

VOCABULARY

Continent: the world's main continuous pieces of land (Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe, North America, South America, Antarctica).

Convictional rainfall: the energy of the sun heats the surface of the Earth, causing water to evaporate to form water vapour. When the land heats up, it warms the air above it. This causes the air to expand and rise. As the air rises, it cools and condenses.

Country: a nation with its own government.

Decomposition: bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms have a very important job in the rainforest, they break down dead and dying matter.

Deforestation: the action of clearing a wide area of trees.

Ecosystem: a community of plants and animals that depend on each other to survive.

Habitat: the natural home or environment of an animal, plant or organism.

Humid: having a high level of moisture in the air.

Interdependent: when two or more people or things rely on each other.

Nocturnal: animal that comes out at night and sleeps during the day.

Rainforest: a dense forest, normally found in tropical areas with high rainfall. They generate much of the world's oxygen.

Sustainability: meeting the needs of today, without compromising the needs of tomorrow.

WHAT CAME BEFORE

Year 2: Comparing London & Mogadishu

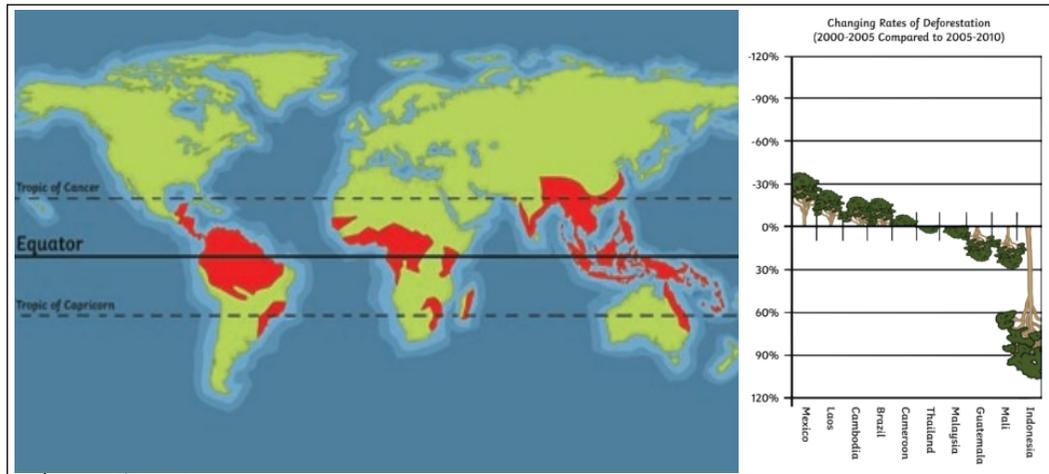
WHAT COMES NEXT

Year 4: Water Cycle, Rivers & Mountains

RAINFORESTS

WHAT YOU SHOULD ALREADY KNOW

- A deciduous tree loses its leaves in the autumn every year, whereas an evergreen tree has green leaves all year round.
- Plants absorb water through the soil to help them grow.
- The Equator runs through the centre of the Earth.



Physical Characteristics of Tropical Rainforest

Climate	Water	Soils	Plants	Animals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot (20-28.c) • Sun is overhead all year round so there is no seasonal variation. • Wet (2000mm per year). • Convictional rainfall every day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roots of plants take up water from the ground. • Rain is intercepted as it falls—much of it at the canopy level, this will evaporate as it heats up to form convictional rainfall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rain washes away nutrients from soil. • Soil is not very fertile. • Humus layer of rotting leaf-fall is very thin (heat speeds up decomposition) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most trees are evergreen. • Continual growing season. • Five layers: forest floor, shrub later, under-canopy, canopy (30m) and emergent. • Epiphytes (plants that feed off other plants and take moisture from the air) e.g. ferns. • Absorb CO2 and release oxygen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many species of animals live in the tropical rainforest. • Food is plentiful and grows all year. • Hundreds of different types of monkeys, snakes and birds. • Thousands of insect species live in the tropical rainforest.

KEY LEARNING

Layers of the Rainforest:

- Emergent layer: the tops of the highest trees.
- Canopy layer: the branches and leaves of most of the rainforest trees; where most of the rainforest's species are found.
- Understory layer: small trees and shrubs able to live in low-light conditions.
- Forest floor layer: the dark, damp ground layer, where the rainforest's larger animals are found.

Causes of Deforestation:

- To clear space for farming: growing crops and space 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.

Impact of Deforestation:

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



SKILLS AND FIELDWORK

- Can you use an atlas to find places and features on a map?
- Can you explain why some people may choose to live in one place rather than another?