



## CLIMATE IS CULTURE

This material was compiled from the **Cultural Voices for the Climate Gathering** in February 2025, held in the Borari Territory, in Alter do Chão, Pará, Brazil. The meeting brought together more than 30 artists, cultural practitioners, climate activists, as well as indigenous and quilombo leaders to discuss the role of culture in addressing the climate crisis.



Scan the QR Code to meet some of the people fighting for climate and culture in Brazil.



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## WHAT'S CULTURE GOT TO DO WITH THE PLANET'S CLIMATE?

EXPLORE WHAT CONNECTS ART AND  
CULTURE TO THE FIGHT TO DEFEND OUR  
TERRITORIES.



# CULTURE CONNECTS PEOPLE, TERRITORIES AND THE PLANET.



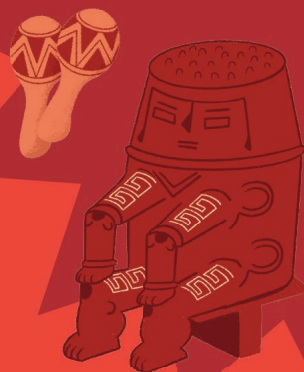
Culture is singing, dancing, painting, cinema, theatre — any artistic expression that connects us and stirs our emotions.

Above all, it's the way we live, how we identify with our community, and how we relate to the world: through traditional foods, languages, religions, folk festivals, and our relationship with rivers, the sea, forests, and animals.

## THIS RELATIONSHIP IS IN CRISIS

### When territories are at risk, our culture is also at risk

When the forest burns down, food, medicines, ancestral knowledge, and sacred places are also destroyed. When our rivers dry up, fish, navigation, and access to leisure activities also vanish. When cities face floods and landslides, our creative economy is impacted, we lose our cultural heritage and memory, and the dynamics of territories change.



### Our identities and cultural expressions feel the impacts, but they also create paths forward.

Indigenous peoples and traditional communities regenerate biomes, grassroots activists use their channels to call out injustices and demand justice, artists inspire behavioural changes through stories and collective experiences.

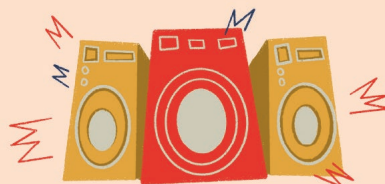
### The climate emergency is already a reality

Extreme weather like floods, heat waves, droughts and wildfires are becoming ever more frequent, destabilising communities around the world and biological systems that sustain life on the planet.



## CULTURE IS A SOLUTION!

It's through culture that we can imagine and create new futures — stirring emotions, fostering encounters, and deepening the relationship between our communities, our territories, and the planet.





# CLIMATE IS CULTURE

Culture shapes, and is shaped by, the dialogue between the community and its territory. **The territory defines our identity and our cultural history.** Climate change threatens the collective memory of peoples and territories, putting traditions, ways of life, and the well-being of communities at risk. Check out some examples of how this works in practice:

## PARINTINS FESTIVAL



The Parintins Festival has been held in the heart of the Amazon rainforest on the banks of the Amazon River for 60 years. Every year, Caprichoso and Garantido —two ox puppets known as bois-bumbá — face off in a traditional contest that celebrates Amazonian culture, honours indigenous and riverine culture, and reminds us of our sacred connection with rivers and nature.

*"For the Caprichoso people, the purpose of celebration is life itself, the living forest. We can only play when our territories are happy, strong, and alive. Without them, not only does the act of celebration lose its meaning, but sustaining all the life that reverberates on Parintins island becomes a painful mission. A community struck hard by climate change gets sick."* – **Ericky Nakanome | Boi Caprichoso**

**The climate crisis threatens the very essence of the Parintins Festival.** As well as endangering the traditions that inspire its art, extreme weather such as intense heat and river droughts can make it impossible to hold the show.

*"Boi Garantido was one of the first to raise climate issues at the festival, and they do it because they're a genuine ally of the Amazon and our territory. The climate crisis is not some far-off scenario. It already directly affects the lives of people in the region—with increasingly intense river floods, extreme and unpredictable heat, and difficulties that impact everything from the daily routines of communities to the very holding of the Parintins Festival itself."* – **Adriano Paketá | Boi Garantido**

## MANDIOCA, MACAXEIRA, AIPIM, MANIACA\*

Would you like to hear an audio description of this text in the Nheengatu language? Visit [climaecultura.org](http://climaecultura.org)

Cassava flour, tapioca, cheese bread, tucupi sauce... It is almost impossible to imagine Brazilian cuisine without cassava, known by many names across the country. This root vegetable is one of the staples of our national cuisine, and part of our daily lives, of meals shared with family and friends, of Brazil's cultural identity.

Heat waves, droughts, and floods threaten cassava plantations throughout the country.

**Shortages in production can drive up prices, making it an unaffordable staple, or even eliminate its availability in shops and markets.**

*"The climate crisis is very worrying because of its impact on our food culture. Cassava supplies us with the largest variety of foods we consume. We cannot imagine eating fish without flour. Without cassava, our food security and our culture are endangered."* – **Marlena Soares | Regatão Institute**

# CULTURE IS CLIMATE

Culture builds real paths to accelerate climate action. Whether it's through art, or through reviving traditional land stewardship practices, or by creating new ways of thinking and acting, culture is where we can start the dialogue, bring people together, and create hope. **By protecting and celebrating cultures, we preserve our territories.** Check out some examples of how this works in practice:

## CULTURAL EVENTS THAT SPUR US INTO ACTION



Festivals, film screenings, plays, and museum exhibitions that combine art and activism have the power to raise awareness among a large audience and create networks for collective action. They prove that culture can be a political act, capable of raising awareness and mobilising people.

Events such as **Virada Cultural Amazônia de Pé** are an example of this. Since 2022, the Amazônia de Pé movement has promoted hundreds of concerts, workshops, public classes, and artistic interventions throughout the country every September, the month of the Amazon. Through these activities,

hundreds of thousands of signatures have been collected in support of a People's Initiative Bill to allocate 50 million hectares of public forests to indigenous peoples, quilombos, and conservation units.

*"By occupying squares, theatres, schools, networks, streets, and rivers, we managed to put Amazon Day, September 5, on the national calendar, debated in every region of the country. It was culture that opened the space for dialogue, touched hearts, and united different artistic expressions in the fight to save the forest."* – **Leila Borari | Surarás do Tapajós and Amazônia de Pé**



## THE CLIMATE IN ARTISTIC CREATION

When musicians, painters, filmmakers, writers, and performers incorporate the climate crisis into their work, they translate science into a language that stirs people's emotions and creates connections. Art can both speak out against injustices and reconnect people with their cultural identities, strengthening communities and territories.

In marginalised communities in large urban centres, for example, rappers talk about environmental racism, such as how a lack of basic sanitation and flooding affect Black communities. In rural areas, hip-hop groups use music to speak out against illegal mining and deforestation. **Rhyme battles, known**

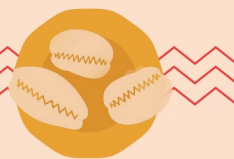
**as slams, transform streets and alleys into stages for protest**, with poets reciting verses about climate justice, bringing people together so that words become action.

*"As the climate changes, we're asleep in the tropics, We need urgency, emergency for Earth on this topic We burn down our forests, the profit culture kills, Swapping green for grey in exchange for dollar bills Throwing trash on the ground, plastic, paper, metal cans Sea creatures drown in tonnes of trash made by man. We foolish human beings, with our boundless greed Keep destroying it all, convinced it's what we need. So, now's the time to change our ways, my friend, Create a new beginning — so this won't be the end."*

–**Thiago SKP | Rapper and art educator**



## SACRED TERRITORY



From Christianity to Candomblé, different branches of religion have developed spiritual connections based on their relationship with the territory.

Indigenous rituals revere Mother Nature and her sacred delights, based on the seasons, lunar cycles, and tidal movements. Orixás, the deities of African-based religions, represent entities of nature, such as Iemanjá, Queen of the Sea, and Oxóssi, Lord of the Forests. Christians evoke nature in their saints, symbols, and sacraments, such as water, fire, and herbs.

**With the planet's climate under threat, our spirituality, our religious communities, and our way of understanding the world are also under threat.**

*"The Sairé festival in Alter do Chão, Pará, is where the past and the present, the visible and the invisible, converge. But it only happens because the territory is alive. When the forest suffers, when the river gets sick, our people also get sick. Preserving the climate means preserving our faith, our identity, and our spiritual strength. The world needs to listen urgently to what the forest peoples have to say about this deep connection with the Earth."* – Osmar Vieira | Sairé Festival

## WORD SEARCH

Find words related to climate and culture in the word search below. The words are hidden horizontally, vertically, and diagonally, with no words spelled backwards.

H E W N H E E N G A T U W C U E I E D G B A H E W N H E C H E W N E N G E W N E N  
N O O O E R T N S M N Q E E H A F T I P W Y N O O O N O A N O O O T N S O O O T N  
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N E A N M N H R E Z N I T A P I O C A S G M N E A N N E R E A N H R E E A N H R  
O S E U T G N C S Ô O L E C E I R T I C H T O S E U O S I O S E U N C S S E U N C  
D M E A U A N F T N D O R E A H W I E S S T D M E A D M C D M E A N F T M E A N F  
A R E M H R N V A I I M R I H A H R E I E I A R E M A R H A R E M N V A R E M N V  
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H T U A G N U D A D T O T L R N C S E T E A H T U A H T S H T U A U D A T U A U D  
T T E C W T E T O E T M O N D A L T E T O N T T E C T O T T E C E T O T E C T  
K N W S B I R T Y P T A R T I V I S M A A T K N W S K N T K N W S R T Y N W S R T  
A C H E I D C U F É E V Y V D C A O T I A A A C H E A C V A C H E C U F C H E C U  
S R T L D O L D Y M O T H E R N A T U R E T S R T L S R E S R T L L D Y R T L L D  
M O O E N V I R O N M E N T A L R A C I S M M O O E M O T M O O E I R O O O E I R  
T R A D I T I O N A L K N O W L E D G E T U T R A D T R O T R A D I O N R A D I O

**TERRITORY:** the physical space where people forge cultural and emotional ties with their environment.

**NHEENGATU:** a language originating from Tupi, spoken by Indigenous peoples in the Amazon region.

**ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM:** Climate disproportionately impacts Black and Indigenous populations.

**TAPIOCA:** A typical Brazilian food made from cassava root.

**CAPRICHOSO:** The Boi-Bumbá associated with the colour blue at the Parintins Festival.

**GARANTIDO:** The Boi-Bumbá associated with the colour red at the Parintins Festival.

**MOTHER NATURE:** A spiritual entity traditionally revered by Indigenous peoples.

**QUILOMBO:** A territory of historical resistance by Black people which also preserves Afro-Brazilian culture.

**AMAZÔNIA DE PÉ:** A national movement for the protection of public forests in the Amazon.

**TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE:** Ancestral knowledge passed down from generation to generation in traditional communities.

**ARTIVISM:** The use of art as a tool for activism and social transformation.

## COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION



Radio stations, newspapers, and social media pages created by and for communities are powerful tools in the fight against climate change. These media outlets provide information about local issues, revive traditional sustainable practices, and strengthen local identity, showing that protecting the territory also means preserving ancestral and cultural knowledge.

**Mídia Quilombola**, a network of grassroots journalists from Brazil's quilombos, is one example. On its news website, videos and social media posts explain how climate change affects the soil, rivers, and crops while celebrating traditional festivals and ancestral

knowledge. By recognising and using stories of resistance to warn about deforestation, they strengthen cultural knowledge to defend the climate.

*"There is no climate justice without protecting traditional territories because we're the ones living in the forest. We were born in it, and we live off it. All our cultural knowledge, our collective imagination, and our understanding of the world has come from our relationship with plants, herbs, animals, rivers, and trees. This means that if the forest is threatened, as we know it to be, all life that is part of it, including ours, is also threatened."* – Juliane Sousa | Mídia Quilombola

## 5 WAYS YOU CAN TAKE ACTION IN THE FIGHT FOR CULTURE AND CLIMATE

1

### Turn your talent into action!

Everyone has an artistic gift — whether it's music, performance, writing, or crafts. **Use your creativity to tell stories about your territory**, reclaim your ancestry, strengthen your roots, denounce the effects of the climate crisis, and hold companies, politicians, and environmental criminals accountable.

2

### Support artists engaged in the climate struggle

Watch plays that talk about climate justice, buy art from indigenous and quilombo collectives, be moved by songs that talk about our relationship with territories, share audiovisual productions about the climate struggle. **By supporting art, we strengthen and amplify the voices that resist through art.**

3

### Push for public policies

Demand that city councils and governments link cultural calls for proposals to sustainable projects and allocate funds to climate adaptation initiatives. Major political events, such as climate conferences and election periods, are also key moments to **get involved with a political movement and put pressure on decision-makers.**

Join the global campaign **We Make Tomorrow**, which brings together voices from the arts and culture to put pressure on governments and decision-makers to put culture at the heart of climate action: [wemaketomorrow.global](http://wemaketomorrow.global)

4

### Put on cultural events to discuss the climate

Organise soirées, lunches, film screenings or art workshops to talk about climate change with your community. **Use the power that only culture has to bring people together** and mobilise neighbours, family, friends and colleagues in the fight for your territory.

How about signing up to take action in your territory by joining an event that's part of the Virada Cultural Amazônia de Pé? Find out more at [instagram.com/amazoniadepe](https://instagram.com/amazoniadepe)

5

### Include climate action in your cultural practices

When organising cultural events, programmes and initiatives, always think about what practical actions you can take to ensure that the impact of your activities is as small as possible. The environment is our way of creating culture.

Do you want to find out how to create a sustainable action plan for your cultural initiatives? Learn more at [tinyurl.com/Cultura-Sustentavel](http://tinyurl.com/Cultura-Sustentavel)





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