

Central America's Rainforests

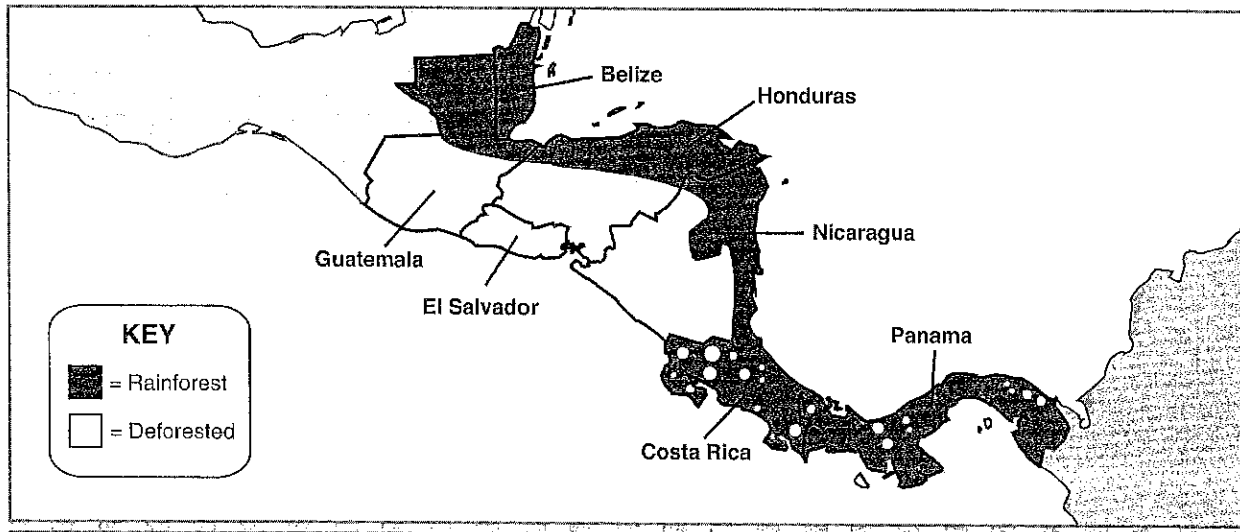
Rainforests cover about 86,000 square miles (222,739 square km) of Central America. That's roughly the size of the state of Minnesota. That may seem like a lot, but sadly, large areas of Central America's rainforests have been destroyed. El Salvador is the most deforested country in Central America, with 85% of its rainforest destroyed.

Rainforests in Central America have been destroyed for many reasons. Many have been logged for timber, both legally and illegally. In other areas, the land has been cleared to grow crops or to create pasture land for raising cattle. Some rainforests have also been destroyed by mining, road construction, and forest fires.

Tropical rainforests are home to millions of plants and animals. In the tiny Central American country of Costa Rica alone, there are about 12,000 kinds of plants and 1,200 kinds of butterflies! Unfortunately, many of these plants and animals are endangered due to illegal hunting and the loss of habitat.

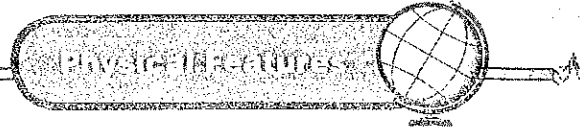
Fortunately, some Central American rainforests are protected by the government. Environmental groups are working hard to save the others.

Central American Rainforest



A. Write four reasons that rainforests in Central America have been destroyed.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



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B. Use the information on the other page to complete the secret code. Read each clue below and write the answer. Then use the numbers to crack the code!

1. Many of the tropical rainforests in Central America have been _____.

10 11 25 26 24 21 5 11 10

2. El Salvador has lost 85 _____ of its rainforest.

22 11 24 9 11 20 26

3. Trees are often cut down and logged for _____.

26 15 19 8 11 24

4. Many rainforests have been cleared to make _____ land for raising cattle.

22 7 25 26 1 24 11

5. There are about 12,000 different _____ of plants in Costa Rica.

17 15 20 10 25

6. Some Central American rainforests are protected by the _____.

14 21 23 11 24 20 19 11 20 26

Crack the Code!

Several species of Central and South American _____ are endangered.

25 22 15 10 11 24 19 21 20 17 11 5 25