

Sons Of Saluga's



Decentralising Digital, or DeDi, was a two year long collaboration between the University of Dundee and the Indian design research agency Quicksand. Our aim was to co-create new stories that explore how powerful developments in emerging technologies such as the Internet of Things, the voice enabled Internet, machine learning and artificial intelligence might be harnessed to support rural communities in India.

This story is set in 2050 at a conservation conference where Soliga researchers are presenting their deep knowledge of the forest via songs. It traces the journey that a researcher begins in 2020, working with the Soligas to understand their ways, using technology over time to enhance this knowledge and incorporating it in conservation policies.

Year 2050, Nagamma is preparing for a conference



2020, Soliga hamlet in BR hills



Hello Achugegowda, thank you for helping me out. I want to do more authentic research that can inform the outside world about your intimate knowledge of the forest.



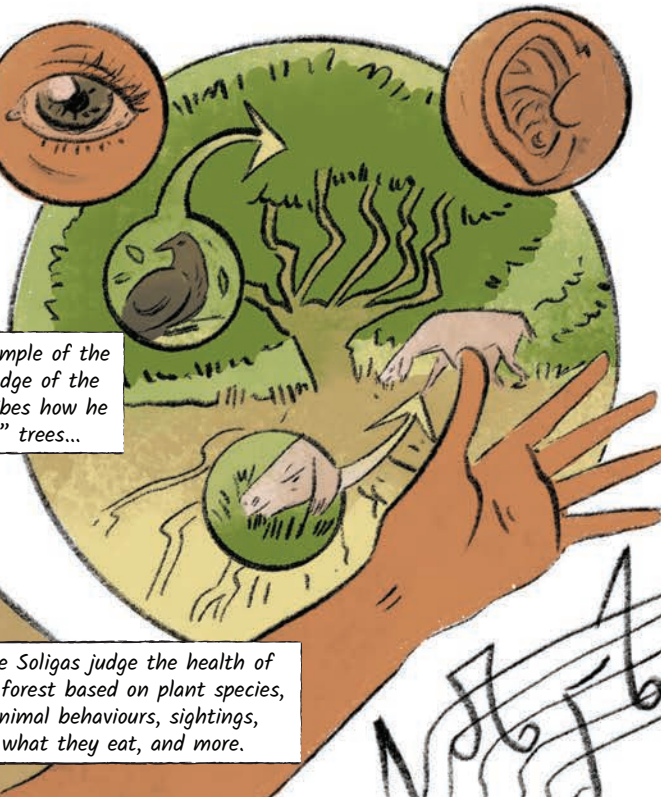
Achugegowda takes Nagamma through the forest on many trips, singing their traditional nature songs...



The songs are an example of the Soligas' deep knowledge of the forest. He also describes how he "sees" and "hears" trees...

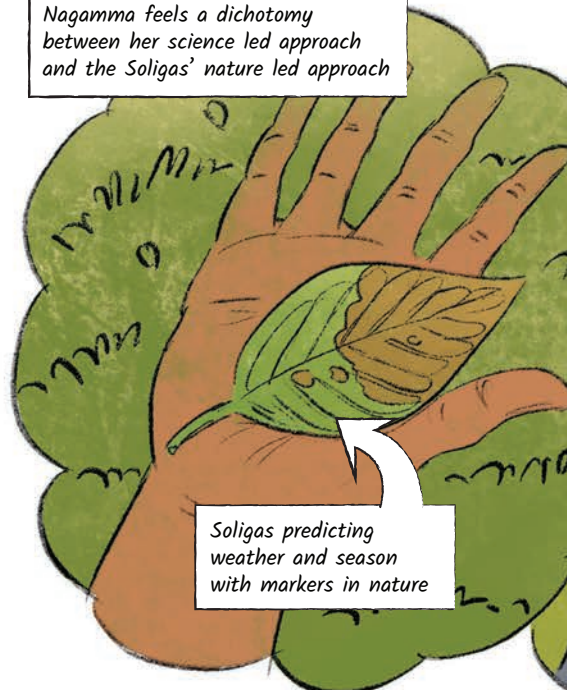


Of course, the forest has changed so much over the years and climate change is a personal loss to us Soligas



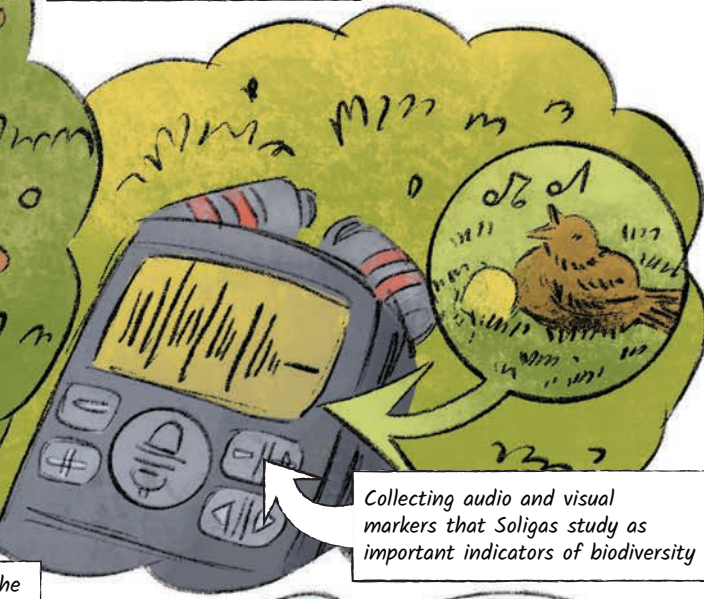
The Soligas judge the health of the forest based on plant species, animal behaviours, sightings, what they eat, and more.

Nagamma feels a dichotomy between her science led approach and the Soligas' nature led approach



Soligas predicting weather and season with markers in nature

Research can be informed by both approaches and validated by each other over time



Collecting audio and visual markers that Soligas study as important indicators of biodiversity

Nagamma involves the community in activities like card sorting exercises, in order to get them engaged in the process of research



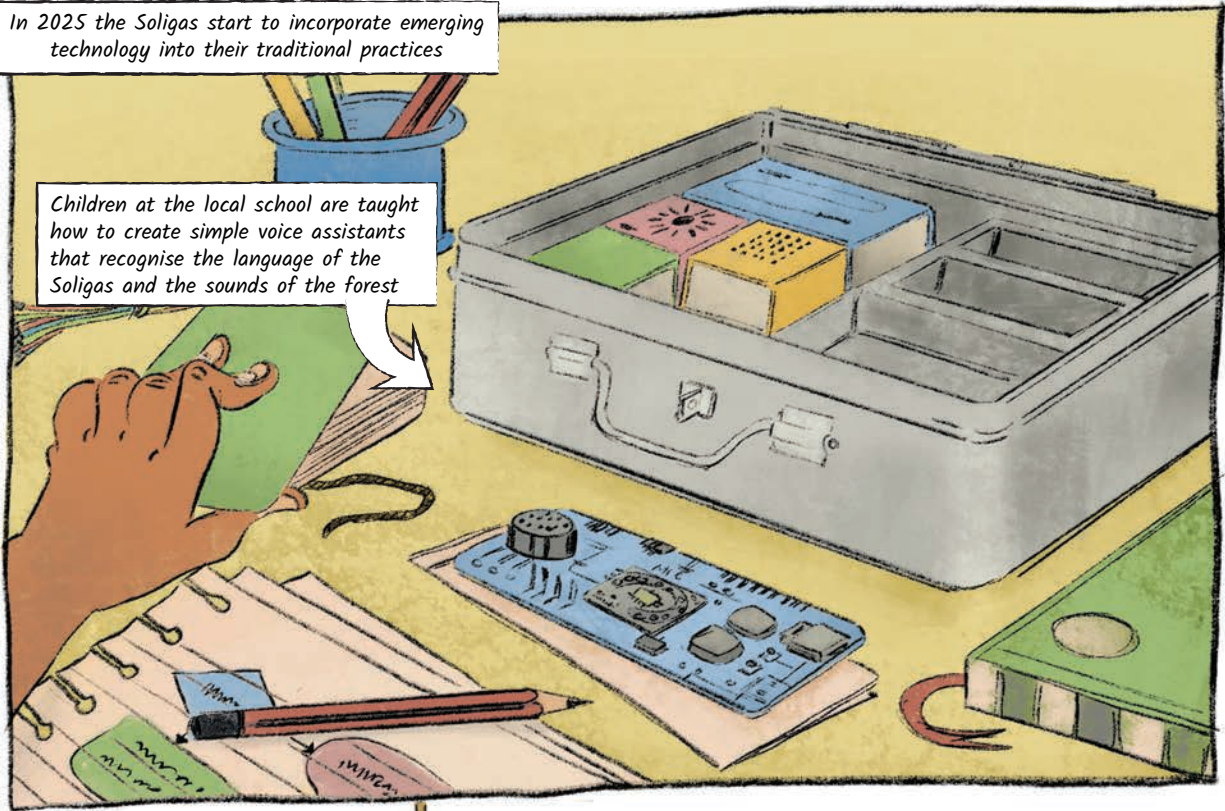
Changes in weather patterns as predicted by the Soligas



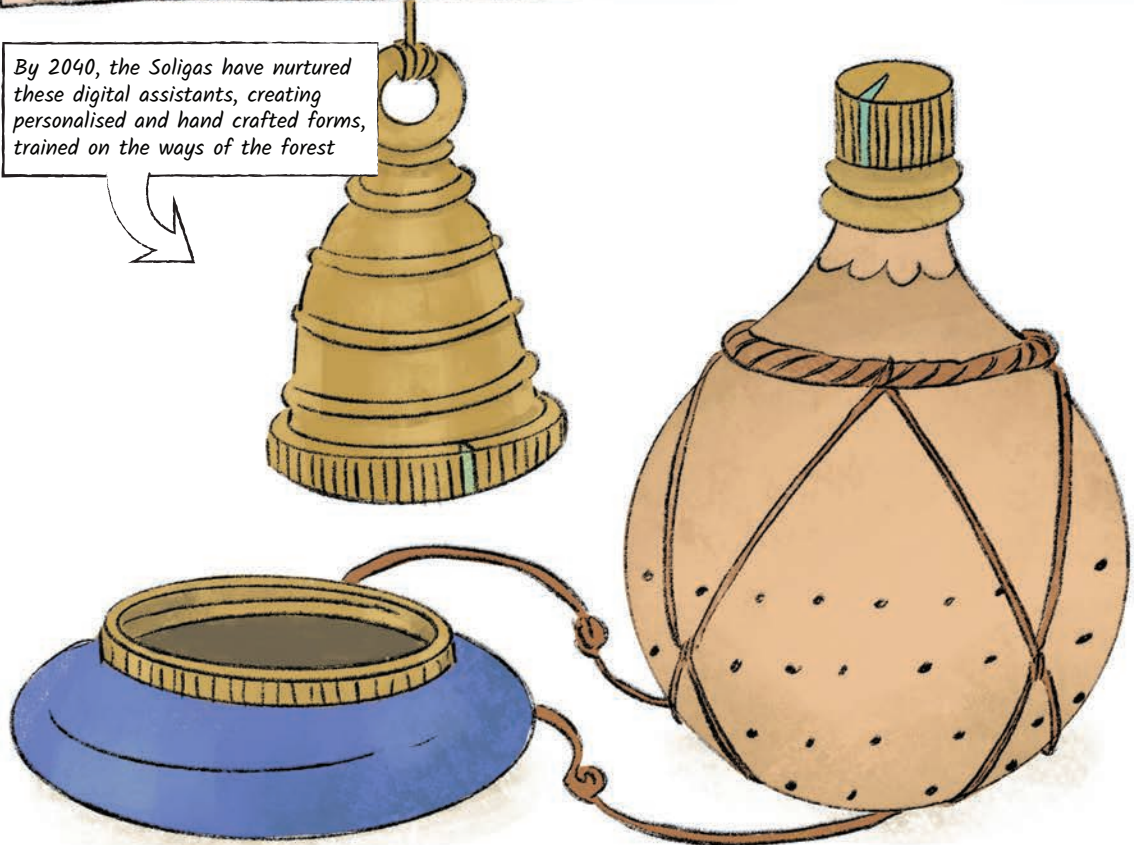
Over time, Nagamma begins to understand the importance of the Soliga ways of sensing and understanding. And starts to think about how these ways can be validated for better environmental protection.

In 2025 the Soligas start to incorporate emerging technology into their traditional practices

Children at the local school are taught how to create simple voice assistants that recognise the language of the Soligas and the sounds of the forest



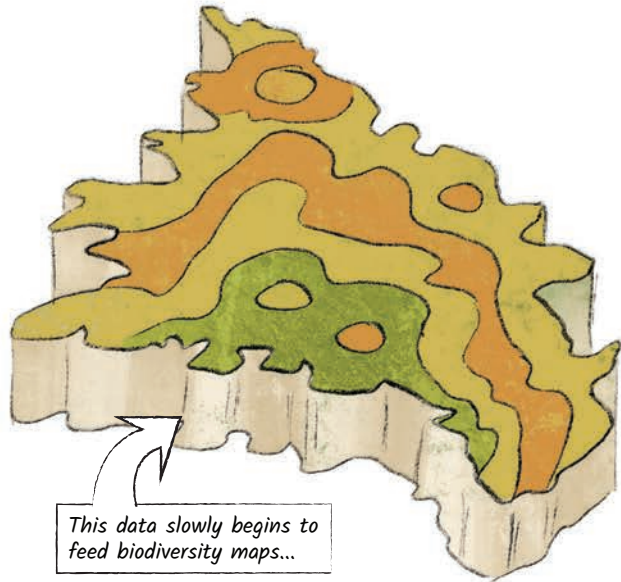
By 2040, the Soligas have nurtured these digital assistants, creating personalised and hand crafted forms, trained on the ways of the forest



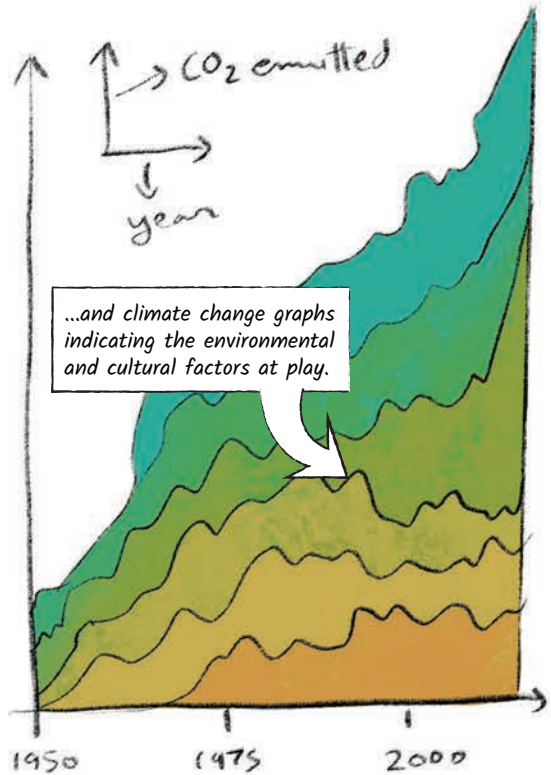
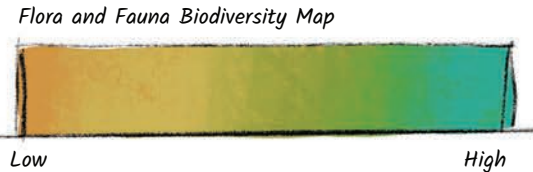
Nagamma continues to collect rich data with the Soligas...

Collecting sounds using the digital assistants...

Collecting visual markers from the forest...



This data slowly begins to feed biodiversity maps...



...and climate change graphs indicating the environmental and cultural factors at play.

In 2040, Nagamma and the Soliga community compile their research into a report for the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

Drishti 2040

A report by Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

A new paradigm for biodiversity regeneration in Karnataka
A partnership between the government of Karnataka and the Soliga tribes in BR hills to discover a new direction for biodiversity protection and regeneration in the state

By 2050, Nagamma has realised her ambition to tell the story of the Soligas through their own songs. Their groundbreaking album features the songs of the Soligas and the songs of the forest, convincing academics and researchers to recognise the unique knowledge of the Soligas.

Learning to speak to an elephant and other forest stories.

Dr. Nagamma C and the Soligas
One
Tuning
The long walk for honey
Learning to speak to an elephant
A bird called Tiger
Those that whisper also cry

Two
Life without language
In the Mesh
Finding my song
Soliga justice day

2050, Nagamma and the Soligas at the Conservation Conference



It is an honour to present at this historic conference after 30 years of research. It will be a disservice for us to present our findings through a presentation...



...Here presenting Songs of Soligas, are my melodious Soliga fellow researchers

Soligas sing their nature and forest songs...



...and illustrate how their language is also now protected and widely spoken because of all these efforts

The project provokes widespread policy changes across India and biodiversity is now better protected

2030

2050

Flora and Fauna Biodiversity Map

Low

High

The world starts to see the importance of traditional, indigenous ways...

...Their ways are now established as formal conservation methods, and included in policies named after the words the Soligas use to describe the forest.

Soliga land rights recognised and enshrined in law
April, 2053

People across the country are fighting for indigenous and forest rights
January, 2051

New policy mandates companies to be 100% carbon neutral
March, 2052

Policy makers take inputs from the Soliga Community
May, 2054

Large positive Biodiversity Index shift in the past 20 years
October, 2060

Push for policy to recognise indigenous and forest rights

Protect Birds,
Protect Animals,
Protect Trees,
Protect, Protect,
Protect!

INDIGENOUS
RIGHTS ARE OUR
RIGHTS

Song of Soligas

quicksand.co.in
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blackbazacoffee.com

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