

Transcript of Greta Thunberg and Samela Sataré Mawé, APIB spokesperson representing youth and women of the Indigenous People of Amazonia, testifying at Brazilian Senate hearing on latest IPCC climate facts on 10 September 2021

Full 2h15 min hearing in portuguese, (Greta thunberg from 1h20min)

original portuguese : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aw7loUlrrsU>

simultaneous english translation : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrE2_XFy3l8

GRETA THUNBERG

My name is Greta Thunberg, and I am a climate and environmental activist from Sweden.

And to be honest, I'm really in no position to tell you what to do. I come from a part of the world that initiated the climate and ecological emergency, the crisis, which is the reason why we are here today. This is a part of the world that is much more historically responsible for this emergency than you are. A part of the world that has signed up to lead the way. And I come from a country which to a large extent has inspired forestry models all over the world with its lack of prioritizing nature and indigenous rights, based on the idea that nature is something that we can and should domesticate and conquer for the benefit of a few.

But no matter how you see it, the things Brazil's leaders are doing now are completely shameful, especially in the light of the way it's treating and has been treating the Indigenous Peoples and nature. Brazil sure did not start this crisis, but your leaders are adding a lot of fuel to the fire. And just because the leaders of the global north have failed, and yes, failing they are, that is no excuse for Brazil not to take a different path.

The Amazon, the lungs of the Earth, is now close to a tipping point, and several studies suggest that parts of it are now emitting more carbon than it is absorbing because of human initiated forest fires and legal as well as illegal logging. And this is happening on your watch. Indeed, it is being directly fueled by your government.

But the world cannot afford to lose the Amazon, because if we lose the Amazon, we will most likely lose all possibilities of reaching the Paris Agreement. And that will be a death sentence to countless people in countless parts of the world, not the least in Brazil.

You have a historic responsibility but also an unprecedented opportunity to lead the way. But in order to do so, you must unite behind the science and give stewardship of the land back to Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon. Globally, Indigenous People make up less than 5% of the population, but they are protecting 80% of the biodiversity. They are the guardians of the land and Indigenous rights and climate justice go hand in hand.

It is time to come to terms with our history and for colonialism to end. Conservation cannot be entrusted only to governments, companies, western NGOS, but to those who have been taking care of the land for millennia. But right now, as we speak, Indigenous People all over the world are being threatened and even killed for protecting the land. And very much so in Brazil. Again, on your watch. And this is outrageous.

The recent proposed bills in Brazil are yet another death to Indigenous rights, to biodiversity and to future living conditions on Planet Earth. As it would rapidly speed up the already disastrous conditions in and outside of the Amazon rainforest. And again, I am in no position to tell you what to do. But I can tell you this:

People all around the world are watching you right now and will you take action to help prevent the worst impacts of the climate and ecological crisis? Will you support the Indigenous Peoples who live in the Amazon to care for the lungs of the Earth? And will you be on the right side of history?

I'm just one person, but the eyes of all the world are upon you. It is time for people like me to pass the mic to the most effective people in the most affected areas. Thank you.

SAMELA SATERÉ-MAWÉ

Good morning, I am Samela Sateré-Mawé. I am a young communicator of the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil APIB, young communicator for Indigenous women, part of coordination of the Indigenous Brazilians of Amazonia. I'm an environmental activist for Fridays For Future Brazil. I'm also a student, a Biology student. And we are here in Brasilia for the second March of Indigenous Women, women reforesting minds for the healing of the Earth. We Indigenous are the main defenders of nature.

We cannot think of a living and sustainable Amazon without considering the Indigenous Peoples. We are here as biomes. We are the Amazon. We are the Pantanal. We are the Amazon. We, Indigenous women. We will heal the Earth. We young Indigenous are the main actors for averting climate change.

We Indigenous must be here fighting for the environment and for the territory in a situation that people do not take into account.

There are many genocide bills of law in the Brazilian Congress that will threaten our territory, that will threaten our lives. These are bills of law that will open space for mining, for loggers, for miners in our territory. We will not put up with that.

We as Indigenous are the main defenders of the environment. And we have mobilised to come here to Brasilia because we will not accept miners in our territory. We will not accept loggers. We are here in Brasilia with over 4,000 women, 6,000 Indigenas in all. We left our territory to fight because all that happens in Indigenous lands will also happen in your own land, in your own states where you all live.

People only care about climate change with the environment when that affects them directly. We Indigenous People hold the sky so that it doesn't come down on our heads, but not only on our heads, but we think about the collective. We think about everybody. We hold the sky so that it doesn't come down on everybody's heads.

The most preserved territories in Brazil are Indigenous territories. Brazil was 100% Indigenous land and we are now down to 13%. And these 13% are the most preserved land in Brazil. It is important to further preserve and protect in general Indigenous land and take into consideration the Indigenous People as main defenders of the environment.

And we young Indigenous protagonise the preservation of the environment not only as young defenders, not only as Indigenous, taking into consideration our traditional knowledge but also we are at the universities, studying and learning. I study biology at the University of the Amazon.

I belong to the Sateré-Mawé people. We Indigenous are the main defenders of Nature. We cannot think of the Amazon, preservation of the environment without considering the Indigenous Peoples. We Indigenous women will heal the Earth.