

Forum: The Environment Committee

Issue: The protection of indigenous peoples in South America affected by deforestation

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Introduction

Deforestation in South America is occurring because of the extension of agribusiness for financial advancement. Extension of industry, logging, mining, cows pastures are additionally answerable for this. The impacts are however distinctive in diverse ranges beginning from debasement of area to soil disintegration and additionally the world's biodiversity.

Nearly 50% of the world's tropical forests reside in the Amazon forest, which is located in South America. Unfortunately, over 60% of the world's deforestation is also occurring here. This does not only affect the millions of animals and plants in the rainforests but also the 400 indigenous groups that reside in the Amazon rainforest. The deforestation of the rainforest is the collective efforts of many countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and the French Guiana.

Agriculture has been reprimanded for the spike in deforestation especially in Brazil. However, authorization has likewise been lax in a goliath nation enveloping around 3.3 million square miles, around three fifths of which is wood.

Izabella Teixeira, the environment minister of Brazil, assembled a crisis conference and urged movement from provincial powers after official information from August 2012 to July uncovered the scale of the issue.

Over the last few years, deforestation of the world's rainforests has increased drastically and this has had an equally negative effect on the indigenous people. In South America 2010, over 200 individual tribes lived and depended on the rainforests for their resources. However, in 2013, there are only 160 of these tribes that are still barely surviving. Many of the indigenous people who lived in the tribes have either died of starvation or have been forced to migrate away from their

homeland.

Definition of Key Terms

South America:

The South American continent is a unique and beautiful country. Although mainly consisting of Less Economically Developed Countries, South America boasts one of the fastest economically growing countries in the world, Brazil. It has a population of 379, 500, 000 people and covers over 17,840,000 km². It is host to the great Amazon River and Rainforest. With a diverse culture and splendid natural attractions, many countries in South America rely on tourism as a source of income. Moreover, due to the fact that South America has very rich natural resources, these are exploited and there has been a lot of controversy regarding the deforestation and destruction of sacred grounds.

Prior to European colonization, the Incan Civilization was a dominant force in South America. In the 1500's, Spain and Portugal colonized much of South America. The colonies gained independence in the 1800's with the help of leaders such as Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin. As a result, much of South America still speaks Spanish and Portuguese is the primary language of Brazil.

It is situated right below the North American Continent. Once attached to the western side of Africa, it shares many plant species with some African areas. The majority of the continent is covered in lush green forest along with the Andes mountain range. Furthermore, it is home to the closest point to Antarctica, the southern pole of Argentina and this is a major hub for ice exploration. It is also home to the Galapagos Islands and Machu Pichu. Moreover, South America was once the land of the Mayans and the famed Inca Empire. South America boasts some of the best beaches in the world and the richest culture. Finally, South America is one of the only places on earth where you can find human tribes that have never seen civilization.

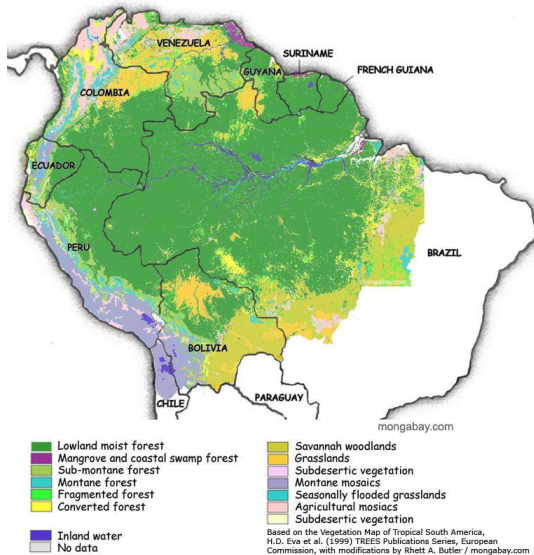


The Amazon Basin:

The Amazon basin is a contested area in this issue of deforestation and perhaps the most important area to consider when debating this topic. In excess of two-thirds of all the clean water on earth is discovered inside the Amazon bowl and over 20% of the world's oxygen is generated there. The Amazon might hold up to one million plant or animal categories. The Amazon spreads a region of more or less 2.5 million square miles (650 million hectares), which is approximately 40% of South America.

The headwaters of the Amazon River are in the Andes Mountains of Peru and a minor 120 miles (190 km) from the Pacific Ocean. From that point the River extends eastward for more or less 4,000 miles (6,400 km) until it at last purges into the Atlantic Ocean at Belém in Brazil. Over this 4,000-mile length no scaffold crosses the Amazon. There are roughly 1,100 tributaries that administration the fundamental waterway, seventeen of which are over 1,000 miles (1600 kilometers) in length; the Río Negro is the most predominant tributary.

Experts state that deforestation in the Amazon rainforest has increased by a third this year and that this needs to be dealt with immediately. Because the amazon rainforest has such a dense tree lining, the basin is the perfect place to log trees and collect wood. Many money driven entrepreneurs tend to over farm the trees and disrupt the once sustainable growth of the trees. With the lack of trees, Carbon Dioxide levels are increasing, less oxygen is being produced and acid rain is being formed in many parts of the continent.



Protection:

The action of saving some thing for personal reasons or the preservation of something important. Many associate protection as keeping something safe. In this scenario, it would be the preservation of the forests for the long-term benefit of both the indigenous people and the world. Protect the rainforests from dying as they provide us oxygen and take away carbon dioxide

Affected:

A person, object or area that has been changed or acted upon by a third party force usually emotionally or physically. In this scenario, the indigenous people have had their lives changed by other humans invading and destroying their homeland. Therefore they are affected.

Indigenous people:

Indigenous peoples are peoples defined in international or national legislation as having a set of specific rights based on their historical ties to a particular territory, and their cultural or historical distinctiveness from other populations that are often politically dominant. The indigenous people keep the culture alive from the past and tend to be very spiritual. This means that they interact with the environment and rely on it on a daily basis. For example, the Orang Asli tribe lives in the deep rainforests of Selangor, Malaysia. They survive off the animals and plants there and the wood in the forests provides them warmth. Skin or teeth from animals can be used however, in an area that is plagued by deforestation, tribes find it difficult to live without these resources.

Deforestation:

The removal of trees from a forest or jungle. Deforestation is driven by the need for wood. Initial methods included steel axes and loggers cutting down trees, however, in the modern era, chainsaws and trucks are used to break trees. Lorries transport them to the designated area. The wood from deforestation typically goes towards the construction of houses, used as an energy source or provides medicinal value.

History

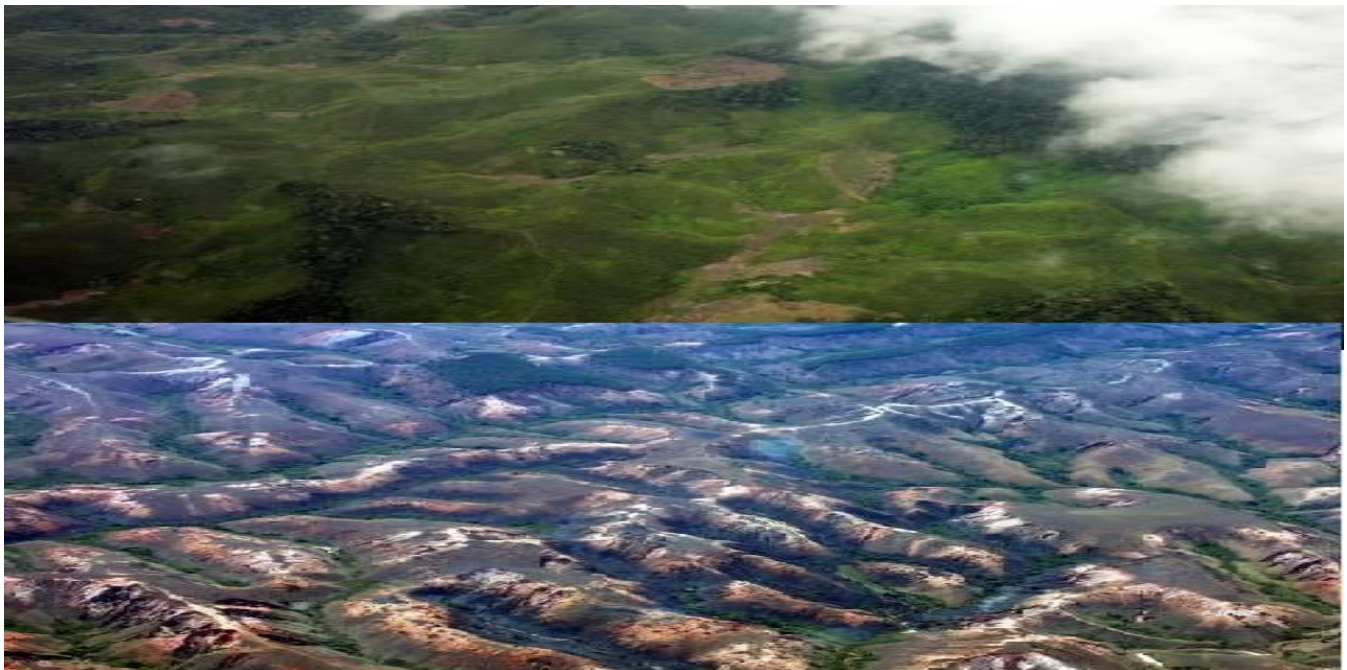
Amazonian deforestation rates have slanted upward since 1991, with clearing undertaking at a variable however quick pace. The substantial and medium-estimated farms represent something like 70% of clearing movement. Benefit from meat cows is one and only of the wage sources that make deforestation beneficial. Timberland debasement comes about because of logging, ground blazes (encouraged by logging), and the impacts of discontinuity and edge arrangement. Debasement helps timberland misfortune. The effects of deforestation incorporate misfortune of biodiversity, lessened water cycling (and precipitation), and commitments to a worldwide temperature alteration

In Brazil, the occasions set in movement by logging are just about dependably more dangerous than the logging itself. When the trees are concentrated and the lumberjacks have proceeded onward, the streets serve as conductors for a dangerous blend of squatters, theorists, farmers, agriculturists, and unchangingly, contracted shooters. The people take after the streets profound into formerly impervious timberland, then obliterate tracts to make it look as though they possess them.

Deforestation has been going on in South America for centuries, dating back to the Mayans. Mayan agricultural farms had almost wiped 10% of the forests. Thankfully over 500,000 square kilometers of forest remained. Moreover, when the Europeans arrived, the sudden need for primary resources decimated some of the forests. With the need for mahogany furniture in Spain and Portugal, the 16th till 19th century depleted many square kilometers of forest. This wood was used for making boats, buildings and structures for the European's. Furthermore, many rich lords and kings in Europe demanded that fine wood furniture was brought back to them to flaunt their ego. With this increased demand, came more workers and more ships. The exponential growth began

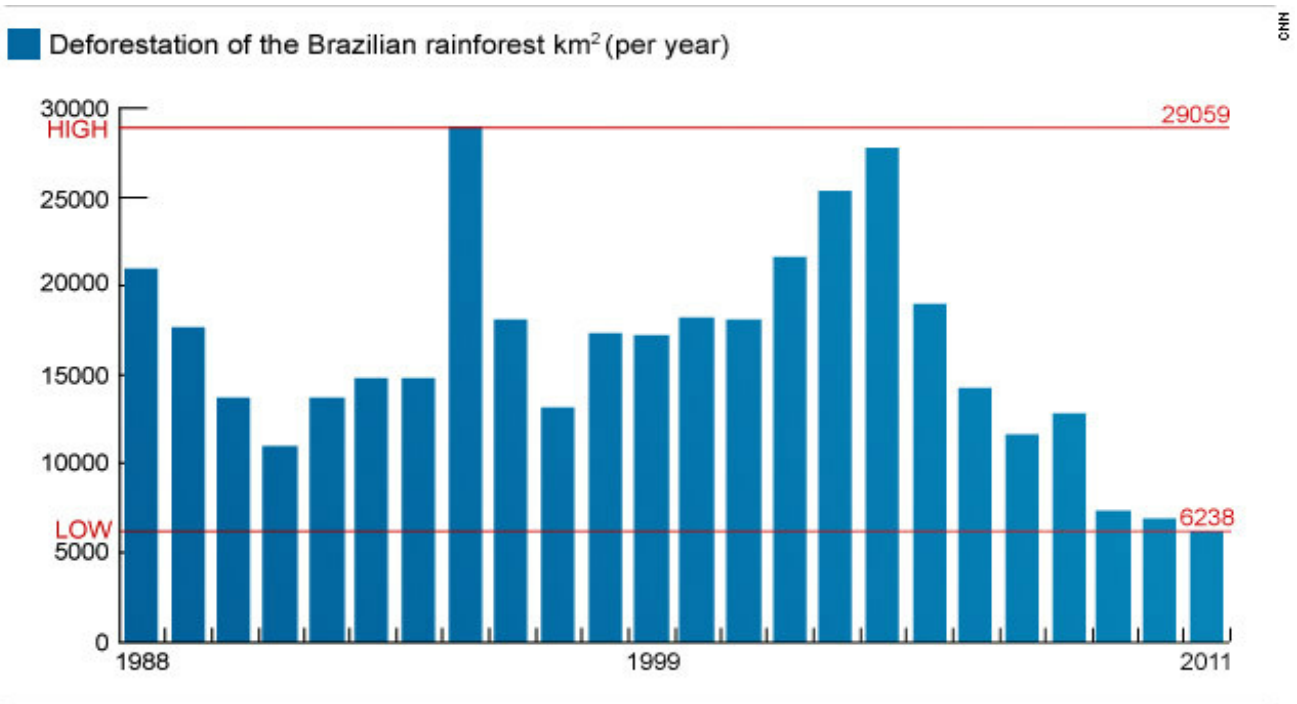
as more food was required to feed these workers and therefore the land that once held trees was used for agricultural farming. Moreover, these farms were over farmed and that resulted in the soil no longer being able to grow trees.

More recently however, the need arose after the industrial revolution in the United States of America. Firewood was needed, as a fuel resource in some factories, and the large untouched and cheap trees in the Amazon was the answer. With urbanization and the need for large amounts of land for tourist attractions, thousands of hectares are cut or burnt down to make room. On the other hand, recently, a new form of tourism by the name of eco-tourism has been introduced where not only do the tourists have fun and enjoy themselves, they also engage in many beneficial exercises that help reduce the effects of deforestation.



Effects of Deforestation in Peru 2011.

As the picture depicts, deforestation does changes the land a lot. The most striking difference is the unappealing site. Many countries in South America rely on tourism to aid their economy and deforestation does not aid it. Moreover, many tourists enjoy wildlife tours into jungles. Deforestation has not only killed trees but many animals along with the breeding grounds for many species.



Graph to show Deforestation in the [Brazilian Rainforest](#)

This graph shows the deforestation in Brazilian rainforests. There is a gradual increase with exponential deforestation occurring in 1995 and 2004. Thankfully, there is currently a gradual decrease in the deforestation however this is still a large issue.

Major Parties Involved

National Efforts

Bolivia

Bolivia, although contrary to popular belief, is possibly the country that is at the biggest risk from deforestation. Although it is famed for its amazing mountain ranges and great trekking destination, almost 70% of the land is in the Amazon basin. Each year over 1,400 hectares of forest is being chopped down and because the country only has 10 million inhabitants, it gives each citizen the highest deforestation rate per capita in the world. Bolivia is one of the world's leading soy producers and with the increasing demand for soy; farmers are forced to cut down forests for more land to grow soy. This has been one of the main factors aiding deforestation to continue. Home to over 1400 species of birds and animals, Bolivia faces a great loss if this issue is not solved. Bolivia hopes to find new more

sustainable forms of farming trees



- The after effects of deforestation in Bolivia 2012

Brazil

Brazil, known to the world as the South American superpower, has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world. Over 40% of Brazil's land is in the Amazon Basin and the country relies greatly on the Basin for its resources. Brazil has seen a staggering economic growth over the last decade, which was backed by the cheap labor, steady supply of resources and amazing tourist destinations. However, if Brazil continues to depend majorly on these resources, permanent damage can be dealt to the rainforests and the economy of the country. Recently, there has been rapid evolution in the structure or palm seeds in Brazil to ensure the dispersion of the seed however experts predict that with the reduced rainfall, this would not be effective. Brazil hopes to replant thousands of trees as well and find a sustainable method of doing so

Colombia

Although Colombia does not rely on their forests as heavily as other countries, they too play a part in the pressing issue. With over 2000 square kilometers of forests being used up annually, there has been a stark change in the soil composition. The soil has

become more saturated due to the lack of intake from trees and this has led to severe floods and uneven distribution of water in areas of need. Furthermore, the growing need for coffee in the world has also put stress on the land requirements in Colombia and many trees have been sacrificed as a consequence. Thankfully the Colombian government has made an effort to help this problem and has spent over 4.5 billion dollars trying to do so. This is key in the growth of this developing country in the long run as many of the citizens are reliant on nature.



Large areas of land now turning into deserts in Colombia (September 2010)

Ecuador

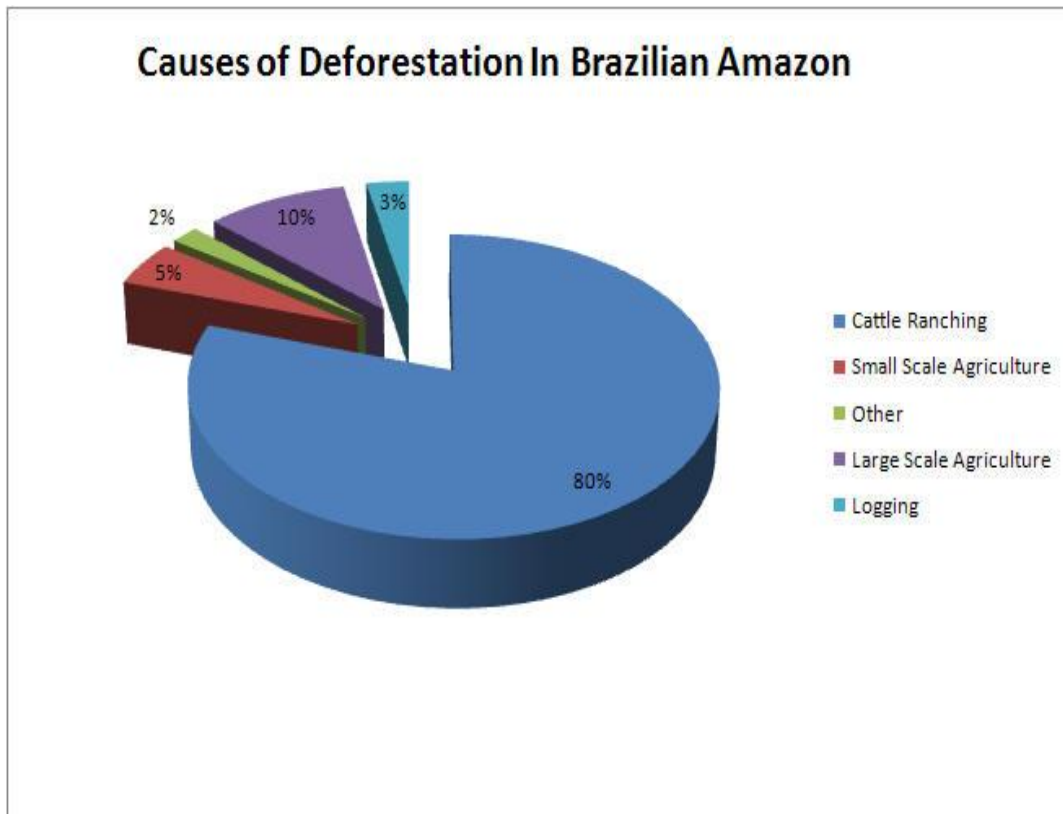
Ecuador, one of the smaller South American countries, faces a great risk from deforestation. It is host to the Galapagos Islands, which is an important scientific sight with a wide variety of strange and amazing creatures. Ecuador's economy is highly reliant on tourism as it has not only the Galapagos Islands but also has access to the Andes Mountains and the stunning Pacific Ocean. Deforestation has affected the wildlife in the country and endangered many of the species.

French Guiana

An astonishing 91.8% of the French Guiana is covered in rainforests. Deforestation has affected this country in the past, in 1990 till 2000; over 28000 hectares of forests were burnt and cut down. A majority of the French Guiana's citizens rely on wood for their living. There are many carpenters and builders that supply to the French nation. However, the French Guiana has lost the least amount of forest out of all the South American countries, as

they understand the importance of this precious resource. The government hopes to keep deforestation levels as low as possible

Key issues



Devastation of Homelands

As a lot of woodlands are gathered up, permitting laid open earth to wither and pass on and the natural surroundings of countless species to be pulverized, the indigenous tribes who hinge on upon them to manage their lifestyle are additionally hopelessly harmed. The misfortune of backwoods has a quick and guide impact on their lifestyle that we in the present day planet, in spite of our own reliance on what the rainforest furnishes, will never know. The level of instantaneoussness is exponentially more excellent.

The legislatures of countries with rainforests in their fringes additionally endeavor to oust indigenous tribes, and frequently succeed, after the real clear-cutting starts. Furthermore, it is almost impossible to rebuild homes as many traditional homes are made from wood and hay, which is no longer found in the area.

Effect on the Culture

South America prides itself with one of the most diverse and interesting culture around the world. Ranging from the native tribes that live deep in the jungle to the mountainous nomads, South America displays a wide and interesting perspective to human behavior and evolution. Over the last few years, as the tourist industry picked up and more people had disposable income, South America was a hot spot. With the lush forests and interesting culture, this gave the opportunity for tribes to spread their knowledge and learn from others.

Unfortunately, with this great advantage comes a price. Tourism and the advancement of the technology led to the mass deforestation of their homeland. Not only did this destroy the forests they live in but also constricted them from getting enough supplies to rebuild their homes. Secondary effects included a shortage of food and corrupted water from the pollution that was created by the machines.

With tribes barely having enough food and water to survive, the focus on their culture was lost. Many of the tribe's elders have now passed away due to the immense stress and there has been a large loss in knowledge between generations. This could affect them in the long term and may completely lose the once thriving culture.



Peruvian Alpaca along with traditional Peruvian clothing

Economic Costs of Deforestation

Countries that are inside the Amazon Basin benefit greatly from the resources it provides. For example, all these countries have access to one of the largest supplies of fresh water on the planet as well as a range of interesting and unknown species of animal. Many minerals and salts reside within the soil that has helped the forest to thrive for the last thousand years. Moreover, there is a fresh and renewable supply of oxygen along with the perfect shelter for temperate weather. Trees and plants also supply an amazing food source that is renewable and vast.

However, instead of utilizing the resources of the rainforest in a constructive and positive in the long term way, many of these countries think very money wise and fail to recognize the permanent damage they are causing. Deforestation, at first, supplied the countries with a large sum of money. A free resource with minimal effort to retrieve it and they earned a lot from it. However they did not predict the long-term effects and failed to understand the gravity of the situation. When the government and other companies farm and cut down forests, not only do they take the trees away but they also leave un-fertile land behind that is uninhabitable for the indigenous people. This means that the government will have to find a safe and suitable location for these people to move to

and also provide all the resources to get them there. This in other words costs more than it is worth.

Furthermore, by chopping down trees, they are getting rid of valuable species that could aid any research in the future in the medical sector and ultimately harm us all. With over 1 million species in the rainforest alone, the chances of finding a beneficial species is very high. Many of the forests are located in remote areas. When cutting the trees down, Brownfield Land is left behind. Brownfield Land is land that has no agricultural value but is good for building infrastructure. However since the forests are in rural uninhabited areas this land is wasted.



Timeline of relevant actions

Date	Description of event
December 22, 1989	Resolution A/RES/44/228 is passed
December 21, 1990	Resolution A/RES/45/211 is passed
December 11, 1997	Kyoto Protocol is approved
February 16, 2005	Kyoto Protocol is put in action
2007	Bali Climate Change Conference is held
November 22, 2010	Cancun Climate Change Conference is held

Past UN efforts

The United Nations has been heavily involved in stopping deforestation from spiraling out of control. They have implemented many measures against deforestation. In the 1990s and early 2000s the United Nations passed effective resolutions that were very successful in reducing not only deforestation, but also the impact of deforestation on the indigenous people. Resolution A/RES/44/228 dealt with many issues regarding the illegal logging and also spread awareness of the possible harms deforestation could cause. The United Nations has additionally put in measures to reduce deforestation in other parts of South America. The United Nations has collaborated with organizations and created UNREDD+, which promotes the preservation of forests. There is also a UNO called the UNEP, The United Nations Environment Program, which is constantly battling the outcomes of deforestation and also heavily promotes the decreasing of deforestation.

In my opinion, these past resolutions have really placed a foundation for the future. By spreading awareness, especially in South America, more people are educated to the effects of what they are currently doing. Moreover, the events held by the United Nations, as shown in the timeline of past events, have set the standard for us to now create and implement ideas that will reduce deforestation and protect the indigenous people.

Possible Solutions

Improve the existing projects so they can be customized to the needs of each nation. For instance if Brazil obeys United Nations guideline for ensuring their woodlands and just chop down a certain amount every year, the United Nations could remunerate Brazil with cash. This might underscore that nations that do dedicate compelling deforestation might as well think as of its impacts on nature's domain and turn to the Un for a motivating force for helping nature's domain. Moreover, in the other extreme, the United Nations could pose sanctions or trade boundaries on a country that does not comply with their rules. Such financing is not an issue since it could be managed either the World Bank or IMF

The best approach to definitely change the rates of deforestation is economical results. Without propelled arranging deforestation will proceed down its cycle of obliteration and interference of nature's turf's common process. Such reasonable results incorporate teaching governments

increasingly about how to get ready for what's to come for their backwoods and how to viably utilize timber as a fare without depleting the greater part of their property and eradicating all greenery.

Finally, I urge all delegation to begin their research as soon as possible. This topic is one that I myself am very passionate about and find very interesting and I hope that you too share this enthusiasm. Till then, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at

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