

CHARTER OF CLIMATE RIGHTS OF MARE



WORKING GROUP

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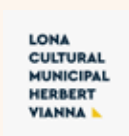
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INTRODUCTION

We are currently experiencing the biggest crisis of our century. The climate crisis is caused by human action on Earth, through the burning of fossil fuels derived from oil, mineral coal, and natural gas, conversion of land for activities such as agriculture, and rampant deforestation.

This seems to be something far from our local reality, but it is here in the Maré Complex in Rio de Janeiro that we feel the effects on our skin, as well as in so many other vulnerable places in Brazil.

Climate Change exposes and magnifies the existing social, racial, and gender inequalities, creating a chasm of extreme marginalization. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in the last decade, the most vulnerable have suffered **15 times more** the effects of the climate crisis, **a scenario that will be even worse** in the present decade.

We know that it is necessary to be aware of the drastic effects of climate change and act fast to create a more sustainable world model. Tools such as **climate education, climate justice, territory vulnerability assessment, implemented adaptation policies, and access to climate financing** are fundamental so that the Maré Complex can live a different reality.

However, the aforementioned tools are still far from our reality, and the challenge to integrate the climate change agenda in the territory is great, after all, our daily lives involve many complex issues that will be addressed in this charter.

For this reason, in July 2022, the movement **“Está rolando um clima na Maré”** was created and residents, grassroots groups, and favela leaderships gathered at Lona Cultural to discuss the climate change agenda, which still lacks a strong connection with favelas and outlying areas. After a productive day of discussions and several online meetings over the past months, the **Charter of Climate Rights of Maré** was created to summarize in a single document the aspirations of those who live in the Maré Complex and envisage living in a greener, more resilient, and adaptive area. The letter is only the first step, and we hope it will be the gateway for several concrete actions at the Maré Complex

CHAPTER 1

FAVELAS IN RIO DE JANEIRO AND THE MARÉ COMPLEX

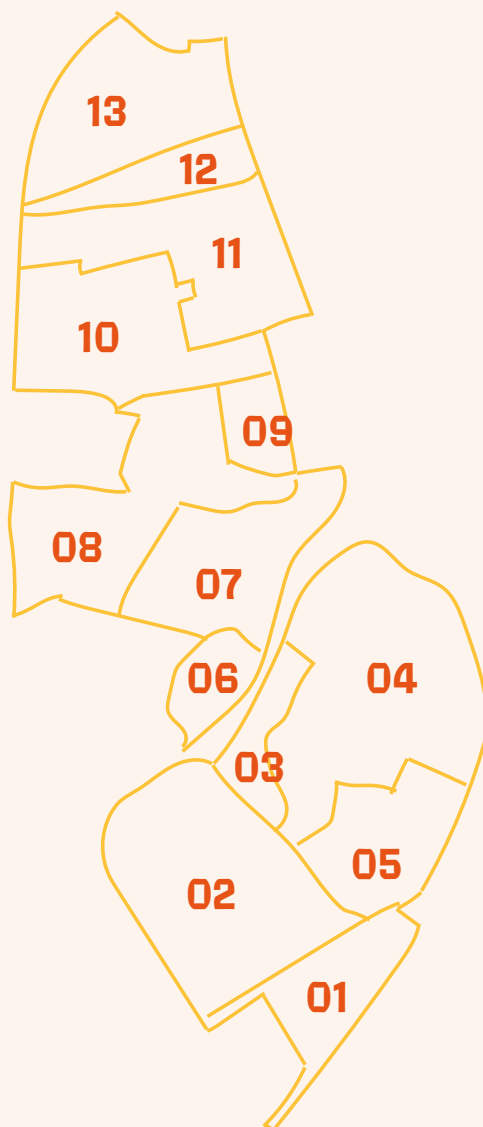
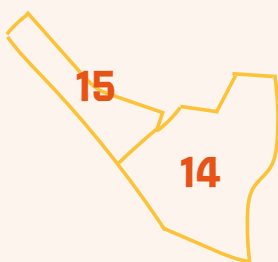
The favelas, as well as the cortiços, were born as a strategy to end the housing deficit, housing mainly poor workers who needed to live near places that offered work. As a result of the slavery legacy, black people were marginalized socially, politically, and economically and even after being freed, they continued to be discriminated against by society. Moreover, they were denied access to land, which drove many to extreme poverty and resulted in a mass displacement of free black and poor white people to peri-urban or rural cities and quilombos. To the state and dominant groups, the quilombos represented a threat to the established order. Meanwhile, for those who resided there, i.e., the quilombolas, they represented a possibility to resist enslavement and the life imposed by the colonial and imperial state. Now, we can interpret the favelas as **a transmutation of the quilombos**, since both spaces have been stigmatized throughout the socio-spatial history of the city.

The **1,018 favelas** of Rio de Janeiro, in different regions of the city, are home to about **1,434,975 inhabitants**, i.e., **22% of the population of Rio de Janeiro** (Data Rio 2018). The largest complex of favelas in Rio de Janeiro is Maré. It is located in the North of the city of Rio de Janeiro and is composed of the following favelas: Morro do Timbau, Baixa do Sapateiro, Marcílio Dias, Parque Maré, Parque Rubens Vaz, Parque Roquete Pinto, Parque União, Nova Holanda, Praia de Ramos, Conjunto Esperança, Vila do João, Vila dos Pinheiros, Conjunto Pinheiros, Conjunto Bento Ribeiro Dantas, Nova Maré, and Salsa e Merengue. Three of the main expressways of the city go through this area: Linha Vermelha and Avenida Brasil go along the boundaries of Maré and Linha Amarela crosses Maré close to Cidade Universitária, which means the area is in a strategic position in the city. The Population Census 2000 and 2010 indicated that, **in 10 years, Maré had a population growth of over 12%**, a figure that contrasts with the finding of the Social Development Index of the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro (2010), by Instituto Pereira Passos, that Maré has the worst Human Development Index (HDI) in the city.

Maré, like other extremely vulnerable urban spaces, suffers from numerous rights violations. In the recent Covid-19 scenario, for example, it had twice the lethality of the city of Rio de Janeiro in the first year of the pandemic. Research institutes and activist leaderships from Rede Maré had to intervene to mitigate the situation. The health conditions and mortality rate during the pandemic were linked to a lack of basic structured sanitation, water insecurity, high population density, low-ventilated housing, and urban violence (Instituto Nacional de Infectologia Evandro Chagas - Fiocruz 2020).

FAVELAS OF THE MARÉ COMPLEX

01. CONJUNTO ESPERANÇA
02. VILA DO JOÃO
03. CONJUNTO PINHEIROS
04. VILA DOS PINHEIROS
05. NOVO PINHEIROS (SALSA E MERENGUE)
06. CONJUNTO BENTO RIBEIRO DANTAS
07. MORRO DO TIMBAU
08. BAIXA DO SAPATEIRO
09. NOVA MARÉ
10. PARQUE MARÉ
11. NOVA HOLANDA
12. PARQUE RUBENS VAZ
13. PARQUE UNIÃO
14. PARQUE ROQUETE PINTO
15. PRAIA DE RAMOS
16. MARCÍLIO DIAS*



*DOESN'T SHOW ON MAP

CHAPTER 2

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Environmental Racism sheds light on environmental issues beyond the preservation and conservation of natural environments. **Environmental Racism focuses on outlying and marginalized populations who have their rights violated due to their color/race and/or ethnicity through environmental risks to their health and well-being.** In our country, many rural territories are affected, such as those of native peoples, quilombolas, and/or traditional communities, whereas in urban environments this occurs in outlying areas, places stereotyped as marginalized, communities, and favelas. Expropriation, neglect, and non-compliance with the law, decrees, or environmental standards, in the face of non-supervision or lax competent bodies, expose several populations to high environmental risks and degradations in comparison to other regions.

Environmental injustice manifests itself through environmental racism, through the existence of social phenomena such as structural and institutional racism. In short, structural racism is the set of historical and cultural discriminatory practices within society that privileges a race over others, which, in this case, favors the hierarchy and domination of white people over non-white. Institutional racism means the imposition of racist rules and standards by institutions that are linked to the social order they aim to safeguard.

The combination of these phenomena and the violence caused by Environmental Racism must be identified in the communities and territories affected by it, so that it is possible to develop strategies with civil society to combat these violations, through the elaboration, revision, and enforcement of laws. In addition to the construction of incidence of socio-environmental and socio-facial public policies in the political agendas for its implementation.

CLIMATE RIGHTS

Everyone has the right to an ecologically balanced environment. That is what the Brazilian Constitution states. However, this right, like so many others, has never been applied equitably. While a small portion of the population has access to healthy common environmental assets, the other largest one suffers from a lack of clean air, clean and regular water supply, green landscapes, rights over their territories and ways of life, and sanitation.

This situation is compounded by the negative effects of the increase in the average temperature of the planet. This phenomenon causes changes in global climate patterns, such as droughts, rains, and floods, hurricanes, cyclones, heat and cold waves, among other climatic events that are increasingly more intense and frequent.

These climate events have disastrous consequences for vulnerable populations without financial or civic infrastructure resources that allow resilience in face of these crises, which further increases inequalities. The Maré Complex, like many communities, has little access to public assets and receives few investments to improve the infrastructure the community needs to adapt and resist any changes in natural conditions.

These climate fluctuations can no longer be considered exceptions. They are part of the new normal. And as stated by our Constitution, we have the right to an ecologically balanced environment. Now, more than ever, we need to demand this right so that we are not driven homeless by climate change. We cannot lose our lives, homes, and community to a phenomenon that has been announced for 50 years. Climate adaptation is survival. Recognizing this scenario as a right to be demanded is fundamental, and the paths to this end include social mobilization, strengthening of grassroots groups and community-based organizations, more access to climate education, and the development of effective public policies in a participatory and collaborative way. If pressure is to be increased, with an articulated and engaged community, it is also possible to demand changes through climate change litigation.

DREAMS FOR THE MARÉ COMPLEX

To be able to demand concrete actions in the Maré Complex, it is necessary to imagine how we want to experience this more regenerative, resilient, and adaptive world. Access to climate education, development of creative processes, debate, and learning is fundamental. In the meeting held in July 2022 with the presence of 50 people that included grassroots groups, leaders, and residents of Maré and in other online meetings up until the publishing of the charter, it was possible to consolidate the voices of several people who already dream of a greener Maré! It will be presented in four distinct segments: Sanitation, Food Security, Urbanization, Gender, and Race, along with the actions required in each axis. However, as the very title of the charter explains, this is the Charter of Climate Rights of Maré, so it is important to emphasize that we need to have the following measures as the basis for climate action in the area and they should be considered cross-sectional in all thematic axes:

- (i) permanent production of knowledge about all types of climate impacts in the Maré Complex by the city hall, academia, and third sector, always actively listening to the residents of Maré about what they observe.
- (ii) Planning and implementation of public policies to adapt to these impacts and support those in need. No public work or policy should be carried out without considering climate change and listening to the population.
- (iii) Preventive actions such as improving health equipment, civil defense, and communication with and between residents.
- (iv) Special attention should be paid to climate events that have a direct impact on the health and well-being of the population, such as floods, heat waves, or dangerous triggers of global warming such as lack of basic sanitation.

4.1 SANITATION

The Maré Complex consists of 16 different favelas with different urban formations. This indicates that the basic sanitation infrastructures in Maré also differ from favela to favela. Therefore, when considering the effects of the climate crisis in these territories, it is also necessary to consider the particularities of each of them.

When considering the interrelations between sanitation and the advance of the climate crisis, one of the most noticeable effects on the territory is the relationship between more intense rains and its consequences on the territory, which has no infrastructure to mitigate or, at least, adapt to the new climatic conditions.

At Maré, open data on basic sanitation infrastructures point to the existence of a mixed sanitary sewage and rainwater drainage network system. Although there are some good examples of the benefits of such mixed networks in some areas, there are also challenges when the volume of rain increases, since it becomes more costly to think about the treatment of this sewage and there is the possibility of it overflowing into other water bodies or even homes due to sewage reflux, as it has often occurred in Maré.

According to data from Data Rio (2017), most of Maré's favelas have an official sewage network, but there is no data on the percentage of sewage treated — and Maré is located next to the Alegria Sewage Treatment Plant (ETE Alegria), one of the largest in Rio de Janeiro, with enough capacity to treat all sewage from Maré.

However, data from Cocôzap (2022) shows that, even though there is a connection to the official sewage collection system, Maré still suffers from many problems related to a deficient structure of sanitary sewage.

Thus, in addressing the worsening of these issues in the face of the climate crisis, some proposals can be presented:

> **Rainwater drainage system**

As pointed out, one of the most visible effects of the sanitation deficit related to the climate crisis involves urban drainage. One way of improving the quality of life in the area is to think of an urban drainage system that can meet the needs of different territories and deal with the increasingly frequent and intense rains, thus preventing flooding.

> **Sewage collection and treatment**

In addition to improvements in the Maré sewage collection, this sewage needs to be treated. That way, it would be possible to prevent tons of sewage from being disposed of incorrectly in the water bodies surrounding Maré, thus moving towards a more sustainable territory.

> **Guanabara Bay and leisure areas**

Created in the 1990s, the Guanabara Bay Depollution Plan (PDBG) also involves treating its affluents, such as the Cunha Canal and the Fundão Canal, which are connected to the Maré Complex. The fulfillment of the PDBG would enable these canals to be used with an economic bias, as previously, and the green areas close to them to become leisure spaces in the territory.

4.2 FOOD SECURITY

Food insecurity in the context of the climate crisis is a warning factor. These are fundamental rights negatively impacted by climate change. According to the definition by the Food Security Information Network, food security is achieved when everyone has, at all times, physical and economic access to innocuous and nutritious foods to meet their dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life. The reality experienced by families in the Maré Complex highlights the restricted access to healthy and nutritious foods, impacting everyone, especially children.

Thus, in addressing the worsening of these issues in the face of the climate crisis, some proposals can be presented:

> Revitalization and creation of new community gardens

The Maré Complex has its largest community garden in an area known by the inhabitants as “mata” and officially named “Parque Ecológico”, located in the southeast of Maré. However, this is the only green area in the region, and it is necessary to implement a system that ensures that the gardens have active permanence in the territory, offering inputs and the possibility of species exchange among residents, institutions, and initiatives that take care of these spaces.

> Implementing a dietary re-education and climate education policy in schools

Faced with the need to approach the topic of climate change in classrooms, in a cross-sectional and interdisciplinary way, the Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio de Janeiro approved Bill 6.060/22. The challenge now is to implement it in all Maré schools so that issues such as health and food safety are incorporated into the daily lives of the students to raise awareness of how they are impacted and the possible solutions.

> Agroecological fairs and distribution patterns

Encourage some fixed spots at Maré fairs with agroecological tents for the distribution of agroecological products and materials from local producers, including crafts, to disseminate knowledge and ideas about agroecology, nutrition, and health, thus assisting in dietary re-education.

4.3 URBANIZATION

Thinking about the effects of climate injustice in the urban context of Maré involves thinking, intrinsically, of the faults that constitute Maré as a complex of favelas. The composition of Maré brings an important aspect to thinking about the advance of the climate crisis in the territory. Maré is a landfill site; until the mid-1950s, most favelas had their homes built on stilts, since most of their extension was made up of water courses, such as rivers

and mangroves. Over time, the Maré complex began to be landfilled – both autonomously and as part of the city's infrastructure projects – and began to see a continuous process of population density increase.

Currently, Maré has about 140 thousand inhabitants, and its urban infrastructure does not correspond to the size of the territory, neither in population nor territorial terms. Maré is a heat island, it has frequent flooding points due to rains and many vertical constructions, which makes it difficult for the air to circulate. Thinking of environments with cross-ventilation, for example, is almost impossible in an urban model such as Maré's.

One of the great obstacles in the urbanization process of Maré is the different formations of the favelas; while some were spontaneously built, such as Parque Maré, others were part of government urban projects, such as Salsa e Merengue. This process makes it difficult to approach problems, challenges, and/or improvements in a homogeneous way; urban policies have to be planned considering the specificities of each favela.

When thinking about the advance of the climate crisis, the most practical urban effect that has been felt in Maré is flooding due to stronger and more frequent rains in unexpected seasons. Some families who live on the banks of rivers, for example, have increasingly reported times when rainwater enters their houses due to floods or drainage and sewage systems overflow inside their homes due to reflux.

Thus, in addressing the worsening of these issues in the face of the climate crisis, some proposals can be presented:

> Guarantee of access to the right to proper, safe, and resilient housing in the territory

With the advance of the climate crisis, thinking of proper, safe, and resilient housing with an inclusive and participatory adaptation process that considers the local voices is of paramount importance for the coming years. It is important to emphasize that these adaptations need to be made first in the territory itself, and policies of displacement to distant territories can only be allowed once the territory becomes uninhabitable due to climate issues.

> Recovery of bike paths, implementation of shared bike systems and electric bus lines in the territory

Thinking about means of transport in the territory is a matter of urban mobility and the right to an inclusive city that should consider issues of adaptation and even mitigation against climate conditions. In the summer, Maré has very high temperatures, which, due to urban planning, put the elderly, pregnant women, and children at risk. A Maré with sustainable transport options would reduce the exposure of these groups to extreme temperatures and increase the quality of life in the territory.

> Social participation as the foundation for urban planning policies

Social participation should be the foundation for urban planning at Maré. The climate crisis poses new challenges for maintaining life, especially in outlying territories. However, it is essential to remember that such territories constitute memories, affections, citizenry, and rights, and, therefore, their needs must be heard and considered in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

4.4 GENDER AND RACE

As a result of colonization, the formation of Brazilian society is marked by social, ethnic-racial, and gender inequalities that are perpetuated and renewed. As demonstrated at the beginning of the charter, the history of favelas is related to this inequality.

The population of the Maré Complex is composed mostly of people who self-declare as black or brown, according to the Population Census of the territory (62.1%), and it also includes an indigenous population of 0.6%. Therefore, the Maré population lives with structural problems that reflect centuries of racial inequality and exploitation – problems intensified by climate change, capable of producing new forms of racism, such as the exclusion of this population from mitigation and adaptation measures.

In Maré, almost half of the women aged 15 years or older are responsible for households, and 62.5% of women aged 25 to 29 are mothers. Poor women from the urban outlying areas are the biggest victims of floods and extreme events. And studies show that violence against women increases with climate change. During the conflict, women face increased domestic violence, sexual intimidation, human trafficking, and rape.

In this sense, to move forward with actions against climate change in the favela, it is necessary to always have the race, class, and gender dimensions as key elements to reflect and build collective actions of combat that are conceived based on the local reality by the people who daily experience the impacts of the climate crisis and fight for solutions.

Thus, in addressing the worsening of these issues in the face of the climate crisis, some proposals can be presented:

> Having more black women from the favela in decision making

As the phrase chanted by social movements goes: “Nothing about us, without us!” We understand that the active participation of black women and favela women in decision-making is fundamental since they are at the front line of climate impacts, thus they should also be the protagonists in the development of solutions.

> Mapping ancestral knowledge and technology of adaptation developed at Maré

We believe that people in situations of vulnerability are great masters of adaptation due to their daily need to adapt to adverse situations. However, such knowl-

edge developed throughout history and often passed from generation to generation is frequently invisible and little valued. Therefore, we need to map out the ancestral knowledge and technologies of the inhabitants, valuing and strengthening their development.

> **Equal distribution of electricity in the different regions of Maré**

In places where there is constant power oscillation, causing power outages in streets and other urban spaces, an unsafe environment is instantly created, especially for women! The climate crisis intensifies the problem of lack of access to energy, so it is necessary to have, in addition to equal distribution, power from renewable sources so the territory can have a guaranteed power supply, thus creating a safer space for Maré women.

