

Deforestation in the Amazon rainforest

Deforestation: The destruction of trees or forests on a massive scale.

Methods of clearing the rainforest:

- **Slash and burn** - trees are cleared and vegetation is burnt
- **Clear cutting** - complete removal of all trees in an area
- **Selective logging** - targeting specific valuable trees but leaving the rainforest intact



Carbon emissions - trees store carbon in their trunks, branches and roots which is released when they are cut down.

Water cycle - trees help return water vapour to the atmosphere which then falls as rain.

Indigenous people - the rainforest was once home to one million indigenous people. Now only 200,000 remain.

Climate change - deforestation contributes to global warming because trees are releasing carbon instead of storing it.

Soil erosion - without trees to protect it, soil in the rainforest is easily eroded. The soil loses its nutrients especially when it rains heavily.

Loss of habitat for millions of species like insects, birds, snakes, frogs and lizards.

Medicine - scientists have discovered that rainforest plants are sources for medicines to treat diseases like diabetes.

