

## ACTIVITY FOR READ/WRITE LEARNER

### Deforestation and Its Impact on Biodiversity

Deforestation refers to the large-scale clearing of forests for various human activities, such as agriculture, urban development, and logging. While forests are vital for maintaining ecological balance, human actions have caused alarming rates of deforestation, leading to numerous environmental problems.

The main drivers of deforestation include the expansion of agricultural land for crops like soybeans and palm oil, as well as cattle ranching. Logging for timber and paper products also contributes significantly to forest loss. Since the 1990s, the world has lost about 1.3 million square kilometers of forest, equivalent to the size of South Africa. Forests play a critical role in absorbing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere, making them essential in mitigating climate change. Without trees, the Earth's ability to regulate CO<sub>2</sub> levels is severely compromised.

The consequences of deforestation are far-reaching, affecting not just the environment, but also the people who depend on forests for food, medicine, and livelihood. To combat deforestation, global efforts are needed to promote sustainable land use practices, implement stricter logging regulations, and increase reforestation and forest restoration projects. By taking action now, we can protect the future of our planet's biodiversity and climate.

Deforestation also threatens biodiversity. Forests are home to millions of species of plants, animals, and microorganisms, many of which are found nowhere else on Earth. As forests disappear, so do the habitats of countless species, leading to extinction. In addition to the loss of species, deforestation disrupts water cycles, leading to soil erosion and reduced water quality.