DEFORESTATION

Deforestation is the process of clearing naturally occurring forests by logging or burning for purposes such as agriculture, fuel or urban development. Forests are also reduced in the UK as more and more trees are permanently removed to make space for houses and farmlands.

Deforestation or the loss of habitat impacts all the species that live in the rainforest and threatens their survival. This can lead to loss of biodiversity (the mix of different animal and plant species).

Deforestation contributes to soil erosion and flooding, as the natural barrier is removed. Deforestation also occurs naturally or unintentionally though wildfires and overgrazing.

Slash and burn is a method of clearing the forest for agriculture. The trees are first cut then left to dry out and then burnt to clear the area of forest. The land is then used for agriculture for a few years until there are not enough nutrients left in the soil to grow crops. Although it is a destructive process, over time and if left alone the forest can begin to regrow.

Plantations are the Intentional planting of a crop on a large scale, usually applied to trees or shrubs. The result is a large area with usually just one major plant species growing, a monoculture. Examples include tea and coffee plantations, and pine forests grown for timber.

World Land Trust works with local communities to help protect land from logging and development to allow species to continue living in the forest. One project is in the Amazonian Andes, where areas of land were protected permanently to reduce the possibility of a road being built. This road would have caused deforestation and encouraged development which would have had a negative effect on the wildlife and local communities.

Sierra Santa Cruz in Guatemala was also at risk of deforestation to clear space for oil palm plantations. World Land Trust raised money to protect this area during their Treasure Chest Appeal which was a great success and enabled the area to be secured, ensuring the land would remain lush and green.

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KEY STAGE 1 / 2

- Consider participating in Operation Ocelot alongside *Rainforests*, to incorporate maths skills.
- Create a healthy rainforest showing the species likely to be found.
- Create a short news segment with a reporter and local person before and after land is looked after (consider using a green screen and recreate a rainforest habitat in different stages of recovery).
- Think about ingredients, materials and other items that are sourced from the rainforest and what alternatives could be used.
- Create a campaign poster to help protect the rainforest and other habitats from damage and include ideas on using alternatives.
- Create a logo against deforestation.
- Brainstorm in groups how to help prevent deforestation and discuss.
- Design a treehouse for the rainforest out of recycled material.
- Write a story about living in the rainforest or write a diary entry for a day living in the rainforest.
- Recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things. Pupils should explore examples of human impact (both positive and negative) on environments, for example, the positive effects of nature reserves, ecologically planned parks, or garden ponds, and the negative effects of population and development, litter or deforestation.
- Discuss issues through persuasive writing, role play or class debate.

Use in conjunction with *Different Types of Forest* and *Human Impact*.

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