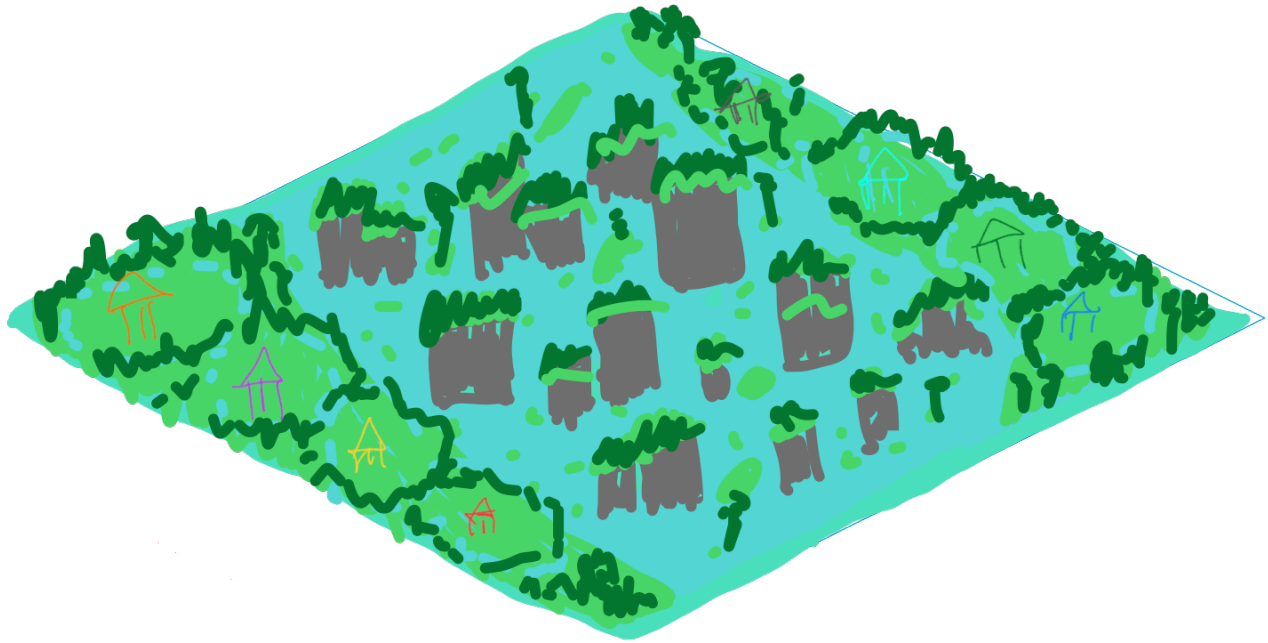


HA LONG BAY



Ha Long Bay, found on the coast of northern Vietnam just east of Haiphong, is famous for its rock pillars sticking out of emerald water, comes to AoE2 as a primarily water-based map. Players start on strips of land {or possibly islands, individual or team} and have to navigate through the water to reach their opponents. There will be plentiful fish and an abundance of stone. There will be a few small islands with stone and trees in the middle, but the dominant feature will be decorative rocks sticking up from the water, much like in the real-world location.

Players will have to rely largely on a fishing economy as huntables and herdables will be in shorter supply than standard (about half). However, players will have berry bushes and standard gold, as well as some neutral gold scattered about. Owing to north Vietnam's relatively tropical rainforest climate, wood will be abundant in the form of rainforest, jungle, and some palm trees, concentrated primarily around the edges of the map where land runs into the boundary, or in the case of player islands, substantial player forests will be in place.

There will be some shallows that are buildable (possibly mangrove to aid in wood collection, or azure with coding to allow for construction) and fishable, although it is not intended to be walkable from one team's land to the other's. This will result in a team-islands style map requiring players to use water to reach each other.

[Option 2 — the shallows will span across the entirety of the bay, or at least scattered, so that units CAN walk to each other, but still requiring significant water investment for map control.]

Other than these unique natural features, gameplay will be relatively standard with an emphasis on water combat. An abundance of stone and wood means it will be relatively easy for players to take defensive measures, but an offensive naval force can be disruptive to players who choose to build on the shallows, though the area around their starting town center should be somewhat naturally protected. This means a massive navy, combined with a strong land force, will be necessary to secure a decisive victory.