



# The “world of projects” according with the Mebengokré

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# Amazon socio-biodiversity

Almost 7 millions mk2

10% known species

300 diverse languages

Diversified environments:  
rainforest, floodplains,  
savannas, rivers, etc. and  
diverse social organizations

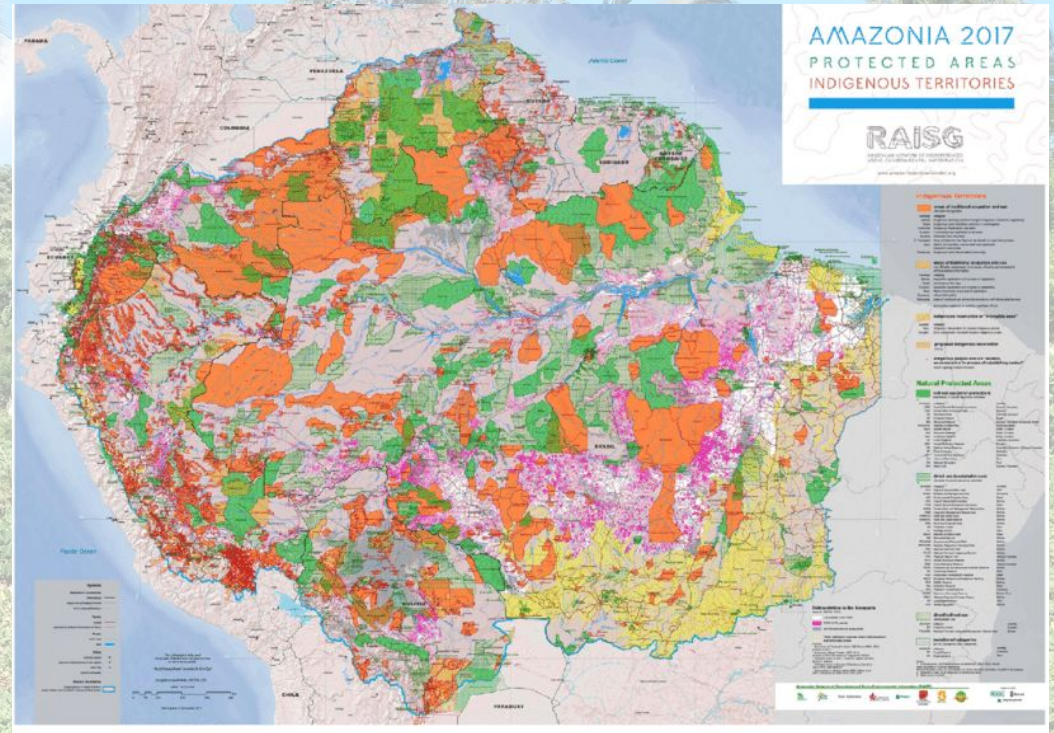


Image: Indigenous lands and protected areas in the Amazon (source: Tauli-Corpuz et al. 2020, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.104923>)



1988 Brazilian Constitution, Art. 231  
right to lands and “costums”

Articulation of Indigenous people of  
Brasil (APIB) in 2005 during the Free  
Land Acampment

Internet activism: i.e. Índios Online  
(Nordest) and Web Indígena  
(Kaingang)

Introduction of right to consultancy for  
“development” projects and  
compensation measures for  
socio-environmental impacts

# Indigenous people and the Brazilian State





# What are Indigenous lands?



Image: Sonia Guajajara (Source: <https://believe.earth/pt-br/sonia-guajajara-reconectando-pessoas-com-o-planeta/>)

*“When you destroy nature and make the way of life of indigenous peoples impossible, preventing them from exercising their culture, you are killing these people. If we don't follow our culture, we stop being a people.”\**

\*Guajajara, Sonia. 2017. Interview to Alan Azevedo (source: <https://believe.earth/pt-br/sonia-guajajara-reconectando-pessoas-com-o-planeta/>)



Caverna da Pedra Pintada (Pará), 13.000 BP: tucumã (*Astrocaryum vulgare*), buriti (*Mauritia flexuosa*), bacaba (*Oenocarpus cf. bacaba*)

Sitio Totonio (Rio Madeira, Amazonas), 9.000 BP: beans (*Phaseolus sp.*), pumpkin (*Cucurbita sp.*), arrowroot (*Calathea allouia*), manioc (*Manihot sp.*)

Sambaqui Monte Castelo (Rio Guaporé, Amazonas), 6.000 BP: corn (*Zea mays*), zucca (*Cucurbita sp.*), yam (*Dioscorea sp.*), Brazilian nut (*Bertholletia excelsa*), cacao/cupuaçu (*Theobroma sp.*), nance (*Byrsonima sp.*), guava (*Guava sp.*)

More than 240 botanical species used by indigenous people

Along the Holocene (from 12mil BP): from 46 genera to 134 genera

# Botanical domestication in the Amazon

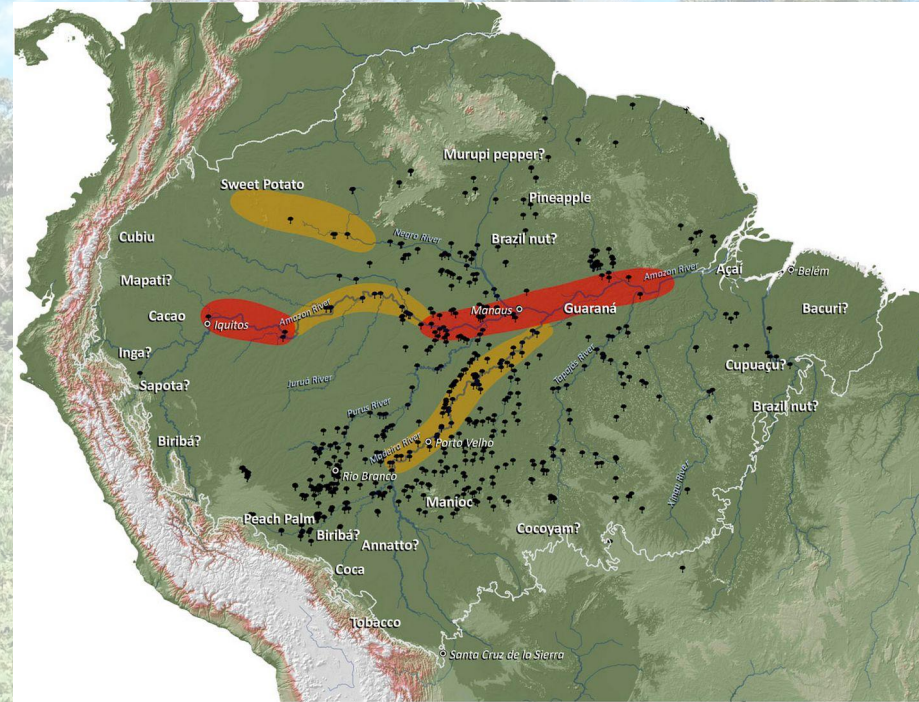
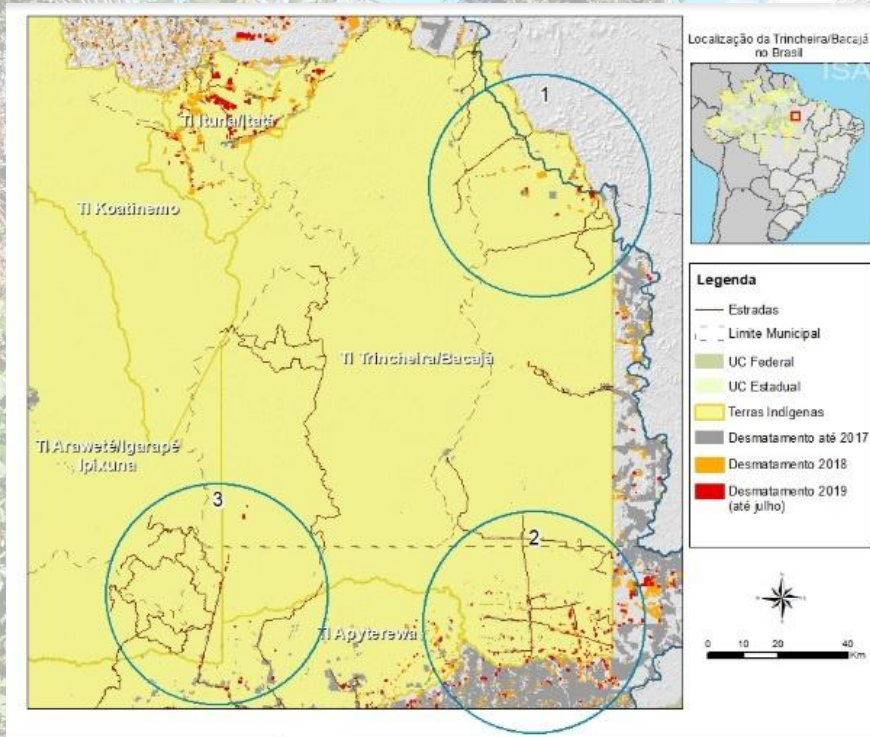


Image: Botanical domestication (source: Clement et al. 2015, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2015.0813>)



# The Mebengokré of the Trincheira-Bacaja Indigenous Land



600.000 hectares

Demarcated as Mebengoké land since the '80

From 1 village to 32 villages

From 2000 persons to 200 and back to 3000

Growing land grabbing pressure

Impacts of Belo Monte hydro-dam

Image: TI Trincheira-Bacaja (source: <https://site-antigo.socioambiental.org/pt-br/noticias-socioambientais/na-iminencia-de-um-ataque-povo-xikrin-luta-para-defender-seu-territorio>)



# The “era of projects”

Bepdjay: “*we had the era of... and now is time of the era of projects*”

With the Belo Monte hydro-dam: the implementation of compensation measures



Image: the collection of Brazilian nuts (source: <https://www.tnc.org.br/conecte-se/comunicacao/noticias/menire/>)



# The Bebo Xikrin of Bacaja Indigenous Association

Funded in 2003

Aimed at empowering the Mebengokré both economically and culturally and to manage funds from Belo Monte

Along the years some conflicts happened and actually the ABEX is the only institution which represent all the population

Elective charges (actually two *memy*, adult men, are in charge)

Growing participation of the *menire*, women





# *Puru*: mebengokré gardens



Image: Mebengokré garden (source: Paride Bollettin)

Slash and burn

Family and collective gardens

Diversified crops and plants

Duration 2-3 years

Increased biodiversity

Differentiation of crops

Circulation of crops

Other-than-human spaces



# Ron ny twàp – the babassu oil

Production of the oil from the *Orbignya oleífera*

Implemented from the experience of the “canteen network”

From 2018 first meeting and 2019 first production

Autonomy of collection on family basis while collective selling

Honorary mention by FAO in 2019



Image: Menire babassu oil (source: <https://decobresil.fr/pt/huiles-/514-huile-de-babassu-menire-xikrin.html>)





Pictures: the production of babaçu oil (source: Rochelle Foltran, 2020)



# New skills



\* mBānōsām

Nome:	Awame: Amem:	kg. P1 vonna	Value Price	kg. P1 per	Value Price
1. W.G.R.E.N.H.O	5	5	50	-	-
2. K.W.Y.N.H.O	5	5	50	-	-
3. N.C.E.N.H.O	5	5	50	-	-
4. I.R.E.T.G	8	8	80	-	-
5. B.E.K.W.A.H.K.A	8	8	80	-	-
6. K.O.K.O.P.Y	7	7	70	-	-
7. B.E.K.W.A.H.O	7	7	70	-	-
8. P.A.H.K.E	6	6	60	-	-
9. I.K.O.D.Y	8	8	80	-	-
10. B.E.K.O.T.A.C	6	6	60	-	-
11. K.K.O.D.Y	8	8	80.00	-	-
12. P.R.E.P.I	5	5	50.00	-	-
13. K.A.K.A.R.E	8	8	80.00	-	-
14. K.O.K.Y	6	6	60.00	-	-
<b>Total:</b>		<b>39 kg</b>			<b>Rff: 3900</b>

05.12.2019 17:04

Pictures: the oil machine and the countability (source: Rochelle Foltran, 2020)



# Body painting



Realised with genipa (*Genipa americana*) and annatto (*Bixa orellana*)

In parties and daily life

Body painting as a collective experience: realised by women in families

Body painting as a personal experience: situating the person in the network

Body painting as a social experience: expressing the *mei* (beauty)

Pictures: Girls painting themselves (source: Paride Bollettin, 2011)



# Follow up....

Example: production of t-shirts with drawings inspired on body painting

These and other products sold through the association

Valorization of the *kukradja*

Engagement of young generations



Image: Menire drawing on t-shirt (source: Paride Bollettin, 2022)

<https://wa.me/c/559388038427>



# Something more

Example: visit of the Mebengoré at the Federal University of Bahia

Dialogues with academics and other communities

From “fights” ro “alliances”

Valorization of the *kukradja* as a complex of knowledge-practices

Economic empowerment and epistemic insurgency



Image: Katopryre Xikrin, Paride Bollettin and Bepky Xikrin at the Universidade Federal da Bahia (source: Julia Turska, 2023)



Dramatic environmental impacts of hydro-dam

Dangerous illegal occupation of a southern portion of the Indigenous Land

Current political panorama

Increasing Indigenous visibility and activism

Mebengokré changing demands: from “projects” to “protagonism”

## Some notes



Image: the Bacaja river (source: Bepkyi Xikrin)



A lush tropical forest scene with various palm trees and dense green foliage under a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

**Thanks for the attention!**

<https://wa.me/c/559388038427>

<https://www.menirexikrin.com.br>