



Brief Note on Deforestation

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DESCRIPTION

Deforestation is the reduction in the area of forests worldwide that are lost to other uses such as agricultural land, urbanization or logging activities. Due to the sharp acceleration of human activities since 1960, deforestation negatively affects natural ecosystems, biodiversity and climate. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates the annual rate of deforestation at about 1.3 million square kilometers per decade

Many factors, either anthropogenic or natural in origin, cause deforestation. Natural factors including natural forest fires or diseases caused by pests and diseases can lead to deforestation. However, human activities are one of the main causes of global deforestation. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the expansion of agriculture is responsible for nearly 80% of global deforestation, the construction of infrastructure such as roads or dams, as well as other activities. Mining and urbanization are the main causes of deforestation.

Commercial or industrial agriculture (crops and livestock) causes about 40% of forest loss - in search of space to grow food, fiber or biofuels (such as soybeans, palm oil, beef, rice, corn, cotton and sugar cane). It is particularly interesting to note that cattle are thought to be responsible for about 14% of global deforestation.

Human construction of infrastructure also leads to deforestation. Specifically, 10% of deforestation can be attributed to new infrastructure that serves the current human way of life in four main ways: transportation, processing, and energy production.

By destroying forests, human activities endanger the entire ecosystem, creating a natural imbalance and endangering life. The natural world is complex, interconnected and made up of thousands of interdependent relationships, and among other functions, trees provide shade and cooler temperatures for animals and plants. Small trees or vegetation may not tolerate direct sunlight temperatures. Deforestation is the purposeful clearing of forested land. Throughout history and into modern

times, forests have been razed to make space for agriculture and animal grazing, and to obtain wood for fuel, manufacturing, and construction.

Deforestation has dramatically changed landscapes around the world. About 2,000 years ago, 80% of Western Europe was forest; today the figure is 34%. In North America, about half of the forest in the eastern part of the continent was cleared between the 1600s and the 1870s for timber and agriculture. China has lost much of its forest area over the past 4,000 years and today just over 20% of the forest area is covered. Much of Earth's farmland was once forest.

Today, most deforestation occurs in tropical rainforests, aided by the construction of major roads in areas that were previously almost inaccessible. Build or improve forest paths to make them easier to exploit. Burn and burn agriculture is a major contributing factor to deforestation in the tropics. With this farming method, farmers burn large areas of forest and use ashes to fertilize the soil for crops. However, the soil was only fertile for a few years, after which the farmers left to repeat the process elsewhere. Tropical forests are also being cleared to make way for logging, cattle ranching, oil palm and rubber plantations.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates the annual rate of deforestation to be about 1.3 million square kilometers per decade, although this rate has slowed in some places in the early 21st century due to measures taken to prevent deforestation. Improved forest management practices and the establishment of nature reserves. The most deforestation occurs in the tropics, where there are many types of forests. They range from tropical forests that are hot and humid all year round, to forests that are merely moist and humid, to forests where trees shed their leaves in varying proportions during the dry season and open forests. Because the boundaries between these categories are certainly arbitrary, estimates vary as to how much deforestation has occurred in the tropics.

Developing alternatives to deforestation can help reduce the need for deforestation. For example, the desire to expand the area of land used for agriculture is a compelling economic reason

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for deforestation. But if people adopt sustainable farming methods or use new technologies and crops, the need for more land could be reduced, according to the United Nations Toolkit for Sustainable Forest Management.

Forests can also be restored, either by replanting trees in areas that have been cleared or simply by allowing forest ecosystems to

regenerate over time. The goal of restoration is to return the forest to its original state before it was cleared, according to the US Forest Service. The sooner the deforested area is replanted, the sooner the ecosystem can begin to restore itself. Then wildlife will return, water systems will recover, carbon will be sequestered and soil replenished.