

Science News

Amazon Deforestation Trend On The Increase

ScienceDaily (Jan. 6, 2009) — Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon forests has flipped from a decreasing to an increasing trend, according to new annual figures recently released by the country's space agency INPE.

The text consists in ten paragraphs. Try to match paragraphs and their headings.

1. Connection between emission targets and global warming
2. Efforts of improvement
3. Measures preventing deforestation
4. Annual deforestation accelerating
5. Methods of fighting against deforestation
6. Organizations promoting conservation
7. Distribution of finance
8. Possibility of adopting new emission targets
9. Negative trends in deforestation

A) Commenting on the figures, Brazilian environment minister Carlos Minc confirmed that the government will on Monday announce forest related carbon emission reduction targets, which will link halting deforestation to the national climate change campaign. From August 2007 to July 2008, Brazil deforested 11,968 square kilometers of forests in the area designated as the Legal Amazon, a 3.8 per cent increase over the previous year and an unwelcome surprise following declines of 18 per cent over the previous period.

B) From 2003-2004 to 2006-2007, annual deforestation totals from the agency fell from 27,423 km² to 11,532 km². There were fears that the current trend could have been worse but for new measures introduced part way through the year when it became apparent that annual deforestation was accelerating towards a possible 15,000 hectare level.

C) WWF-Brazil has praised in particular restraints on credit for properties not complying with environmental rules on deforestation licenses, legal reserve and permanent preservation areas, strengthened land ownership rules, increased patrolling activity and a sharing of responsibility for halting deforestation with states and municipalities.

“Credit restraint prevents effects linked to illegal land occupation and exploitation (“grilagem”), which is the main direct and specific cause for deforestation in the Amazon”, says WWF-Brazil’s CEO, Denise Hamú.

“Nevertheless, we are concerned with such a deforestation which is equivalent to almost 40% the size of Belgium or the size of Jamaica.

D) “WWF-Brazil favors that which was established in the Amazon Pact for Forest Value Acknowledgement and Deforestation Decrease, which proposes concrete actions and urges the government and society to endeavor all efforts to curb deforestation to zero level in seven years”. The Pact was an initiative by a group of NGOs and the proposed actions have an estimate cost of R\$ 1 billion (1,000,000,000 reais) per year, which is relatively cheap as compared to the social costs (droughts, floods, deaths, economic difficulties and so forth) inflicted on everyone by deforestation. WWF-Brazil’s CEO says that it is necessary to adopt a wider conservation strategy. “We favor a definition of clear deforestation mitigation targets, besides economic and fiscal mechanisms to encourage conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources, as well as to discourage predatory practices”, says Denise Hamú.

E) WWF Brazil welcomed the forthcoming carbon emission reduction targets, noting that deforestation and forest fires together are responsible for 75% of Brazilian green house gas emissions. The targets

add to a range of other new measures announced in October, following preliminary assessments that deforestation rates in August 2008 had reached triple those a year earlier.

"Negligence towards our forests causes Brazil to rank fourth among the larger contributors to the planet warming," Hamú said.

F) The decrease in the Amazon deforestation rate achieved in the last two years shows that it is viable for Brazil to adopt emission curb targets. The adoption of targets to decrease emissions from deforestation could place Brazil in a forefront position for the international climate negotiations.

G) WWF-Brazil's Conservation Director, Carlos Alberto de Mattos Scaramuzza, explains that actions to fight deforestation must run on four tracks. The first one is the effective protection of forests through creation and implementation of protected areas. Secondly, there is the promotion of sustainable use of natural resources, through forest management capacity building in the Amazon states. Then there are patrolling actions to tackle illegal activity threats which are linked to land property and occupation ("grilagem"), to agribusiness and to large infrastructure works. Finally, we must have financial offset actions to reward those who protect the forest.

H) "We acknowledge some positive actions taken by the federal government, but we urge some improvements," Scaramuzza said. "In particular, we call for the continuation of the protected areas creation process, the strengthening of implementation efforts in the already created protected areas, the allocation of personnel and their management capacity building, plus the effective implementation of the new forest policy, including forest management capacity development in the Amazon states." The Amazon Fund, created by the government in August 2008, is also an important policy to make financial offset viable for those who protect the forest.

I) Nevertheless, WWF-Brazil claims that funds should be applied in the end of the chain. "It is crucial that funds reach the field, direct to local communities, land owners and protected areas", Scaramuzza said. "We hope that the Amazon Fund implementation will encourage innovation, creativity, experimentation and the involvement of civil society; and that it will be complemented by public funds, instead of being used to fulfill the blanks and gaps in governmental programs".

Match words from the text with their meaning:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| a) control or limit st | viable |
| b) strongly advise sb to do st | negligence |
| c) st very important | halting |
| d) guarding, checking | urge |
| e) reduction of a harmful situation | crucial |
| f) stopping | patrolling |
| g) carelessness | financial |
| h) possible, plausible | curb |
| i) fiscal | mitigation |

The second sentence in paragraph B means that

- a) The trend could have been worse due to new measures.
- b) The trend could have been worse after the adoption of new measures
- c) The trend could have been worse were it not for new measures.

Nevertheless in paragraph C means

- a) on the other hand
- b) in spite of that
- c) owing to that