

Terra de Direitos in defense of climate justice and effective popular participation at COP-30



Brazil and the world are experiencing a central moment. The choices made by countries will determine whether humanity collapses, with even more profound impacts for some social groups, or whether we confront the mode of production and accumulation of wealth that has led us to the current stage of climate crisis and rights violations. This is an alert from Terra de Direitos, a social organization that has been working since 2002 in the defense, promotion, and enforcement of economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights.

In November of this year, Brazil will host the world's largest climate meeting. The Conference of the Parties on Climate Change (COP) 30 will be held in Belém (PA), from November 10 to 21. In a contradictory move, the Brazilian government claims a place among the world's leaders on climate issues while simultaneously adopting measures that will exacerbate the impacts of the climate crisis, such as relaxing environmental legislation, supporting agribusiness, and approving pesticide registrations without restraint.

Even if late, the country needs to commit to and implement measures that guarantee climate justice. In this way, we understand as structuring:

1. Participation of indigenous peoples, quilombolas, and traditional peoples and communities at COP30 and climate policy

The Conference of the Parties on Climate Change (COP) has historically been a space that excludes the participation of indigenous peoples, traditional communities, and social movements through a set of structural barriers. The high cost of travel and accommodation, bureaucracy in the accreditation process, and the lack of translation services, for example, make it difficult for these groups to participate effectively in climate debates. Furthermore, decisions are often made in closed environments, limiting the influence of those on the front lines of the climate crisis.

It is imperative that COP30 promotes real and influential participation by these peoples, ensuring accessibility, reducing bureaucracy, and providing concrete conditions for their presence. These communities are the primary guardians of the planet's most preserved territories, and their voices must be central to the development of climate solutions.

What we demand: That Brazil, as chair of the event, ensure that indigenous peoples, quilombolas, and traditional peoples and communities play a leading role in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of climate and territorial policies, both inside and outside the conference.

2. Protection for environmental and climate defenders

Advocating for action to address the climate crisis and protect the environment must be a permanent policy, not just during COP. To face the climate crisis, it is necessary to create conditions for human rights defenders to act in defense of their territories and denounce actions, policies, and enterprises that increase inequalities, without being criminalized and exposed to violence.

The country is among those that kill the most people who defend the environment, land, and territory. Data from the research study [Na Linha de Frente](#) (On the Front Line), conducted by Terra de Direitos and Justiça Global, show that between 2023 and 2024, more than 80% of reported cases of violence against human rights defenders occurred in contexts of struggle for land, territory, and the environment. The [UN Special Rapporteur, Mary Lawlor](#), emphasized that, as Brazil hosts the UN Conference on Climate Change, it must adopt urgent and more effective measures to protect the lives of those who defend rights.

In addition, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (I/A Court H.R.) reaffirmed the Brazilian State's duty to guarantee the constitutional right to demonstrate. Issued in 2024, the ruling against the Brazilian State in the Antônio Tavares case highlights that "public and peaceful demonstration is one of the most accessible ways to exercise the right to freedom of thought and expression, in order to demand the protection of other rights."

What we demand: Approval and implementation of the National Plan for Human Rights Defenders; adequate budget that enables the implementation of the actions provided for in the Plan; suspension of laws and non-approval of legislative measures that criminalize human rights defenders by the different spheres of government; approval and ratification of the Escazú Agreement.

3. Confronting environmental racism and guaranteeing territorial rights

The inequalities generated by environmental racism expose certain groups to daily human rights violations, perpetuated by colonial disregard for ancestral and traditional forms of biodiversity conservation and preservation. In the floods that occurred in the South, the fires in the Center-West, and the extreme droughts recorded in the Amazon and the Pantanal, the populations most affected were the poorest.

The colonizing view that the knowledge of traditional peoples and communities for the protection and preservation of biodiversity was outdated and unprofitable in the face of the capitalist model of exploitation gave way to Eurocentric ways of relating to nature, such as deforestation and monoculture, generating irreversible social and environmental impacts and leading to the disappearance of many species and ecosystems. Given this scenario, the allocation of US\$300 billion per year until 2035 by developed nations and private actors to finance efforts to address the climate crisis in developing countries, as agreed at the end of COP29, is considered insufficient.

With the significant increase in extreme weather events, it is urgent to develop solutions to address the global climate crisis. It is urgent to recognize the importance of the ancestral knowledge and technologies of traditional peoples for the preservation of nature and to recognize territorial protection as a condition for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Advancing the titling and demarcation of indigenous and quilombola territories, as well as the land regularization of family farmers, traditional peoples, and communities, also means confronting the environmental racism that directly and disproportionately impacts these populations.

What we demand: Progress in the demarcation of indigenous lands, quilombola land titling, and land regularization for traditional peoples, as well as the implementation of popular agrarian reform to expand and strengthen family farming; recognition and protection of traditional knowledge associated with biodiversity, and the adoption of measures that recognize the most intense effects of the climate crisis on these peoples.

4. Developing a just energy transition

The energy transition in Brazil cannot be limited to replacing fossil fuels with “green” alternatives, which, despite appearing sustainable, reproduce socio-environmental injustices by disregarding the needs and rights of local populations. An example of this is the wind farm projects in the Northeast Semi-Arid Region, which, although promoting a source of energy considered clean, often disregard the impacts on traditional communities and the affected territories. An example of this is the wind farm projects in the Northeast Semi-Arid Region, which, although promoting a source of energy considered clean, often disregard the impacts on traditional communities and the affected territories.

What we demand: We defend a popular energy transition and justice, which prioritizes national sovereignty, the active participation of affected communities and peoples, and the equitable distribution of the benefits generated. This approach seeks to break with the current centralizing and exclusionary model, promoting an organization of energy production and use that respects human and environmental rights, ensuring that historically marginalized populations are protagonists in the construction of fair and collective ways of life.

5. Development of mitigation and adaptation policies aimed at protecting traditional peoples and their ways of life

False solutions, such as the carbon credit market and the bioeconomy, do not address the root causes of the climate crisis, as they operate within the capitalist logic and do not alter the structures that cause the problem. These approaches are insufficient to bring about real change. The climate crisis is systemic and requires equally systemic responses, including listening to affected traditional communities.

The transformation of nature into financial assets, such as carbon credits and the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF), disregards the spiritual and cultural value that the peoples of the waters, fields, and forests attribute to nature. In addition, bioeconomy projects can put pressure on traditional territories and cause environmental degradation, often without truly preserving biodiversity and traditional ways of life.

What we demand: Mitigation and adaptation policies developed with the participation of these peoples, aimed at safeguarding their ways of life, which are currently threatened by climate change. The protection of the environment involves protecting those who, historically, have been guardians of nature. Therefore, it is essential to guarantee the rights outlined in ILO Convention 169, including free, prior, and informed consultation, as the basis for any measure that impacts the territories of these communities. It is necessary to develop

policies to value the ways of life, production, and management of traditional peoples. To this end, land regularization in these territories and support for the marketing of products and food based on community autonomy are essential.

6. Addressing measures that intensify the climate crisis

To effectively address structural inequalities exacerbated by the climate crisis, the country needs to decommodify common goods and reverse and reject initiatives and measures that intensify the crisis. The National Congress needs to concentrate its efforts to stop measures that accelerate environmental degradation in territories that are already vulnerable. It is essential to reject proposals such as the new General Environmental Licensing Law (Bill 2159/2021), whose proposed text promotes a veritable dismantling and relaxation of the environmental licensing process, exacerbating violations of territorial, socio-environmental, and climate rights.

Discussions in the judiciary regarding the time frame for demarcating indigenous lands are also another opportunity to correct historical inequalities, reaffirming the rights guaranteed to indigenous peoples by the Federal Constitution of 1988, without any setbacks in ensuring the rights of these peoples. The STF's position will effectively say whether the Supreme Court complies with what the Federal Constitution determines. The Federal Supreme Court must also recognize the unconstitutionality of Law No. 14,785/2023, known as the "Pacote do Veneno" (Poison Package). The law is the subject of Direct Action of Unconstitutionality No. 7701. The relaxation of rules for the approval of pesticides in the country runs counter to global commitments to reduce and discourage the use of toxic and polluting residues in the environment.

What we demand: rejection of proposals such as the new General Environmental Licensing Law (Bill 2159/2021); guarantee of indigenous rights and an end to the time frame; recognition by the STF of the unconstitutionality of Law No. 14,785/2023, known as "Pacote do Veneno" (Poison Package).

7. Confronting the model of destruction adopted by agribusiness

The model of large-scale production of products for export (with tax exemptions under the Kandir Law), such as soybeans, corn, and wheat, with intensive use of pesticides and GMOs and land accumulation, leaves a trail of destruction in its wake. It is a vicious cycle – agriculture accounts for 96% of the deforestation recorded in 2022 (MapBiomas), and deforestation across various biomes and agriculture are responsible for most of the country's greenhouse gas emissions, about 75% (Seeg). In addition to deforestation, agribusiness harasses and criminally

appropriates public lands, territories of traditional peoples and communities, alters rainfall patterns, causes biodiversity loss, contaminates water, food, and people, and puts a large part of the population living in cities at risk, with the possibility of water shortages and extreme weather events.

What we demand: A review of public measures and programs that favor agribusiness, such as the Safra Plan, and the end of the Kandir Law; the declaration of unconstitutionality of the Transgenic Law (Law No. 11,105/2005) and the Pacote do Veneno [Poison Package] (14,785/2023); the approval of the National Pesticide Reduction Program (Pronara) and the strengthening of Brazil's National Policy for Agroecology and Organic Production (Pnapo), with guaranteed actions, adequate budget, and integration between areas.

8. Guarantee of the rights of traditional peoples and communities in the development of enterprises

The large-scale agribusiness production model is not limited to the destruction of forests and the concentration of income; it also requires extensive infrastructure to enable the transport of its products, such as highways, railroads, ports, waterways, and irrigation canals, which often encroach on the territories of traditional peoples and communities. This infrastructure, essential for the advancement of agribusiness, generates direct impacts on local populations, whose ways of life are threatened.

In addition, the expansion of the agricultural frontier, with the consequent destruction of biodiversity, finances the degradation of vast areas of forest, accelerating the process of deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions. In the specific case of the Tapajós Region, [studies by Terra de Direitos](#) show that the construction and expansion of ports and railways such as the EF-170 (known as Ferrogrão) for the transport of soybeans and other agribusiness products has had a severe impact on indigenous, quilombola, and ribeirinhos (riverbank dwellers) territories, affecting fishing, water quality, and the forest with increased deforestation, as well as affecting the survival of several communities. These infrastructures disregard the needs of local populations and violate their rights, thereby generating further conflicts and aggravating the region's socio-environmental vulnerability.

What we demand: the adoption of measures that impose obligations on companies to ensure human rights, especially those of traditional peoples and communities; the approval of Bill 572/2022, which creates the national Framework Law on Human Rights and Companies and establishes guidelines for the promotion of public policies on the subject.

9) Free use of biodiversity, protection of traditional knowledge, and the right to consultation

The large-scale agricultural model, centered on agribusiness, poses serious threats to Brazilian socio-biodiversity. The intensive use of pesticides and genetically modified seeds, combined with deforestation for the implementation of monocultures, results in the loss of seeds and native breeds, which are fundamental for maintaining agricultural genetic diversity. This practice compromises the environmental balance, leading to the extinction of essential species such as bees, fish, and butterflies, which play crucial roles in local ecosystems.

Biopiracy, characterized by the misappropriation of traditional knowledge and genetic resources without proper consultation, recognition, and benefit-sharing, constitutes a serious violation of the rights of traditional peoples and communities.

O que reivindicamos: Promotion of the adoption of bicultural protocols by traditional communities; respect for prior, free, and informed consultation; effective control of access to traditional knowledge through the National System for the Management of Genetic Heritage and Associated Traditional Knowledge (SIGEN); reduction of bureaucracy in the National Program for Benefit-Sharing (PNRB) and the National Benefit-Sharing Fund, ensuring transparency, direct participation, and access to resources for traditional communities and family farmers; promotion of state and national laws that guarantee traditional peoples and communities free access to socio-biodiversity, even when located on private property or in conservation units; and laws that support and protect sustainable practices of plant and fauna agroextractivism, without any criminalization of sustainable agroextractive practices that protect biodiversity, including specific public resources to support practices undertaken by women; implementation of the National Agrarian Reform Program (PNRA) and public policies aimed at protecting and valuing native seeds, reinforcing the National Policy on Genetic Resources.



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