Colegio San Jorge Miss Mirthala Sanhueza

Sub sector Inglés Cuarto Medio

ARICA

ENGLISH WORKSHEET

Name…………………………………….. Class:

Objective: Talk about a current issue: Climate change and The Amazon tragedy.

The Amazon is burning at record rates—and deforestation is to blame.

The blazes are so huge that smoke can be seen from space, and experts say the fires could have major climate impacts. (fire)

Wildfires are currently burning so intensely in the Amazon rainforest that smoke from the blaze has covered nearby cities in a dark haze. (fog)

Multiple news outlets are reporting that Brazil’s National Institute for Space Research (INPE) reported a record 72,843 fires this year, an 80 percent increase from last year. More than 9,000 of those fires have been spotted in the past week.

The size of the fires is still unclear, but they spread over several large Amazon states in northwest Brazil. On August 11, [NASA noted](https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/145464/fires-in-brazil) that the fires were large enough that they could be spotted from space. (seen-detected)

Thomas Lovejoy, an ecologist and National Geographic Explorer says:

“There’s no question that it’s a consequence of the recent uptick in deforestation.”

(increase)

**How is this related to Brazil’s pro-business environmental policies?**

Environmentalists have been raising the alarm about deforestation since the country’s current president Jair Bolsonaro was elected in 2018. A major part of his campaign message called for opening up the Amazon for business, and since he’s been in power, he’s done just that.

Data released by INPE[has indicated](https://www.apnews.com/88a097ee5f574fd0bdf3b7a4e7e2b35f)that more forest has been cleared in Brazil this summer alone than in the last three years combined. (removed)

“In the previous years wildfires were very much related to the lack of rain, but it has been quite moist this year,” says Adriane Muelbert, an ecologist who’s studied how Amazon deforestation plays a role in climate change.

“That leads us to think that this is deforestation-driven fire,” she says.

In addition to harvesting timber (forestry), many trees in the Amazon are cleared to plant soy (Asian bean) or make way for lucrative cattle pastures(grass for livestock: farm animals) Burning is commonly used to clear trees quickly. Like the wildfires that plague California, most are started by humans, but then spiral out of control.

This produces a cyclical system in which deforestation fuels forest loss, making the region drier, spurring (lead to) even more deforestation. Much of the rain in the Amazon is generated by the rainforest itself, but as trees disappear, rainfall declines. Experts worry that this downward (declining)spiral could increasingly dry out the forest and push it to a point of no return, where it more resembles savannah than rainforest. (look like)

“The Amazon has this tipping point (critical moment) because it makes half of its own rainfall,”. That’s why “the Amazon has to be managed as a system”, says Lovejoy.

**What do these fires have to do with climate change?**

If deforestation and mismanaged (badly supervised) forest clearing by fire continues, Lovejoy and Muelbert warn that wildfires of this scale could continue. Such a massive loss of forest would be felt on a global scale.

Protecting the Amazon is often touted (promoted)as one of the most effective ways to mitigate the effect of climate change. The ecosystem [absorbs millions of tons of carbon emissions](https://phys.org/news/2017-02-carbon-uptake-amazon-forests-region.html) every year. When those trees are cut or burned, they not only release the carbon they were storing, but a tool to absorb carbon emissions disappears.

“Any forest destroyed is a threat to biodiversity and the people who use that biodiversity," says Lovejoy. He adds that "the overwhelming (huge) threat is that a lot of carbon goes into the atmosphere."

Muelbert says it’s too early to calculate how much carbon might be emitted by this August’s wildfires. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released a report earlier this month saying the world doesn’t have forest to spare (lose) if it wants to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

“It’s a tragedy,” Muelbert says of the wildfires, and of the deforestation behind it. She says: “a crime against the planet, and a crime against humankind.”

Give COMPLETE answers.

1. How serious is the burning of the Amazon ? How can we tell this is a critical moment? What is the evidence?
2. What does the IMPE reported?
3. Where is the fire located exactly?
4. Who is Tom Lovejoy?
5. What is the connection of Jair Bolsonaro with this tragedy?
6. Who is Adriane Muelbert and what is her theory?
7. What does she back her theory on?
8. Which are the different uses of wildfires?
9. Why is deforestation defined as a cyclical system? (Both pronounciations are correct)
10. What is the connection between the rain and the rainforest?
11. Why do experts say that the Amazon could end up as a savannah?
12. Why is it said that the Amazon is living a crucial moment?
13. Why is the protection of the Amazon a must?
14. Explain the connection between carbon dioxide, carbon emissions, climate change and biodiversity.
15. What is your personal stand concerning this topic?
16. What do you think is likely to occur in the future under a warming climate?
17. Are you really conscious of the problem that you and your children will definitely face in the near future?

ANSWERS

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