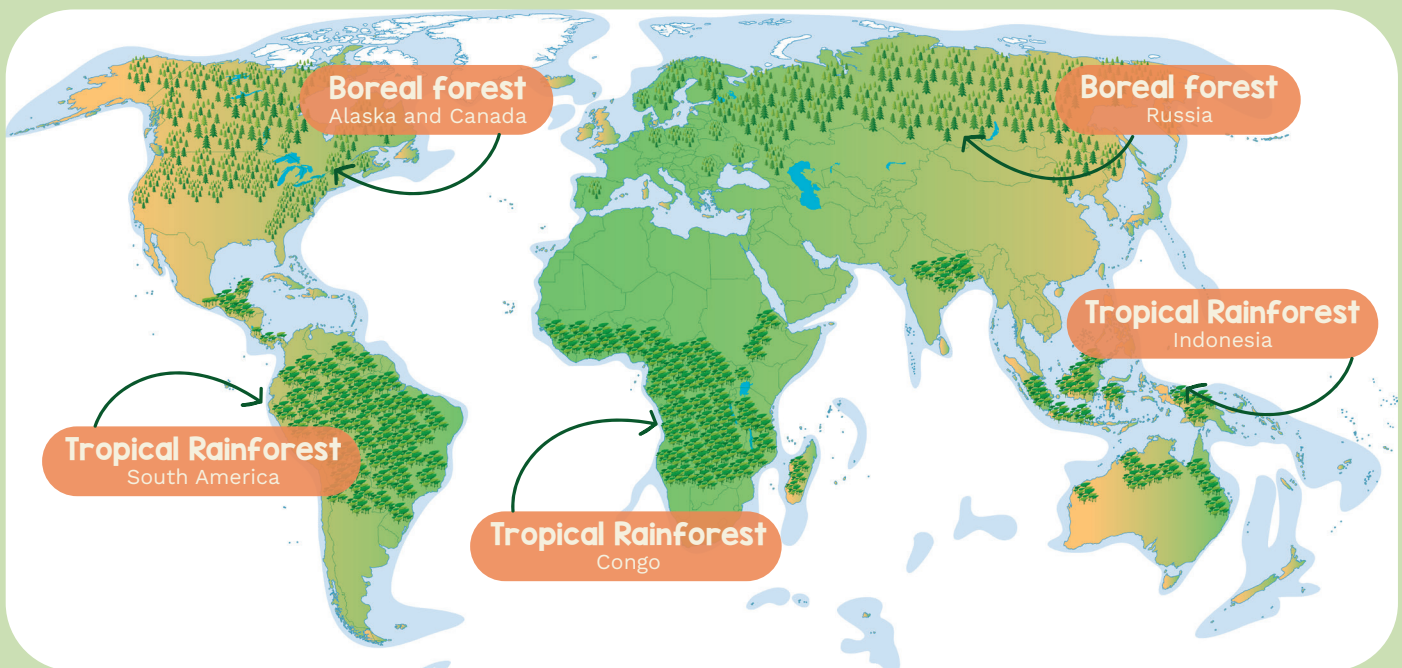


Tropical rainforests are very diverse habitats. The Amazon rainforest is home to one in ten of all plant and animal species known on Earth. But forests around the world are being destroyed by humans. Greenpeace is working hard to protect them.

The map below shows the location of the world's main forests.



Why do the forests matter?



Animals

Eight out of ten species found on land call forests their home.

But many of them are at risk of disappearing forever. This is called extinction. In Borneo, an island where a lot of the Indonesian rainforest is, half of all orangutans have been wiped out in just 16 years.



People

Millions of people live in the forests. Over a billion rely on them for food, fresh water, medicine and jobs. But many of those living peacefully in the forest have lost their houses and can be hurt whilst trying to protect them.



Climate

Trees store greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide. Cutting them down puts these gases back into the atmosphere. This makes the planet hotter and adds to climate change. Trees also give out the oxygen we all breathe! Read the 'Climate Emergency' sheet for more on this subject.

What's the problem?

What is deforestation and why is it happening?

Deforestation describes the removal of trees and is mainly caused by people.

Half of the world's forests have been deforested, particularly tropical rainforests. In Indonesia, an area of rainforest the size of a football pitch is torn down every 25 seconds! Here are some of the main reasons why.



Palm oil

Palm oil is found in many everyday items, from shampoo to chocolate bars. It's cheap and useful but a disaster for the world's forests because companies cut them down to make way for palm tree fields. Between 1990 and 2015, around 24 million hectares of rainforest was destroyed in Indonesia. That's an area the size of the UK!



Unsustainable farming practices

Our supermarket shelves are being filled with increasing amounts of meat, cheese and eggs. All these foods come from animals. Around 60% of all animals on the planet are farm animals. Only 4% are wild (the other 36% is us). This increase in farm animals is destroying the forests. All these animals need land to live on and lots of food, so forests are being cleared to make fields for crops and grazing.



Soybeans

Soybeans are eaten by many people. However, around 90% of soybeans grown worldwide feed farm animals, especially chickens. Miles and miles of tropical rainforests are cut down and replaced with soybean fields. If we just fed them to humans, we wouldn't need so many!

What's the solution?



Gather the facts

Greenpeace's investigations team finds out what and who is destroying the forests. For example, we found out that KFC, McDonald's and Burger King are serving meat that is produced by companies deforesting the Amazon rainforest



Raise awareness

Greenpeace makes sure as many people as possible know what is happening to our forests.

We write articles and make films like Rang-tan, which shows how palm oil is destroying orangutans' homes. When people understand the problems, they normally want to help us fix them.



People power

Deforestation is more likely to stop with the help of ordinary people like you. That's why we make petitions – a written note signed by lots of people which demands change. The more people who sign, the more pressure there is for companies to stop.

Greenpeace helps people show their support in other ways too. We help them send letters, for example, to fast food restaurants like KFC, demanding they stop buying chicken that causes deforestation.



Persuade companies and governments

Support from people worldwide helps Greenpeace make companies and governments change. Since 2006, many companies agreed not to buy soybeans from farmers that destroy the Amazon thanks to one of our campaigns. This has significantly reduced deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon!



What can you do?



What we eat and where we buy our food can help protect our forests. Eating mostly foods from plants (plant-based food) means we can feed more people, have a smaller impact on the environment and keep ourselves healthy! Here are three simple things you can do to help protect our forests.

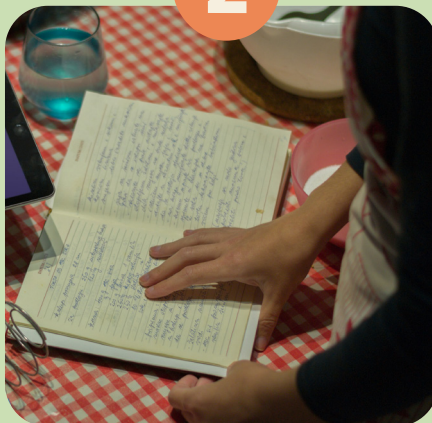
1



Choose plant-based takeaways

When you get a takeaway or eat fast food – try a veggie or bean burger instead of chicken or beef.

2



Create a recipe book

Write a recipe book of tasty plant-based meals that you can make. Share it with your class or make one together.

3



Try out meat free days

Make a calendar of your week. Choose at least one day when you'll avoid eating meat. Share it with your parents or carers to see if they can help you.

Invite a Greenpeace Speaker

Ask an adult to invite a Greenpeace Speaker to talk to your class or club. They'll tell you about the challenges our planet faces and what you can do to help. Find out more: www.act.gp/speakers

Mon

Meat
free
monday!

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Meat
free
friday!