

# 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.

