How do economic actors make “sense” of nature? This seminar covers recent work at the intersection of political ecology, political economy, and social studies of markets. We will delve into a wide variety of topics, from farmland investment, to carbon credits, to hydropower for Bitcoin, to the global exotic animal trade. Questions we will interrogate include: How is nature understood and constituted as a resource, and for whom? How are the values of nature and its loss socially and politically determined? How do capitalist practices of calculation, valuation, and standardization attempt to render diverse natures subject to economic exchange, remaking our relationships with one another and the more-than-human world? What makes some attempts more “successful” than others?

Tentative readings include:


