Synthesis paper

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**Deforestation**

Throughout the world deforestation is a common practice to produce timber and space for industrial areas. Deforestation is widely practiced in the area of South America and in the Amazon Rain Forest. People around the globe have different stances on deforestation due to their own personal beliefs, their surrounding government, and their occupations. The cons of deforestation are; we lose the natural benefits of the trees when they are cut down, it increases carbon dioxide in the air, and it contributes to the extinction of wildlife. People that support deforestation in the Amazon argue that it creates more room for useful land for growth and it allows for civilization and industrialization. Deforestation in the Amazon Rain Forest is a problem that affects the wildlife around it, the benefits humans collect from nature, and the air we breathe.

Vegetation in the Amazon rainforest provide humans with an immense amount of benefits including food and medicine. These benefits make up a large reason not to clear cut the Amazon rain forest. The Amazon has some of the most diverse plant life in the world. Land clearing causes a lack of biodiversity in the soil leading to an unhealthy environment for plants to grow in. This is a major problem especially in tropical environments such as the Amazon rainforest, Rebecca C Mueller, specialist at the institute of ecology and evolution at the University of Oregon says “Land-use change, such as deforestation, is one of the greatest threats to biodiversity worldwide” (1). When plants and veggies are not able to grow, people around the Amazon cannot harvest the crops and feed their families. This also has an impact on other animals’ humans eat, such as livestock. The cities and civilizations surrounding the Amazon rainforest depend heavily on it to feed and to make money. The native plants are also being used to develop cancer treatments and medicine. The key to finding the cure to incurable diseases, such as cancer, could be in the rainforest that are being cut today.

# Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that holds heat into the atmosphere. “Land-use change is a major driver of carbon emissions in tropical regions” (1) says Camille Dezécache, author of *Questioning emissions-based approaches of deforestation baselines in high forest cover/low deforestation countries.* When deforestation takes place the level of carbon being released increases exponentially thus contributing to the warming of the planet. Global warming is a concerning topic in today’s world, putting politicians and everyday citizens in distress about how to solve this problem. The answer; to stop actions like deforestation in the Amazon rainforest. The trees in the Amazon are responsible for the majority of absorbing carbon, when they’re cut down the carbon does not get absorbed and is then released into the atmosphere heating the planet. Deforestation of the Amazon rainforest takes away one of the largest carbon consumers in the world and it will result in catastrophic damages to our earth if it is not stopped.

# The Amazon Rain forest is the home to over ten million species of animals. These animals’ lives are in danger due to deforestation. Habitats and food sources are being destroyed from clear cutting by large industrial companies looking for new space to put buildings and machinery. These animals are important because if one species is removed from the food chain the whole cycle of life will shift. Plants are at the bottom of the food chain but are arguably the most important, plants absorb energy from the sun, the plants are then eaten by other animals and the cycle continues. According to Jorge L. M. Rodriquez, department of biology at the University of Texas, “tropical rainforests comprise only 7% of the Earth’s land surface, yet they support more than 60% of all known plant and animal species” (1). Jorge echoes the importance of the number of species lives in danger due to land change such as deforestation. The worlds lack of knowledge on this subject will result in a loss of biodiversity and impacting the food chain significantly.

# Deforestation in the rainforest, in some people’s eyes, does have benefits and is justified by the outcomes of cutting down the trees. Some of the justifications of deforestation are; the land is used for cattle grazing that has an exponential growth for the economy of the Amazon region and that the space cleared is put to better use due to industrialization. Deforestation in the Amazon rainforest is currently happening to increase the income of large organizations around the world. The economy and the large incorporations are vital to our world today and this increase comes at a cost to the forest.

# People that support deforestation justify their actions of cutting down trees by saying that the land that is being cleared is put to better use. The land that has been cleared is often used as a grazing area for livestock. The Global Forrest Atlas says, “Cattle ranching is the largest driver of deforestation in every Amazon country” (1). The Amazon region is the largest exporter in the world, responsible for a quarter of the worlds cattle market. Because of this, the demand for cattle grazing land is very important. The Amazon covers most of this region, so when it comes time to clear space for the cattle the trees are the ones to go. Supporters of deforestation believe the profit from the cattle is worth the lives of the trees and the Amazon. The number of trees being cut down for this reason is increasing exponentially, “Approximately 450,000 square kilometers of deforested Amazon in Brazil are now in cattle pasture” (GFA 1). The cattle industry around the amazon is a booming business and produces more income than any other export in the region. Due to this, the cutting down of trees is justified by many politicians and local leaders.

# Large companies in the Amazon region have been cutting down trees for years. The tree line is cut back and replaced with large building. The industrialization of the Amazon region is good for the economy because the buildings bring in a profit and build net worth for large incorporations. Casey Hightower, the writer of the article *industrialization or deforestation* emphasizes the importance of this saying“The effects of industrialization to our environment and human health are tremendous” (1). Although the forest does have some economic benefits, it does not compare to new companies’ income they are bringing in. The industrialization of the Amazon is one of the main reasons people are taking action in deforestation.

# Deforestation in the Amazon rainforest is not a new problem, but it is slowly becoming a larger problem to our world. The benefits of the Amazon are second to none and it is imperative we preserve this region. When we clear cut trees, we lose all the benefits the area provides, we increase the carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere, and we contribute to the extinction of many species and decrease the biodiversity in the area. The counter argument includes the clear cutting is done to create space for cattle grazing and to create space for the industrialization of the amazon region. Deforestation in the Amazon region needs to be brought to a halt before the consequences become apparent.

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**Work Cited**

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