

Geography - Rainforests

Rainforest	A dense forest, normally found in tropical areas with high rainfall. They generate most of the world's oxygen.
Deforestation	The action of clearing a wide area of trees.
Interdependent	When two or more people or things are reliant on each other.
Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn	Imaginary lines north and south of the equator. Most rainforests can be found between these two lines.
Emergent Layer	Giant trees that enjoy the most sun but counter high and cold winds
Canopy	Dense layer of trees overlapping each other. Home to most animals in rainforests.
Understory	Relatively dark, open area below the canopy.
Undergrowth	Also known as the forest floor, mainly consisting of fallen leaves, fruit etc. that decomposes as food for trees.
Indigenous	Indigenous people or things belong to the country in which they are found.
Biodiversity	Variety of plant and animal life in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.



Today, around 13 percent of Earth's land is covered with tropical forests (about 2 billion hectares or 7.7 million square miles). The largest unbroken stretch of rainforest is found in the Amazon river basin of South America.

Tropical rainforests are forests with tall trees, warm climates, and lots of rain. It can rain more than one inch nearly every day of the year!



What are human and physical features of geography?

We separate geography into two main areas; Physical and human geography.

Physical geography:

Natural. Including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle

Human geography:

Man made. Including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water





Deforestation:

Deforestation is the clearing, or cutting down, of forests. The word is normally used to describe the actions of humans in removing forests from the planet, rather than destruction caused by such natural events as hurricanes. People have been cutting down trees for thousands of years.

Causes of deforestation:

- To clear space for farming: growing crops (e.g. soya beans & palm oil) and space for cattle to generate cheap beef.
- Chopping down trees for wood.
- To build roads to mine for metals, gold and diamonds.
- To dig for oil.
- To flood areas to make dams and generate electricity.

Indigenous people

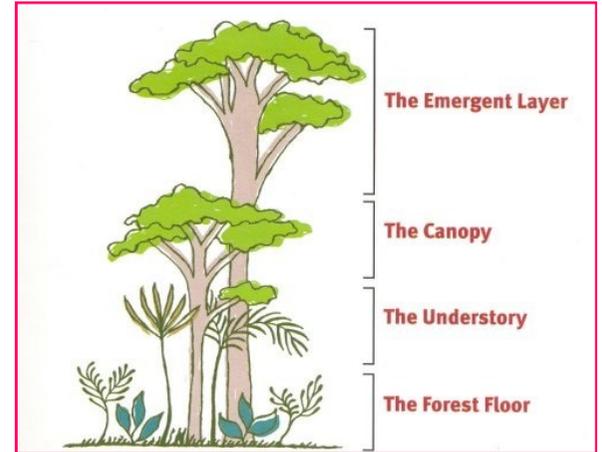
Rainforests are bursting with life. Not only do millions of species of plants and animals live in rainforests, but people also call the rainforest their home. In fact, indigenous, or native, peoples have lived in rainforests for many thousands of years.

The Yanomami is a local tribe living in southern Venezuela and northern Brazil. They live in *shabanas*, these are villages made with wood, straw and palm leaves. The word "Yanomami" means "human being".



Impact of deforestation:

- An area the size of 20 football pitches is destroyed every 60 seconds.
- 1/2 of the tropical rainforests we had are now gone.
- 28,000 species of animals are expected to become extinct in the next 25 years.
- Local people's houses are destroyed.
- Levels of carbon dioxide in the air are increasing and oxygen is decreasing.



The tropical rainforest is a complete environment from top to bottom. In general, it is divided into four layers: emergent layer, canopy layer, understory, and the forest floor. These layers host several species of tropical animals and tropical plants.

