

# Deforestation in amazonia

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The Amazon rainforest is the world's largest rainforest situated in Brazil of South America and consequently suffers the most deforestation in the world. Deforestation is the cause for the destruction of the Amazon and rapidly becoming the most reliable method for access to resources such as wood. The countries of Amazonia are poor, less developed countries that rely on the resources of the Amazon rainforest to become richer, more developed countries. However, some people think that they can only do this by destroying the rainforest forever.

The trees of the rainforest can be sold for wood (timber). This timber is in great demand in economically developed countries like Britain, Japan and USA. Accordingly, as it is in great demand, there are many advantages as well as disadvantages of the deforestation of the trees in the Amazon. There are many people that have an interest in the rainforest such as the large companies in the developed countries who buy the raw materials such as the wood from the rainforest.

The business of trade of the materials would most likely improve the developing countries like Peru and Brazil as the government would profit exceedingly and could use the money to build roads or provide the materials for buildings and schools or hospitals as a way to improve the country. As the company will be a transnational company, there will be many, many jobs created in both the developing and developed countries involved in the business thus improving the standard of living for many people in both types of countries. Nevertheless, the destruction of the rainforest will be vast and this use of the rainforest will not protect the forest.

Other types of people that might be interested in the rainforest are the owner and workers of a saw mill. The owner would gain from his business and would also place many local people in employment. This would improve the local people's standard of living however, the mill would not help the entire country to become more developed. Similarly, this use of the rainforest will not help protect the rainforest however, the destruction of it would not be on such a large scale as the large companies' use of the forest. Landless farmers would be under the impression that they would also benefit from the deforestation of the forest land.

One of the government's plans to improve the country is to give landless farmers a way of living by encouraging them to set up small farms on land which has been deforested. The landless farmers accept the land as the government provides it for the cheaply. However, as a result of deforestation, the land has become useless as the soil is infertile and vulnerable to erosion due to the equatorial climate. This means that Brazil would not become more developed because the landless farmers will not have the land suitable for growing crops therefore their standard of living will remain poor, adding to the poverty of the developing country.

Subsequently, Brazil is left with the destruction of deforestation and useless soil that cannot be recovered in addition to the problem of damaged scenery, all of which does not protect the Amazon rainforest. One point to be considered is that the jobs created will economically develop the country because tax will be introduced and the government could benefit from the

tax money to improve the country by building schools and hospitals etc. so in one way, the poor countries would become more developed.

If the land that has been deforested due to timber being in great demand economically is turned into cattle ranches and plantations, local people would benefit from this as many jobs will be created. Workers will improve their standard of living from this as plantations will allow vital crops such as sugar, coffee and rubber plants to be grown. These raw materials can be sold to economically developed countries, however, growing these crops will be a slow process and the workers would not benefit straight away.

On the other hand, the local tribes like the Kayapo would be against the deforestation of the rainforest completely as their way of living and cultural traditions are destroyed because they are forced off the land to make way for new developments resulting in loss of homes and therefore poor standards of living ensuing again in the poverty of the country. Natural conservationists and tourists would be against this use of the rainforest because rare animal species would become extinct, as well as rare plant and tree species being destroyed. For this use of the rainforest to be sustainable, far less trees would have to be destroyed.

Statistically, approximately one in twenty trees is of economic value, while the rest are destroyed for no reason, leading to the extinction of rare species of plants and trees, which the natural conservationists would be against. To maintain sustainability of the rainforest by using it for the timber, large companies who buy the raw materials could only cut down the trees of economic value rather than destroying others. Also, removing the deforested

trees results in other plant life to be destroyed as roads have to be built and vehicles have to be brought into the rainforest to remove the trees.

Residents of the forest are aware of the circumstances and have found others ways to remove the trees without destroying others. Buffaloes have been used to drag the trees out, without the need to build roads. However, using buffaloes to remove the trees would be slow development for the government so a few roads could be built. Another use of the rainforest is for valuable minerals. Under the forest lie huge amounts of valuable minerals like iron ore, bauxite and gold, some of which are vital to daily life. These valuable minerals are sold to economically developed countries.

The developing country would profit from the sale of the minerals to more economically developed countries for the reason that the demand for the minerals is high from developed countries as they are so vital. Not surprisingly, deforestation is the method used to access these minerals, causing masses of destruction. Nevertheless, large companies in the developed countries who buy the raw materials from the rainforest will still favour the use of the rainforest to extract valuable minerals. Besides destroying the land under which the minerals lie, room has to be made for the power stations needed.

Extracting valuable minerals such as bauxite which is aluminium need hydro-electric power from these power stations. One advantage of this use of the rainforest is that electricity can be provided for the local people as well as for the extraction of minerals. This therefore helps part of the country to become more developed as many homes would have the basic amenities

that a home in the developed country would have. Another advantage of this use of the rainforest is that again, many jobs will be created for the local people to work at the sites.

Jobs will be created in order to build the power stations, to build roads so that access to the rainforest is easy as well as for the removal of the trees.

Jobs will imply a better standard of living for the people of the country.

However, there are many disadvantages of the use of the rainforest in this method. The deforestation process leaves the soil useless as it becomes infertile and insecure. This is because the roots of the trees once held the soil together, to prevent it from collapsing, and a lot of the nutrients in the soil were also provided by the trees.

In this way landless farmers are once again left not benefiting from this use of the rainforest. Deforestation also adds to the problem of the destruction of the scenery which natural conservationists and tourists of the rainforest would be against, and also because of the extinction of a variety of different species of animals and plants. The deforested land could then be used for cattle ranches which a few local people would profit from because jobs would be created on the ranches. There would also be one problem that the workers would face on the cattle ranch.

As the land has been deforested it will be unlikely that grass will grow which is vital to the cattle for grazing. Therefore the cattle would not be as healthy and the food produce from the cattle would not be as appealing to the richer countries. . However, this problem is only small scale and the grass would grow back eventually. For that reason, workers on cattle ranches would be in

favour of this use of the rainforest. On the other hand, workers on plantation farms would find it difficult to grow fundamental crops such as sugar, rubber, and coffee plants as the soil would be infertile.

Similarly, the local tribes of Amerindians would be against this use of the rainforest as they do not benefit from deforestation because of their traditional, cultural and social way of living from the trees in medical ways as well as having animals to hunt for food. To maintain sustainability in the rainforest using this method of extracting minerals from the rainforest extraction of the minerals could take place in parts of the rainforests which have already been deforested as a result of timber trade rather than deforesting new areas of the rainforest.

Another way is that when the soil is dug up after the extraction, people could find a way to return the nutrients back into the soil for example by using artificial fertilisers. However, this proves to be tremendously costly for the government as millions of acres of land would need to be covered and this would not benefit the country if the money was used on the fertilizers rather than developing it into a richer country. One other use of the rainforest is for tourism. The rainforest can be kept as it is and used as a tourist attraction.

Visitors from the richer, developed countries would visit to see the great variety of plants and animals. As opposed to the other uses of the rainforest, this use of the rainforest will not be favourable to many of the different types of people interested in the forest. As the tourists would like to see the forest in its natural habitat, they would be against the idea of abusing the

rainforest's nature by taking advantage of the land it covers and the crucial resources it provides.

However, some deforestation would need to take place in order for the tourists to see the rainforest. Roads would have to be built to provide access to the forest. Lodges would have to be built for the tourists to stay in, which will have to include the basic amenities such as electricity and hot water. In order for these to be provided water and electricity systems will need to be accessible in the rainforest which could cause some deforestation.

Local people would benefit to some extent from tourism because they could sell food products such as fruits and meat etc. from the forest to the tourists or provide the tourists with places to stay and this could improve their standard of living slightly. However as the scale of tourism in a natural place such as the rainforest is extremely diminutive, it is highly likely that the local people would not benefit as much from the use of tourism in the rainforest as using the rainforest to extract valuable materials or for selling timber.

Many people such as the owner and workers of a saw mill, landless farmers, and owners of cattle ranches alongside the large companies in the developed who would want to buy the raw materials from the forest would be against this idea of conserving the forest for its natural purposes because they would not profit from this whatsoever. The rainforest land would have to be kept undisturbed. This use of the rainforest will not help the developing country to become more developed as tourism of the rainforest is of such a small scale that the whole country will not benefit from it.



On the other hand, tourism of the rainforest does help protect the Amazon since people want to tour it in its natural condition. The idea of ecotourism introduces sustainability of the rainforest, however to maintain this sustainability of the rainforest, tourism would have to be limited. If the tourist industry were to grow in the rainforest, much more land would need to be deforested to make way for developments such as hotels, roads, shops etc. as this would attract more visitors from richer countries.

This would also bring out the multiplier effect which is when an economic activity creates extra employment, expanding more economic development. This is also a method that could help to improve developing countries. In my opinion, for the development of the rainforest to be sustainable in order to allow many uses of the rainforest to gain access to the resources of the rainforest without destroying it forever, all of the above uses should be limited to a certain amount.

Total neglect of the devastation done to the rainforest is not the solution. There is also the problem of the change in the climate caused by deforestation, for whatever reason, whether it is to extract minerals or to sell timber, to be considered when dealing with the issues of deforestation. However as timber is such a vital resource for everyday life virtually everywhere in the world, deforestation cannot come to an end immediately because of the timber being such a reliable source.

My opinion suggests that limitations should be introduced so that deforestation can be easily managed, for example, restrictions should be made on how much land can be deforested each year and which areas of the

rainforest deforestation can occur. If the area contains many rare species of trees and animals then deforestation here should not be allowed, to prevent the species from becoming extinct. To make this idea even more sustainable, the government should consider replanting in the areas deforested after making sure not too much damage was caused to the soil.

As well as timber being an essential resource taken from the rainforest, minerals also have a particularly great impact on our everyday lives as these minerals are turned into valuable substances such as aluminium and priceless gold for jewellery. Again, destruction of the rainforest cannot be completely stopped in this situation because of the essentiality of the minerals, nevertheless, it can be limited. Areas can be restricted from mining sites to decrease destruction. Many people could argue here that more land would be needed if all the minerals in that area have been extracted.

Interestingly, the solution to this has already been introduced and encouraged by many: recycling. Most of the materials can be recycled such as aluminium from the bauxite extracted as well as the iron and this environmentally friendly method could cause less destruction of the rainforest. My idea also suggests that although ecotourism is the most eco-friendly and causes the least destruction, this should also be controlled. To maintain sustainability of the rainforest without entirely abandoning ecotourism, restrictions should be made on exactly how much development of the tourist industry should be allowed in the rainforest.

Although the country will become further developed with many jobs created and tourists from developed countries staying in hotels many shops set up

profiting from tourism etc, problems such as the destruction of the rainforest will arise from this. More land will be required for this sort of development and this will cause more devastation of the rainforest, making it unsustainable. Therefore restrictions would preserve the sustainability of the uses of the rainforest without causing future harm to the rainforest itself.

Fencing off areas that have restrictions from extracting minerals and slashing trees for timber is another way to make sure that ecotourism will be persistent in the rainforest as they fenced off areas will be preserved for the tourists, plus natural conservationists will be satisfied as well. In conclusion, my proposition is better than others as my solution maintains the development of many of the uses of the Amazon rainforest without causing too much destruction because I have made limitations to each use of the rainforest to maintain the sustainability of the rainforest's natural environment.