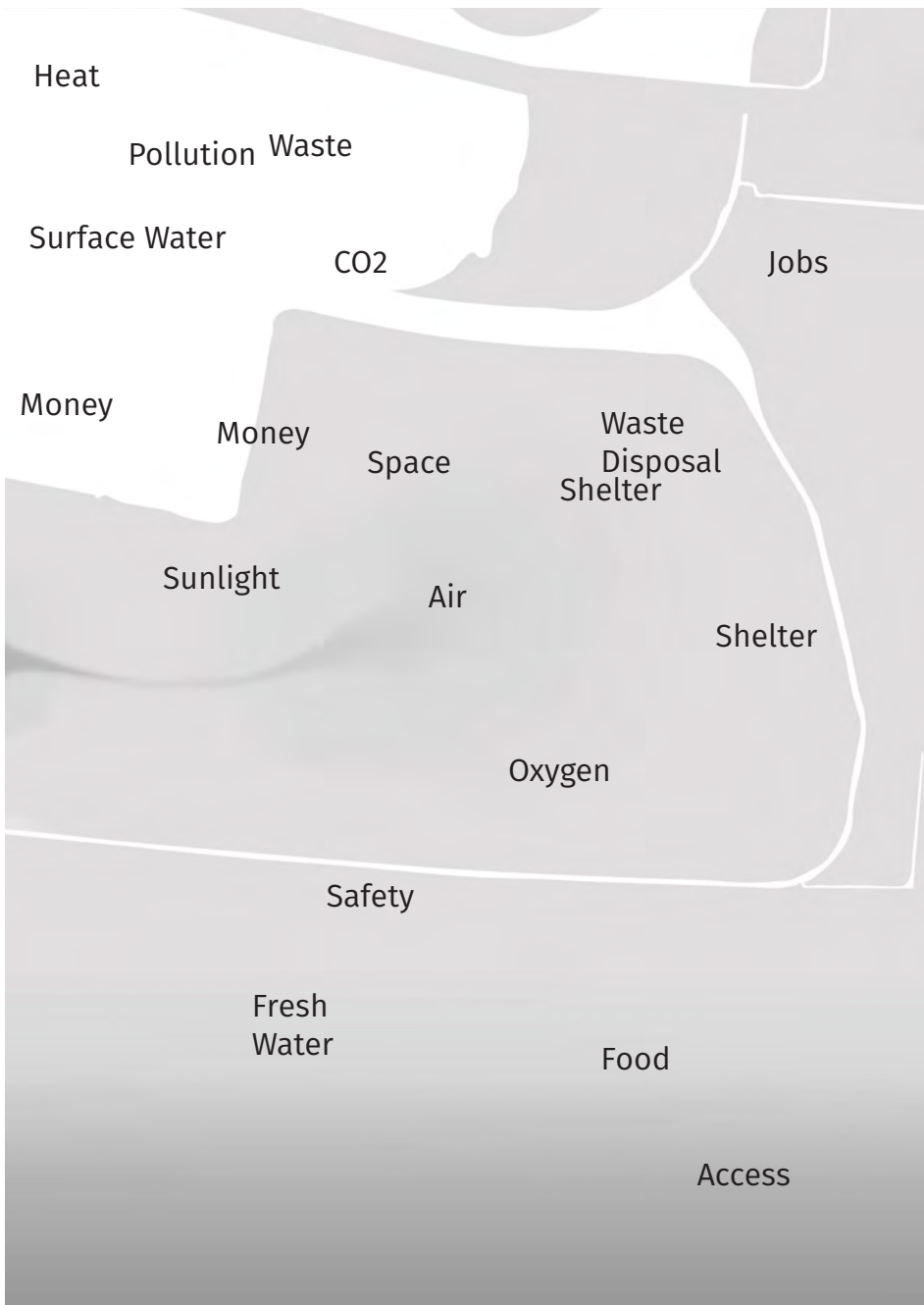
PROSPECT, SUPPORT, SYNERGISE



Sketches exploring the possibilities of nature



On site exploration of elements, the creation of synergy



Needs
What it is Providing

PROSPECT, SUPPORT, SYNERGISE



Perspective of the fields flooded
Modern and picturesque picture of the wetlands



A path in between open landscape and industry tracks This path is a witness. A witness of the struggle between “nature” and antropocene. People will walk across a flat and mysterious landscape experience a journey; a new way to discover the story of the relationship between industry and nature; a way to synergise.

