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Mega-infrastructures as *politics of disavowal*:

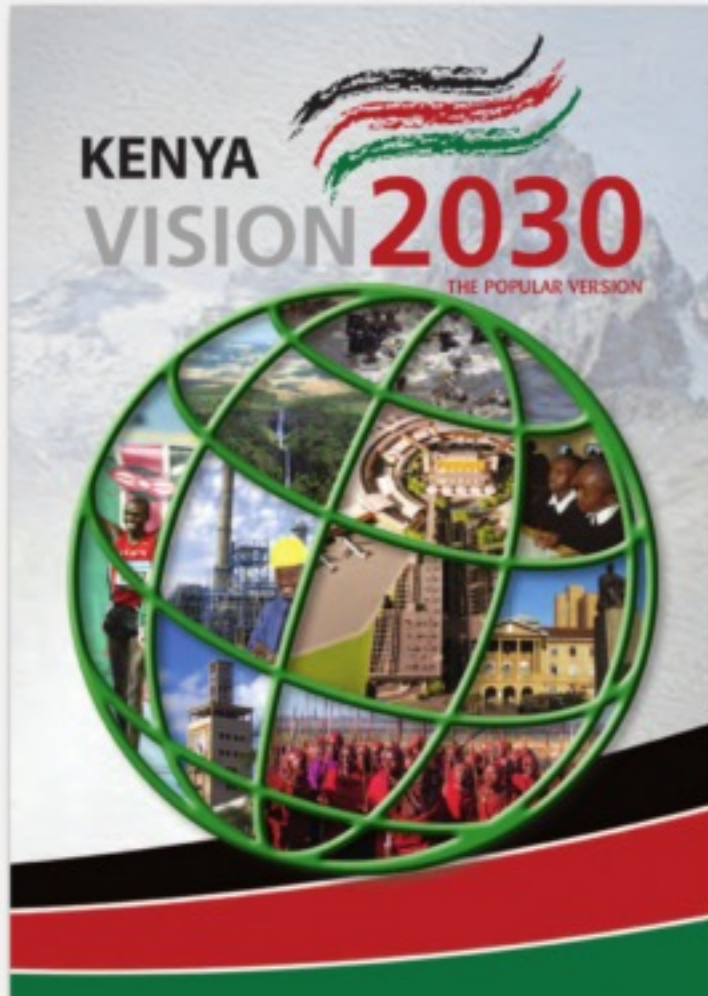
The SGR and LAPSSET in Kenya

Dr Gediminas Lesutis
University of Amsterdam
g.lesutis@uva.nl

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Infrastructure as “development”

Infrastructure as a mode of governance articulates imaginaries of a “better life” that, materially not yet present, are a deferred possibility of the future.



The celebration of the SGR Phase I opening, Mombasa, 31 May 2017 (© TONY KARUMBA/AFP/AFP/Getty Images).

The SGR and its ruinous materialities

Alongside other documented impacts and effects, the SGR disrupts ecologies of social reproduction:

- the new railway disorders people's mobility patterns and their access to essential infrastructures,
- as well as decouples their labour from transport systems and informal road economies central to self-sustainment.

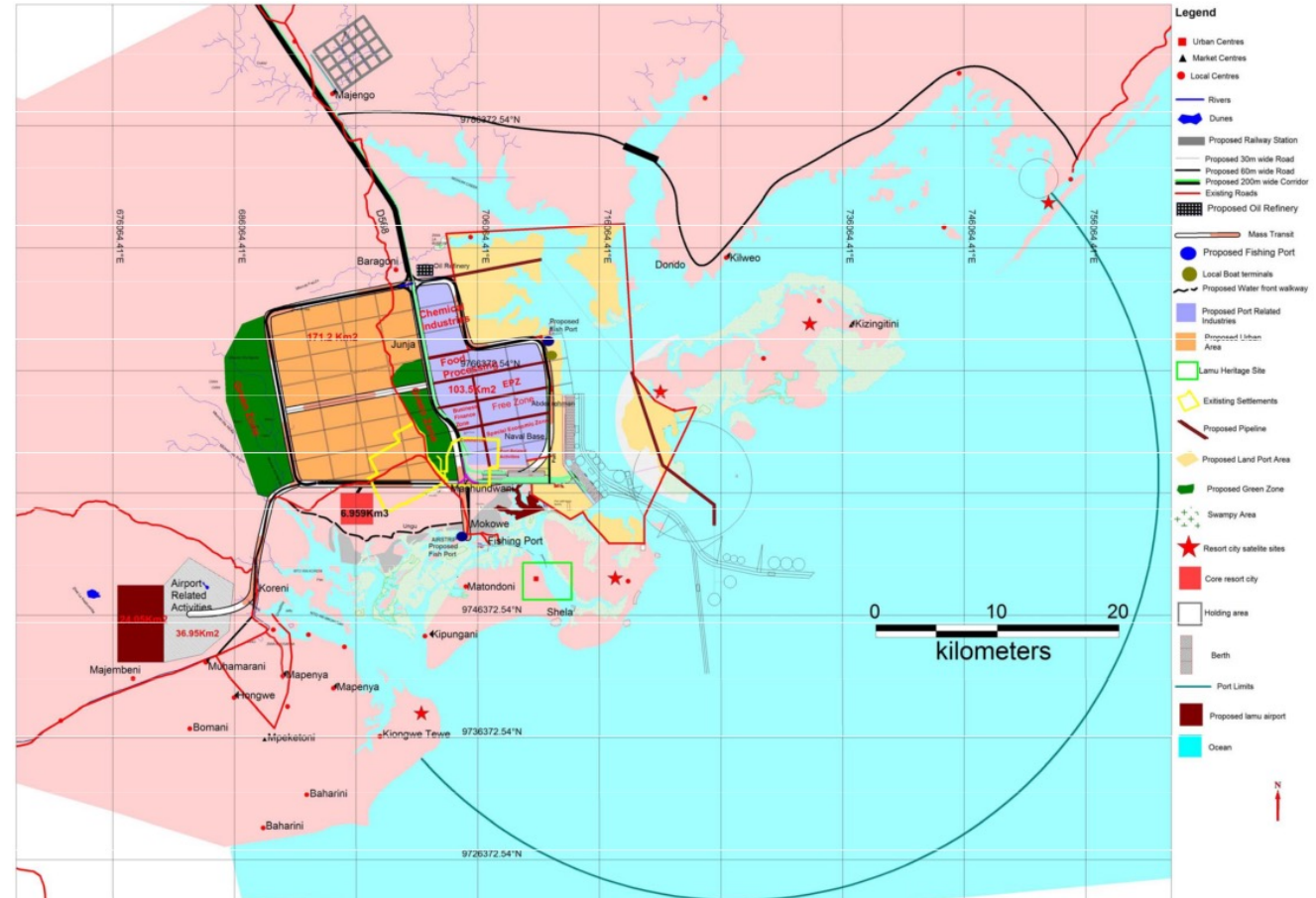


The SGR underpass (© Gediminas Lesutis)

More details: Lesutis, G. (2022) 'Disquieting ambivalence of mega-infrastructure: Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway as spectacle and ruination'. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 40 (5): 941-960.

LAPSSET and Lamu Port

- *Anticipated changes* in natural resource governance and the projected influx of 1 million newcomers to Lamu County.
- *Already felt, real impacts:* Lamu Port, which has displaced local fishermen from their traditional fishing grounds.
- This undermines the already limited possibilities of self-subsistence.



Lamu Port Development PPlan

More details: Lesutis, G. (2022) 'Politics of disavowal: Megaprojects, infrastructural biopolitics, disavowed subjects'. *The Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, early view.

Contesting the injustice of mega-infrastructures



Protests against the SGR directive in Mombasa, November 2019 (© Gediminas Lesutis).



Residents and environmental activists protesting against lack of consultations and government failure to address environmental concerns in respect to LAPSSET in Lamu island, March 1, 2012 (© 2012 Joseph Okanga/ Reuters).

A politics of disavowal

- Mega-infrastructures as a specific form of state violence:
- A tacit denial of state-admitted responsibility and support to vulnerable population groups, which, despite civil society mobilisation and the subsequent formal recognition by the state, renders them effectively absent in the spaces of biopolitics advanced through mega-infrastructures.
- Through *disavowal* as a governance strategy, the marginalised and disavowed subject is enunciated as constitutively absent, materially unaccounted for, and abandoned to endure in the margins of megaprojects.