Tetrapods #1
Dongying, China, 2016
Edward Burtynsky

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The tetrapods pictured here make use of concrete to address another human-generated problem: climate change. When used for shoreline protection, tetrapod seawalls allow water to flow around them. This disperses the energy of breaking waves that would otherwise crash against a flat wall, eroding the shoreline.

What are two connections you can make between the tetrapods in China and the materials in the gigapixel image?

What are two similar characteristics of the tetrapods in China and the materials in the gigapixel image?

Dam #6
Three Gorges Dam Project, Yangtze River, China, 2005
Edward Burtynsky

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By the 1950s, the construction of large dams in many of the world's largest rivers was causing a decline in the health of many of the world's aquatic ecosystems. Rivers carry nutrient-rich sediments eroded from the soils and rocks they flow over. Dams trap some of this sediment and starve the rivers downstream of their normal nutrient load. Such sediment displacement is considered a global signal of the Anthropocene and is now a dominant warning signal for many coastal environments.

What are two connections you can make between the dam in China and the materials in the gigapixel image?

What are two similar characteristics of the dam in China and the materials in the gigapixel image?

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Densified Oil Drums #4
Hamilton, Ontario 1997
Edward Burtynsky

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Aluminum, the most abundant metal in the Earth's crust, cannot be found in nature in the form we most often see it used. Aluminum as we know it began to be mass-produced in the mid-20th century. From then until the early 21st century, the total production of aluminum metal has been at least 500 million tonnes. It is highly recyclable, making it one of the easier waste products to manage. Considering its light weight and common use in daily life, it is one of the most recognizable global technofossils.

What are two connections you can make between the aluminum pictured above and the materials in the gigapixel image?

What are two similar characteristics of the aluminum pictured above and the materials in the gigapixel image?

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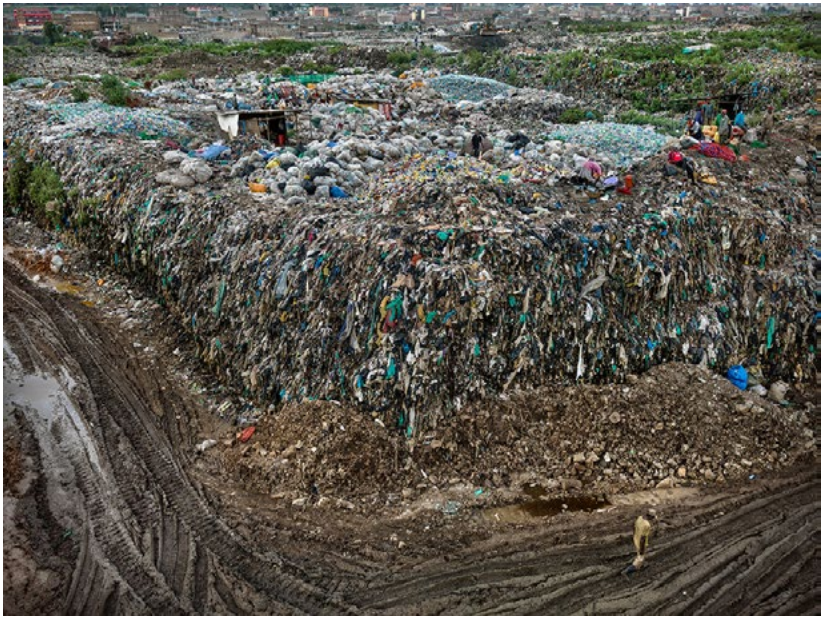

Dandora Landfill #1
Nairobi, Kenya, 2016
Edward Burtynsky

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Dandora Landfill, one of the largest landfill sites in the world, was created in the 1970s and declared full more than a decade ago. However, the municipal dumping site continues to function and provides the primary income source for many people living near it. An estimated 6,000 people mine its fenceless grounds each day, searching for metal, rubber, glass, plastics and electronics for resale or purchase by recycling companies. The mounds in these images, almost five metres high, are composed primarily of less-valuable plastic bags. In 2017, plastic bags were banned across Kenya, a move that other governments around the world are also making to reduce their nation's plastic footprints.

What are two connections you can make between the landfill pictured above and the materials in the gigapixel image?

What are two similar characteristics of the landfill pictured above and the materials in the gigapixel image?

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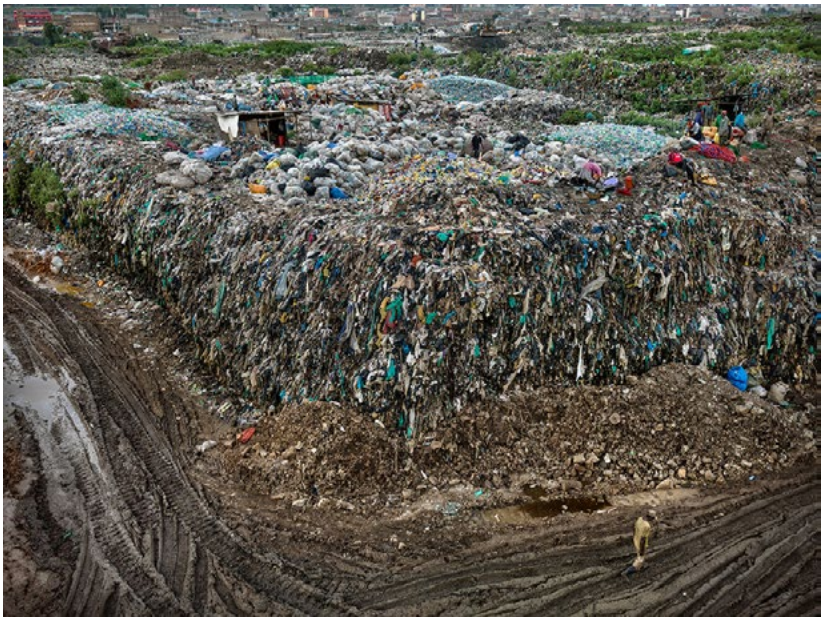

Highway #8
Santa Ana Freeway, Los Angeles, California, USA, 2017
Edward Burtynsky

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Fact cards

Consumerism and urban sprawl are increasing over time due to growing populations. Los Angeles is an example of the type of urban sprawl we see today: large areas of separated land use, single-family houses with yards and a reliance on the automobile. This consumer lifestyle is creating a coating on the planet that will outlast humanity. Just as dinosaur bones live on as fossils, so too will the markers of our time. Things like sofas, perfume bottles, metal roofs, forks, USB keys, basketball nets, cars and other things that are difficult to recycle also have the potential to fossilize in layers in the Earth's crust.

What are two connections you can make between the suburb pictured above and the materials in the gigapixel image?

What are two similar characteristics of the suburb pictured above and the materials in the gigapixel image?