

**Time Has Come to a Stop: Temporalities of Loss and Resistance
on the West Papuan Plantation Frontier**

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Over the last decade, Indigenous Marind communities in the Indonesian-controlled region of West Papua have seen over one million hectares of their customary lands and forests converted to monocrop oil palm plantations without their free, prior, or informed consent. This pattern of corporate occupation sits within a longer history of settler-colonial incursion in West Papua, premised on the theft of sovereignty over Indigenous bodies, landscapes and self-determined futures. Drawing on long-term ethnographic fieldwork and prior investigative research conducted on the Papuan oil palm frontier, Sophie Chao will explore how Marind communities sense and make sense of the temporal transformations wrought by agroindustrial expansion, as these manifest within and across species lines and as these are shaped by Indigenous modes of historicity. The paper will further examine how Marind's explicit disavowal of hope in the face of monocrop expansion constitutes an act of Indigenous epistemic resistance to the future-oriented, linear temporality of technocapitalist modernity. In doing so, the paper will invite attention to how disempowered communities creatively harness hopelessness to reclaim the very terms of their existence, amidst and against attritive histories of ontological occupation, intergenerational injustice, and multispecies violence.



An Indigenous Marind elder at the outskirts
of an oil palm plantation in Merauke, West Papua

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Dr Sophie Chao is Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) Fellow and Lecturer in the Discipline of Anthropology at the University of Sydney. Her research investigates the intersections of Indigeneity, ecology, capitalism, health, and justice in the Pacific. Chao is author of *In the Shadow of the Palms: More-Than-Human Becomings in West Papua* and co-editor of *The Promise of Multispecies Justice*. She previously worked for the human rights organization Forest Peoples Programme, supporting the rights of forest-dwelling Indigenous peoples to their lands, resources, and livelihoods. Chao is of Sino-French heritage and lives and works on unceded Gadigal lands. For more information, please visit www.morethanhumanworlds.com.



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