

# THE MAP OF LIFE

TAPAJÓS AND SAWRE MUYBU LAND:  
THE VIEW OF THE MUNDURUKU PEOPLE  
ABOUT THEIR RIVER AND THEIR TERRITORY

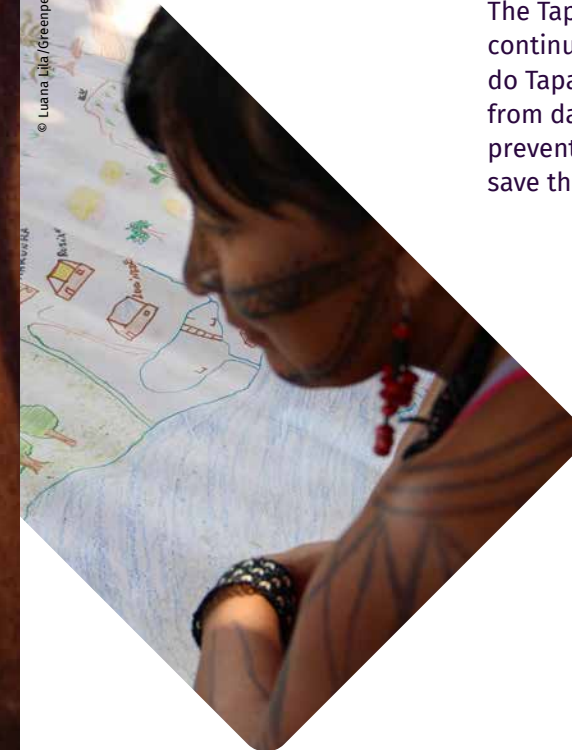
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The Tapajós River, in the state of Pará, is threatened by the Brazilian government's plans to continue to expand the construction of hydroelectric dams in the Amazon. If built, São Luiz do Tapajós dam, would cause irreversible damage to one of the last major Amazon rivers free from dams and home to the Munduruku Indigenous People. They have struggled for decades to prevent this from happening. Greenpeace has allied with the Munduruku people in their effort to save the heart of the Amazon. Join us!

## WE ARE MAKING OUR OWN WAY

"It is important for us to continue our struggle until we reach the demarcation of our land. In fact, this is the land of all of us, Munduruku. It is to be used respectfully, allowing us to raise our children in our villages. The land is our mother. It raises our children. We would not exist if it did not exist. That's why this demarcation is so important. We are not making our way in a strange land; we are not invading anybody's land. "We are making our own way."

**JUAREZ SAW**  
CHIEF OF THE SAWRE MUYBU VILLAGE

## "THE MAPPING IS A WEAPON WE HAVE TO DEFEND OURSELVES."

"The mapping is to defend ourselves, to defend everything, so that the river can continue as it is: alive, so that the *awaidip* (forest) can remain alive. It's for those who live in the forest to keep the way they are. The mapping is a weapon we have to defend ourselves. The government has tried to fool us, to deceive us, in every way. But we are many: the shamans are with us, the elders, the storytellers, those who know the uses of the river, teachers, students, pregnant women. They are all here in this movement. Where will our women raise our children? It must be in the *daipi* (land). Now that we have the Map, let's spread the word.

That's why we walk. So, the mapping is not going to stay here by itself, but it will connect all the places where we exist. We are here to defend the whole *Idixidi* (Tapajós River). We must not stop with the land demarcation. It is how we can defend ourselves. Shall we wait with our arms folded, seated, until the water rises to flood our lands? No, we have to fight, organize ourselves, listen to our fellows. We are fighting here not only for us, but for everyone; not only for the land of Sawre Muybu land but for all of the Munduruku territory."

**BRUNO KABA**  
HEAD OF THE MUNDURUKU WARRIORS



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# SAVE THE HEART OF THE AMAZON

The **MAP OF LIFE** is born from the indignation of the Munduruku indigenous people upon hearing the Brazilian government states that the construction of the São Luiz do Tapajós hydroelectric dam would flood "only" seven percent of the Sawre Muybu indigenous land. What seemed little in the eyes of the government and business people involved with the dam project was - and still is - non-negotiable for the Munduruku. To ask them to give up their territory is to ask them to give up their way of life and their ancestral relationship with the Tapajós River and its forests.

When they learned about the hydroelectric project, they realized that the Brazilian government had no idea about the importance of the Tapajós River and the Sawre Muybu land to ALL the Munduruku people. And so, they decided to make the Brazilian society understand that the discussion is not about the size of an area, but about the survival of an entire culture.

In 2016, they asked Greenpeace Brazil to help them to develop a dialogue channel with society, a strategy that could show people the importance of Sawre Muybu land for the physical and cultural survival of the Munduruku people, and the vital role of the Amazon nature. An extremely rich process started, resulting in The **MAP OF LIFE**.

Although they have been victorious in stopping the the São Luiz do Tapajós dam project, the Munduruku understand the non-demarcation of their Indigenous land of Sawre Muybu as a clear signal that the Brazilian government has not yet given up plans to dam the Tapajós River.

The demarcation of Sawre Muybu is vital and urgent! Join arms with more than 1 million people who are standing in solidarity with the Munduruku people and help save the heart of the Amazon.

Danicley de Aguiar, Amazon campaign, Greenpeace Brazil

[WWW.TAPAJOS.ORG/MAPOFLIFE](http://WWW.TAPAJOS.ORG/MAPOFLIFE)



Sawre Muybu Village,  
Tapajós River

## IPEREGAYU MOVEMENT

The Iperegayu movement is an organization of the Munduruku people which works to defend our rights. As warriors protecting the forest, we fight against the construction of dams and the exploration of our rivers and forests by the pariwat (non-Indigenous people). The Iperegayu movement is the main Munduruku resistance against the construction of dams in the Tapajós River. We expose human rights, social, environmental, economic, and cultural violations of the communities threatened and affected by dams in the Tapajós and other Amazon rivers.

[movimentoiperegayu.wordpress.com](http://movimentoiperegayu.wordpress.com)

## PARIRI ASSOCIATION

The Pariri association was established in November, 1998. Its main goal is to fight for the physical and cultural survival of the Munduruku people from the Middle Tapajós region. Pariri's work is mainly focused on the defense of indigenous rights as violations against their rights have been intensifying each day with the development projects plans for the region (hydroelectric, waterways, agribusiness, extraction of wood).

[www.aipariri.org](http://www.aipariri.org)

## GREENPEACE

Greenpeace is an independent campaigning organisation, which uses non-violent, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems, and to force the solutions which are essential to a green and peaceful future.

[www.greenpeace.org.br](http://www.greenpeace.org.br)



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**TAPAJÓS AND SAWRE MUYBU LAND: THE VIEW OF THE MUNDURUKU PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR RIVER AND THEIR TERRITORY**

**“THE MAPPING IS TO STRENGTHEN OUR FIGHT AND TO SHOW WHERE ARE THE PLACES THAT CANNOT BE DESTROYED, WHERE ARE OUR SACRED THINGS, EVERYTHING THAT CANNOT BE TOUCHED.”**

**ANA POXO**  
WARRIOR, MOTHER AND IPEREGAUY MOVEMENT COORDINATOR



## FOREST

**1** "Here, in our land, there are several things that cannot be touched; the hunting cannot be disrespected, the pigsty cannot be moved, anything cannot be moved – the forest is sacred for us. It nourishes our children. This *awaidip* (forest) gives us buriti, açai, pataua... Therefore we have to use our land with care. The açai [açai trees] generates food for everything, for all the hunting, monkeys, jacu birds and even for us. The açai is very important. It cannot disappear. If they build the hydroelectric plant, this açai and all the fruits will disappear, and then it will never come back, it will end."



JUAREZ SAW

**2** "The mother of the hunting live in the spring of igarapés (small river streams). There are many things in the forest that we have to defend: the Mother of the Forest, which only the *pajé* (shaman) can see. There is also the Mother of the Rain who fertilizes everything."

BRUNO KABA

**4** "These chestnut trees are beautiful, just like the rubber trees. If one day the dam floods everything here, we'll miss them. That is why we are visiting all places: to show what cannot be flooded and destroyed, so everything continues always just the way it is."

ANA POXO

**3** "We make our plantation small, according to our needs, only to guarantee our grandchildren sustenance with sugarcane, banana, and cassava. That is why we are defending our land. And if we continue like this, our grandchildren will understand the importance of our fight. We have no big farms here; so all of this here, the *awaidip* (forest) as a whole, is our place. And we have everything we need here: wild pigs, tapirs, catitis, cutias, jacu birds, monkeys. We are defending the forest because it sustains us."

JOSÉ SAW



JOSÉ SAW

## WATER

**5** "Everyone eats the *jauari*: tracajás [Amazonian turtles] eat it, as do turtles, aracus, pacus, pirarara, jundiá [all fish species], they all eat. The wild pigs come from the other side and cross the river in early summer when it is drying to eat it too. The *jauari* is important for everyone. We use the fruit of the *jauari* to catch fish. In the winter, the fish come to this igapó [flooded forest] here to eat. That is why this island cannot be flooded, it is not only us who need it, but all these beings, the fish and the other animals that eat the fruit."

JUAREZ SAW

**6** "We are on the island where, in the winter, when the river fills up, it brings a lot of fishes. In the spawning season, the *jaraqui* and other fishes come to lay their eggs. It's life for the animals, for the fish and for us, who live here. We have a connection with each other; each one depends on the other. If they dam the river forever, fish will look for the island for spawning time and they will not find it, affecting all beings. If the river changes, it affects everyone. What we are going to lose with the dam is life, our culture and our identity. It would change our way of being."

ANTONIO DACE



ANTONIO DACE

**7** "This is why we say we do not want the dam. We want everything as it is, the river filling up and down, the fish going up and down river, entering streams and lakes. It is the *igarapó* (flooded forests) that makes fish fat. Sete Quedas waterfall was closed upstream by a dam, and the impact was huge. The river dried up and did not fill up as it used to. Fish did not enter the igapó to eat, and we saw the impact, fish were dry, thin, even the tracajá (Amazon river turtle) was thin. If the dam up there has such an impact here, imagine if they dam the river right here. It will never be like it used to be."

VALTO DACE

**8** "Fish do not lay eggs anywhere. They arrive in the right month to reproduce. When the river begins to fill, they begin to rise. And each fish has its specific place to breed. A fish that mates in one place will never do it in another place. If the river does not fill where it expects, it will not go to another. It stays there waiting to be filled so it can enter the area. This is the story of the riverbank. The *pedral* [rocky area in the rivers] is also very important for the children because it's where they can take bodó, and jacundá, traíra, mandi, aracu, it has all types of fish. There are those who live hidden in the caves of the rocks, under wooden sticks, but there are also those who live in the lakes. The *pariwat* (non-indigenous) say that the *pedrais* are not necessary, but they are, as the river edge and the caves of the rocks, and none of these can be flooded."

JUAREZ SAW



JUAREZ SAW

**9** "The *pariwat* (non-indigenous) want to destroy this place of ours, *Daje Kapap*, with all the sacred objects and everything that cannot be destroyed. Because here lives the Mother of the Fish, and there is the Mother of the Hunting in the forest. There are many creatures here left by the One who created us in this backwater, at the bottom of the river. Now, these people who want money, people from the dam and the mining, they want to end it all; they want to end the creation of *Karosakaybo* (ancestor Munduruku, creator of the world and its things). They want to end our story. They want to destroy our sacred place."

JUAREZ SAW

**10** "The mapping is to show why this place must continue as it is. They are destroying the land, the miners are taking diamonds out of our sacred place. They don't know what is sacred to the Munduruku; they do it because they do not understand, don't know that they cannot do it. They have destroyed many of our sacred objects, things that our ancestors scattered everywhere, in the waters, in the woods, in the backwaters, in the stones."

SOLANO AKAY



SOLANO AKAY

**11** This mountain was created by *Karosakaybo* (ancestor Munduruku, creator of the world and its things) not to be destroyed, but to always be *xipanikug* (well cared for). We respect everything: the forest, the rivers, the food of the animals, the food of the fish. We all want to be alive, the forest wants to be alive, the rivers want to be alive and the beaches want to be alive, otherwise the animals would not appear. It is the government that does not want us alive."

ALDILEIA KABA

**12** "Here in the *boiador* lives a being that cannot be moved: it is the home of the Mother of the tracajás [Amazonian turtle] and the tortoise. It is a sacred place. In fact, it is the place and the beach in which we look for eggs from these animals. If one day the government builds a dam here, where would they lay their eggs? The beach would be flooded, the waterfall where we fish would be flooded. Where would we get food from?"

VALTO DACE



VALTO DACE

## LAND

**13** "This river is our home. Nobody can say that this land is not ours. There is broken pottery around, black soil, *kato*, where the Munduruku walked. We Munduruku are not lost, the *pariwat* (not indigenous) are the ones who are lost. Here we originate, here our grandparents raised us, we did not come from the United States – we are from this river, from this region, our children were born here. We are the ones who have the right."

ALDILEIA KABA



ALDILEIA KABA

**14** "We are showing the lakes, the forest, the medicines... To defend ourselves. Not only for the Munduruku people living in the land of Sawre Muybu, but for all Munduruku, in all our territory, in all our land."

BRUNO KABA



BRUNO KABA

**15** "We decided to map our territory to register the important places and main points. We found several evidences of ancient Munduruku villages in the territory. These places are on the banks of the Jamanxin River. The area in the center of the territory is where we find a set of hills where the animals live. These hills are the center that connects with other places considered sacred, which must remain far from human presence. In the vicinity of the hills, there are several species of plants that bear fruit and provide food according to the season. The hills that connect with other places are called *Puca Ka'a*, the home of the animals. These are untouchable places."

JAIRO SAW