

A composite image featuring a woman's face with a map of Latin America overlaid on her features. The map is rendered in green and brown tones, showing the geographical outline of the continent. The woman's eyes are a striking yellow-green, and her lips are a deep red. The background is a solid blue color. The text "Geography of Latin America" is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

# Geography of Latin America

# The Caribbean Islands

The Caribbean Islands are archipelagoes or groups of islands. The major archipelagoes are:

- ▶ The Greater Antilles – Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola (Composed of Haiti and the Dominican Republic), and Puerto Rico
- ▶ The Lesser Antilles



# The Andes

- ▶ The Andes Mountains extend from Columbia to the southern tip of Chile and they are over 4,000 miles long.
- ▶ At some points the Andes are over 300 miles wide and large portions of Peru, Ecuador, Chile, and Bolivia have very high elevations.

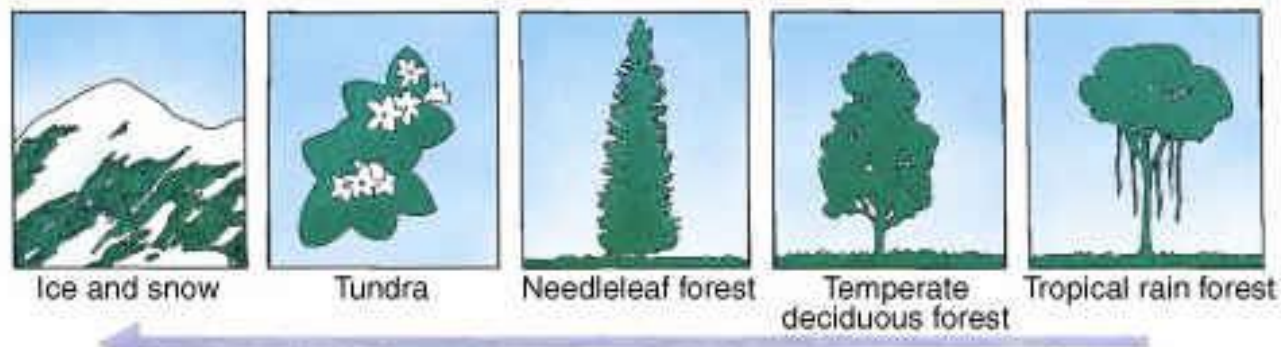
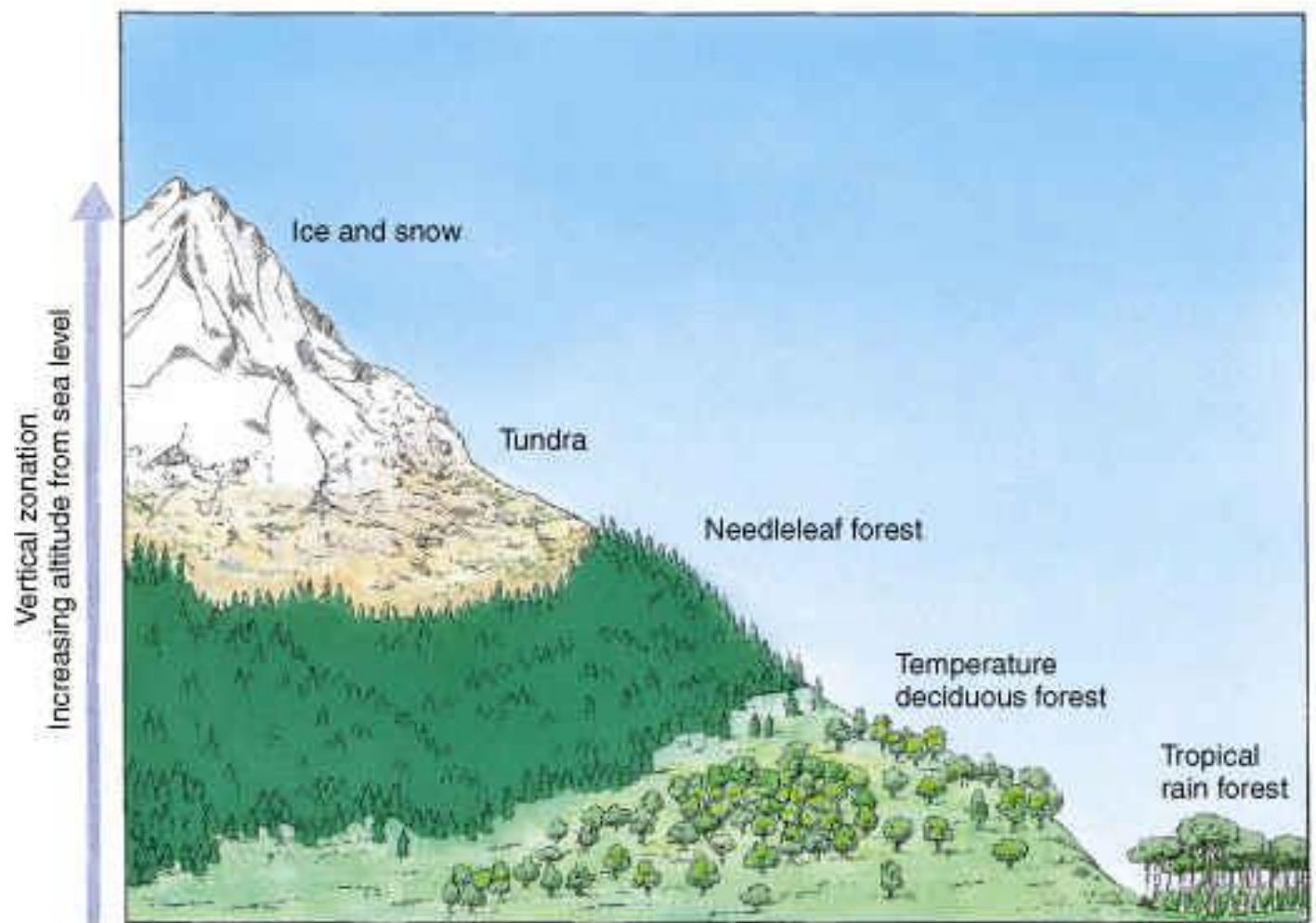




# Altiplano

- ▶ Where the Andes are widest there are high flat plains called altiplanos.
- ▶ People live and farm in these areas but the temperature is cool all year long and it can be difficult to grow food.



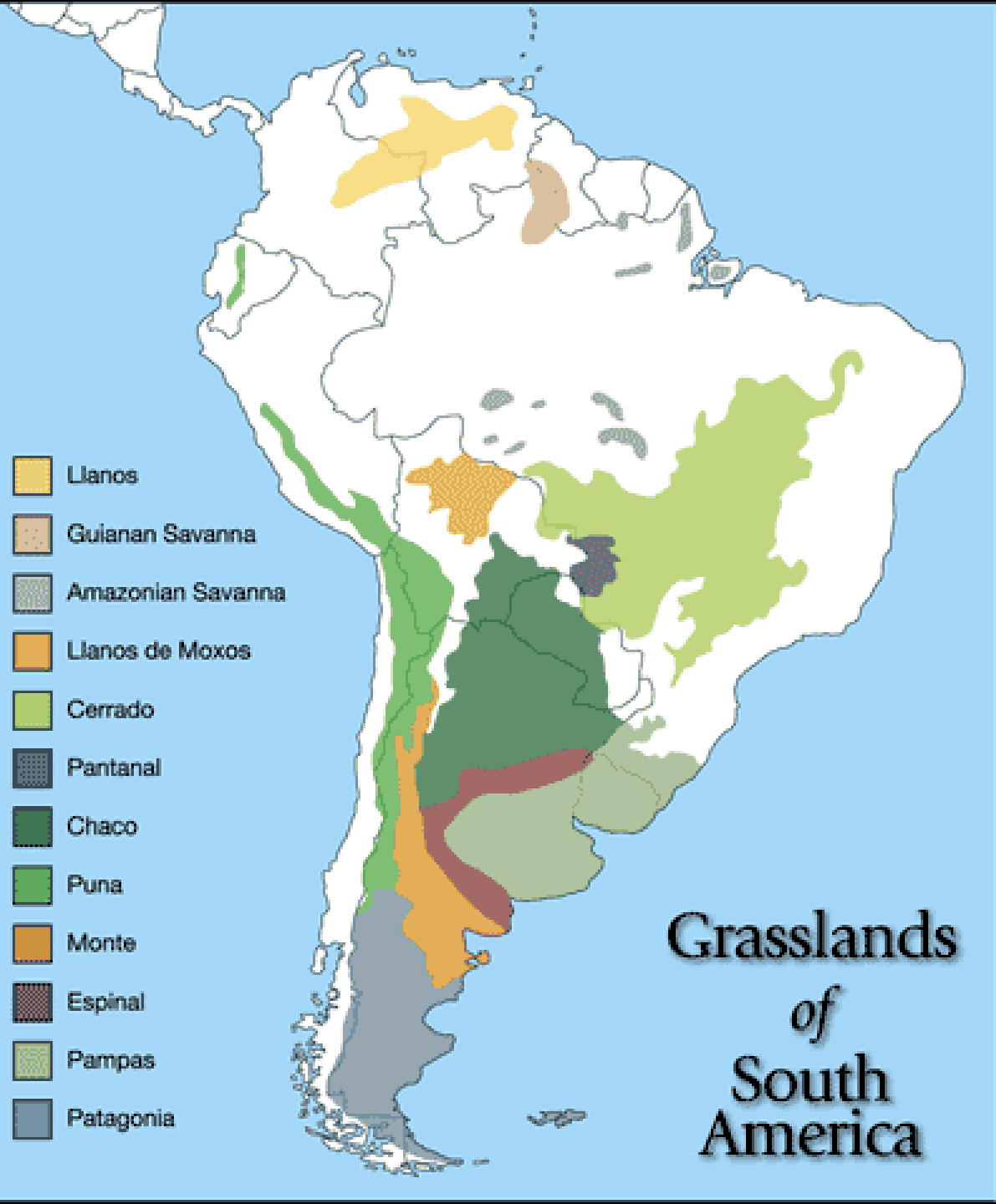


(a) Latitudinal zonation  
Increasing latitude from the equator

# Vegetation

- ▶ Tropical rainforest
- ▶ Pampas – Temperate grassland located in Argentina.
- ▶ Llanos – Tropical grassland located in Colombia and Venezuela.
- ▶ Cerrados – Tropical grasslands located in Brazil.









# Llanos

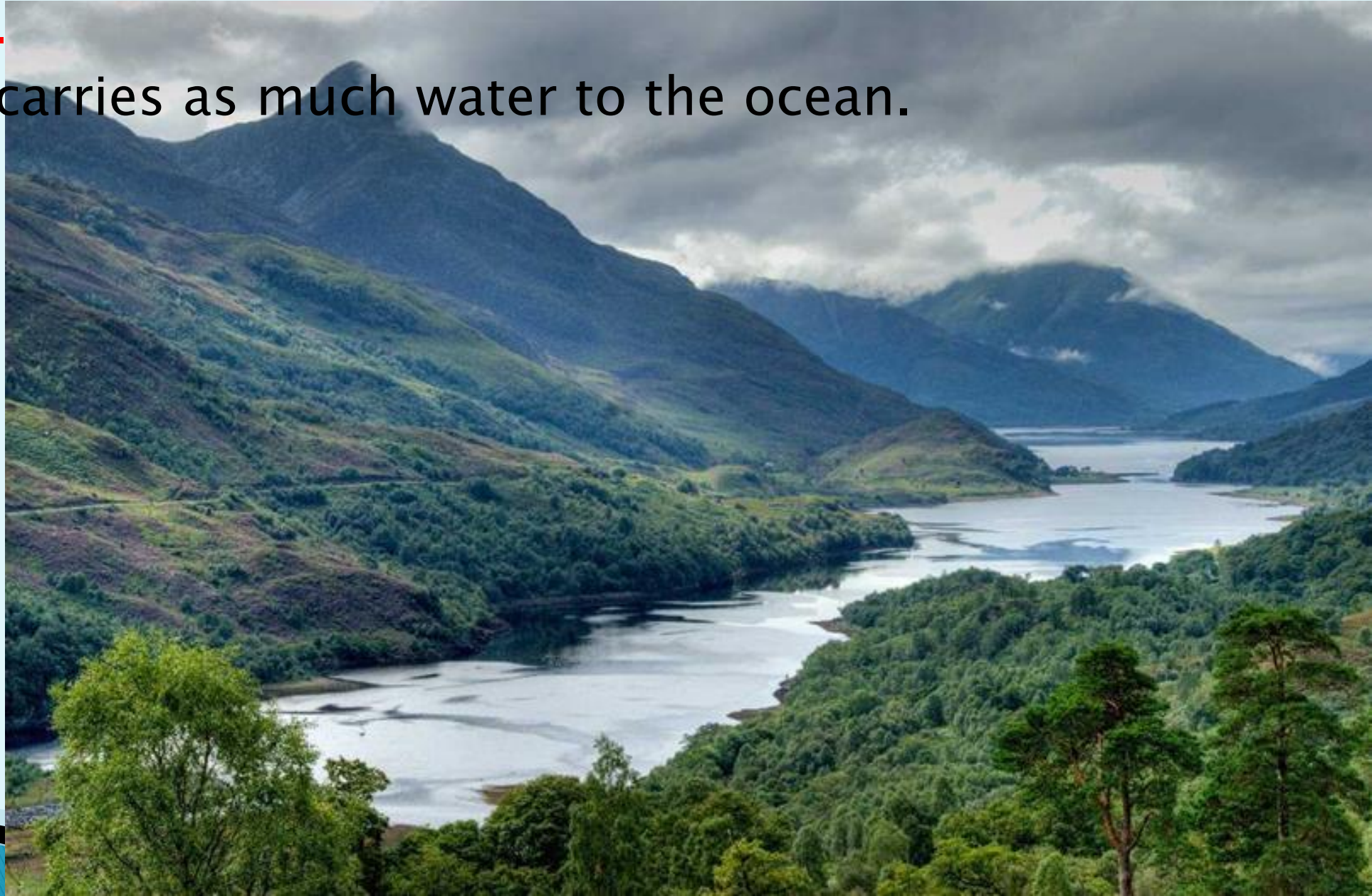
# Sierra Madres

- ▶ The Sierra Madre Oriental and Occidentals run along the east and west coast of Mexico. Between these two mountain ranges lie the Mexican Plateau.



# Amazon River

- ▶ The Amazon River flows near 4,000 miles from the Andes to the Atlantic Ocean.
- ▶ No other river carries as much water to the ocean.



# The Amazon River

- ▶ The Amazon River is located in South America and it drains a large area that is known as the Amazon Basin. The Amazon has many tributaries, which are smaller rivers that flow into a larger river.
- ▶ Much of the Amazon River is navigable, which means large boats can travel up it to transport goods to the cities located along its banks.



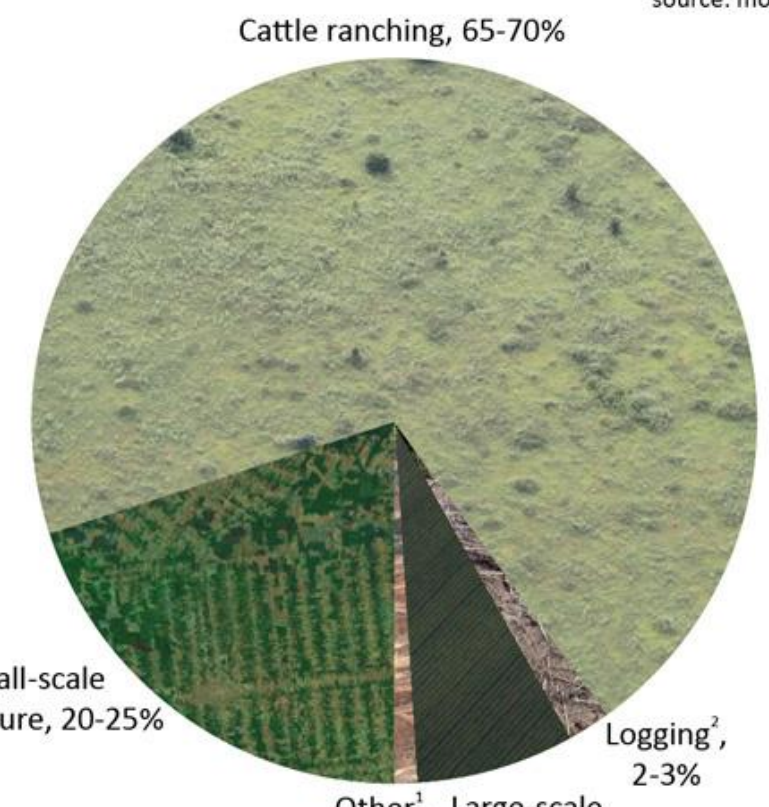
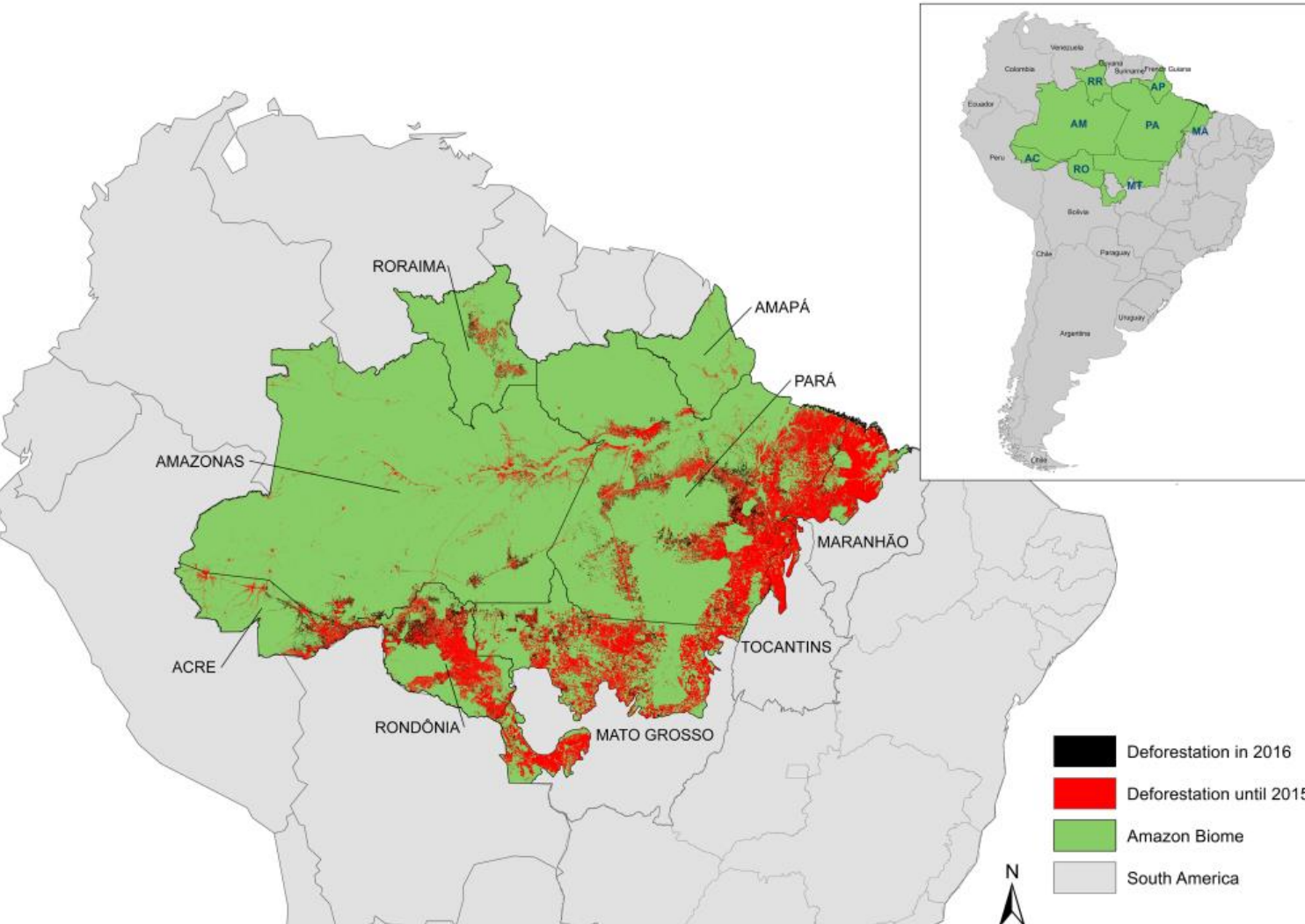
- ▶ **Deforestation is the process of cutting and clearing away trees from a forest.**
- ▶ This increases the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air.
- ▶ Some believe this contributes to global warming.

## Deforestation



# Causes of Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon, 2000-2005

source: mongabay.com

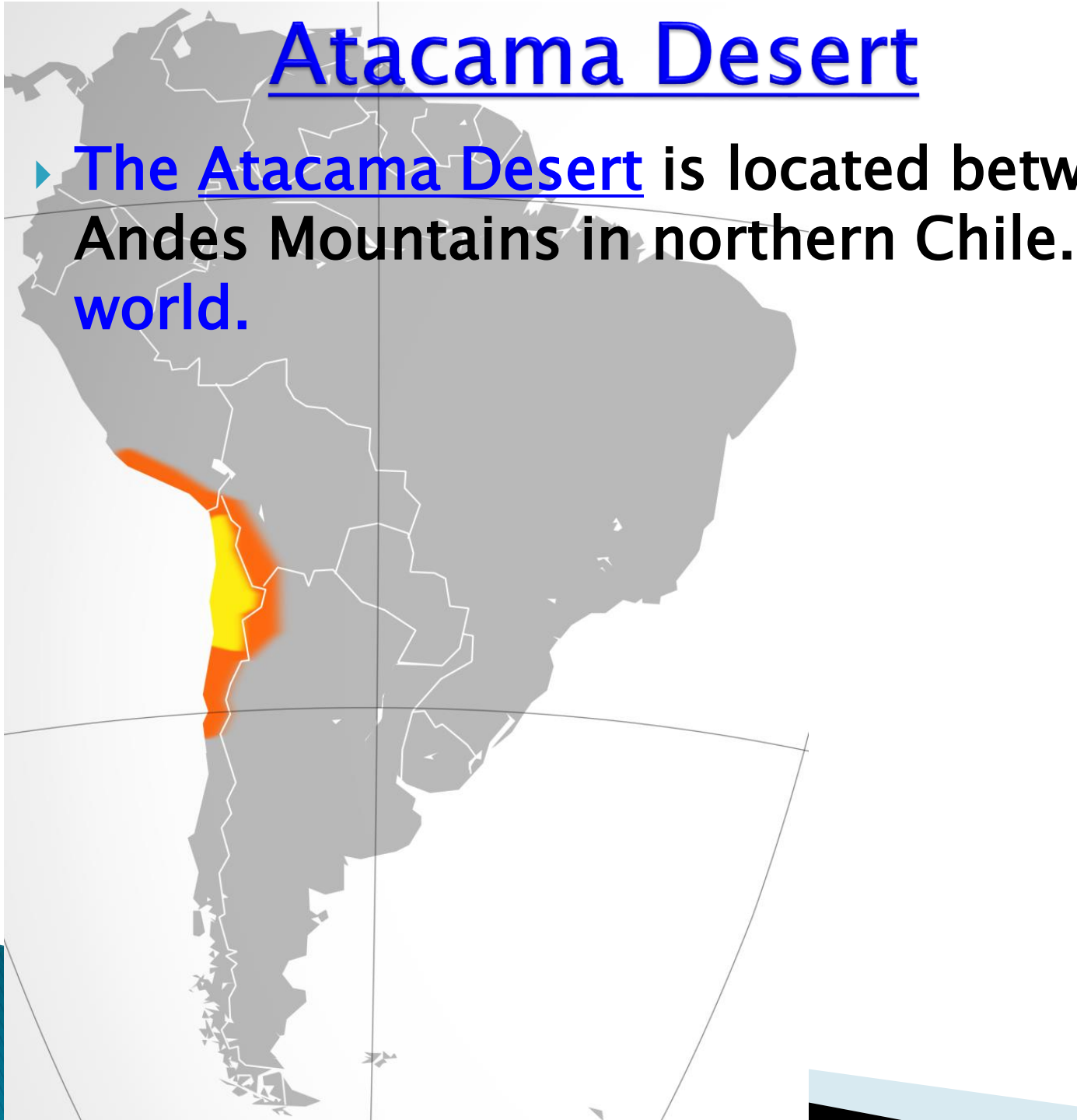


1) Other includes fires, mining, urbanization, road construction, dams; 2) Logging generally results in degradation rather than deforestation, but is often followed by clearing for agriculture; 3) Data from Holly Gibbs 2009



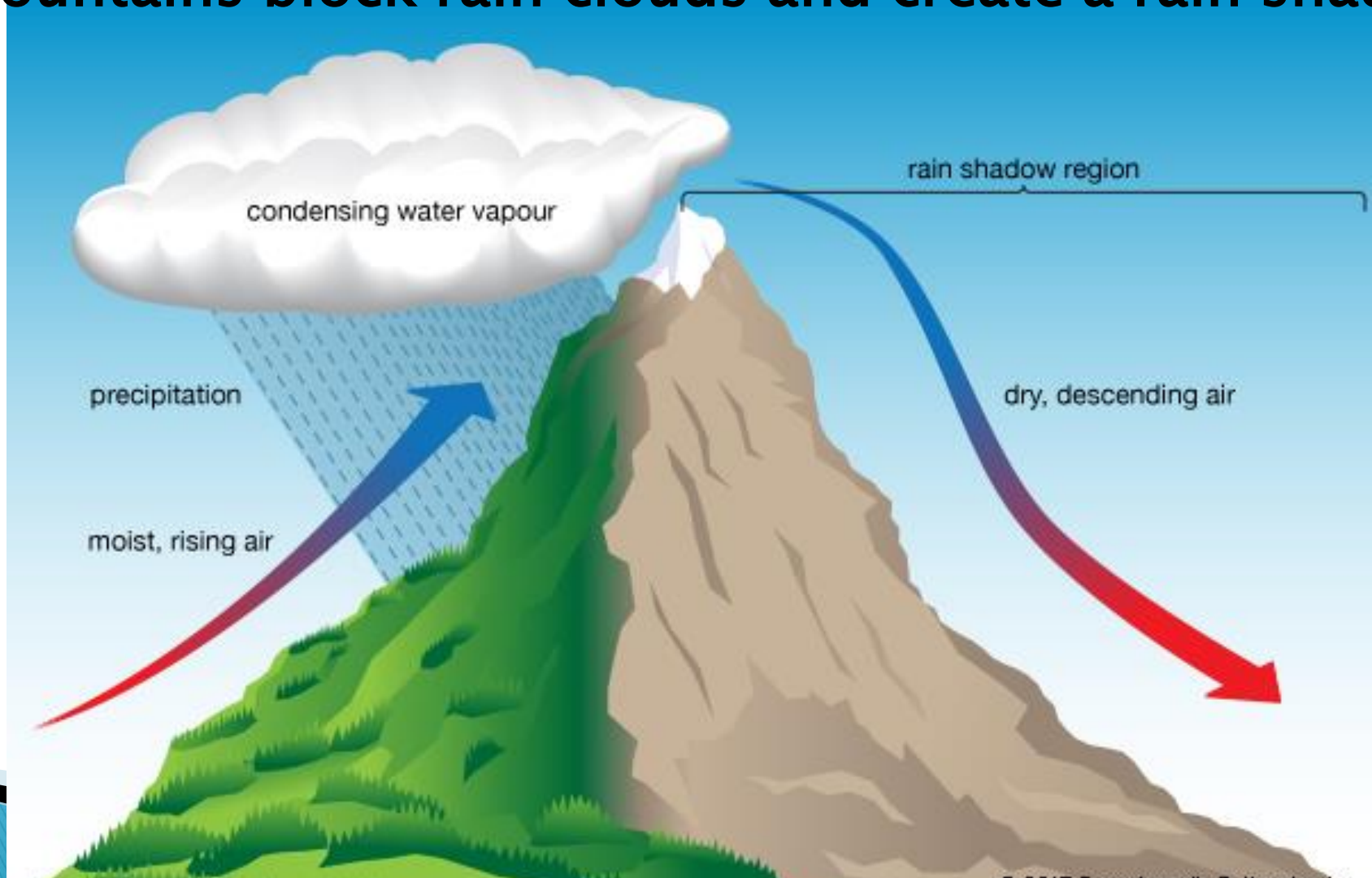
# Atacama Desert

- ▶ The Atacama Desert is located between the Pacific Ocean and the Andes Mountains in northern Chile. It is the driest region in the world.



# Climate

- ▶ The Atacama Desert is created by orographic precipitation, which is caused by mountains.
- ▶ The Andes Mountains block rain clouds and create a rain shadow.





# Patagonia

- ▶ **is a region in southern Chile and southern Argentina** between the Andes Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. It is made up of dry plains and plateaus.



# Panama Canal

- ▶ Located on the Isthmus of Panama, the [Panama Canal](#) links the Atlantic and Pacific
- ▶ The Panama Canal is an important waterway that cuts through the isthmus of Panama. The canal is human made and was completed in 1914. The canal eliminated the long trip around Cape Horn, the southernmost tip of South America

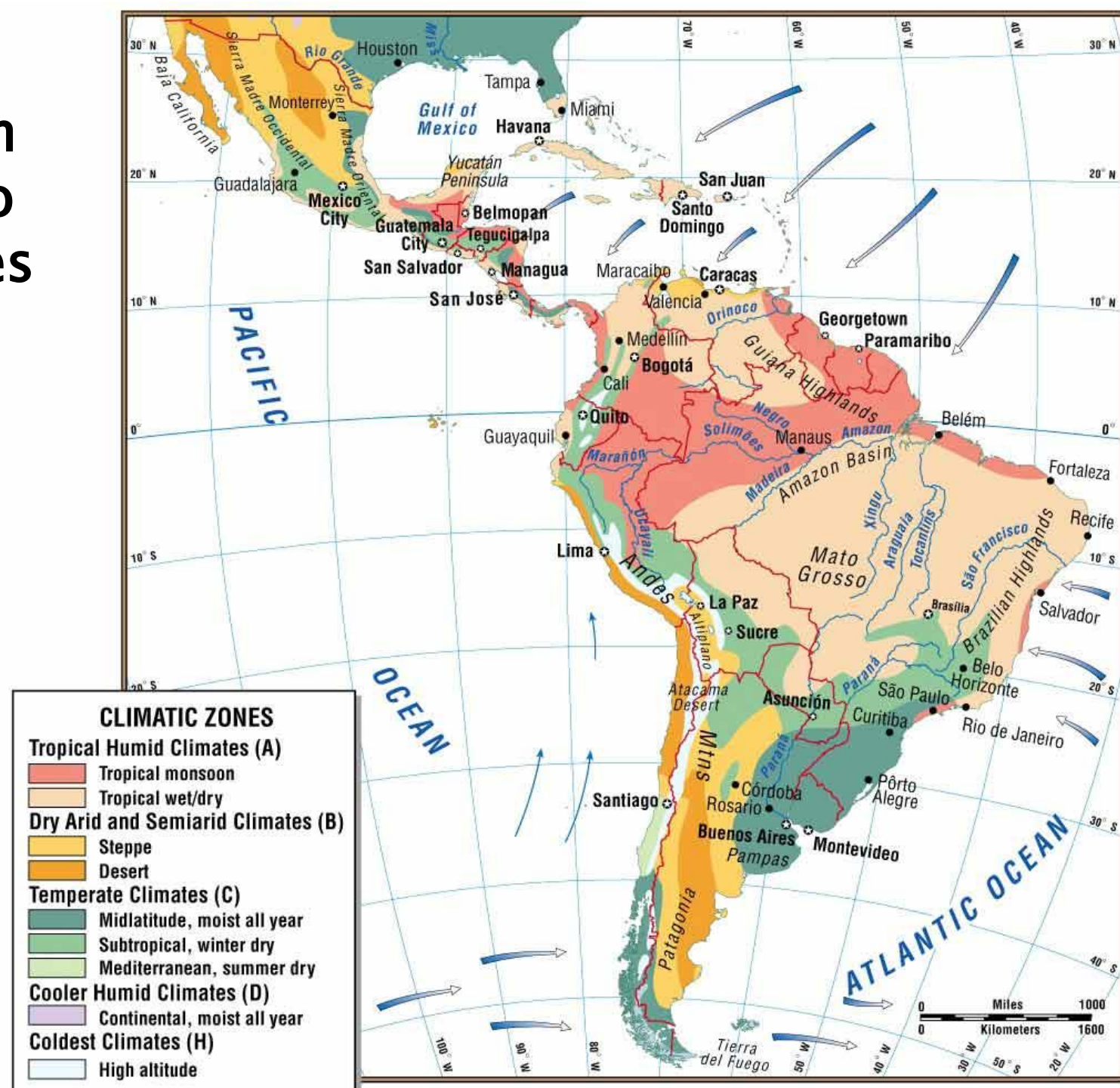


# Climate

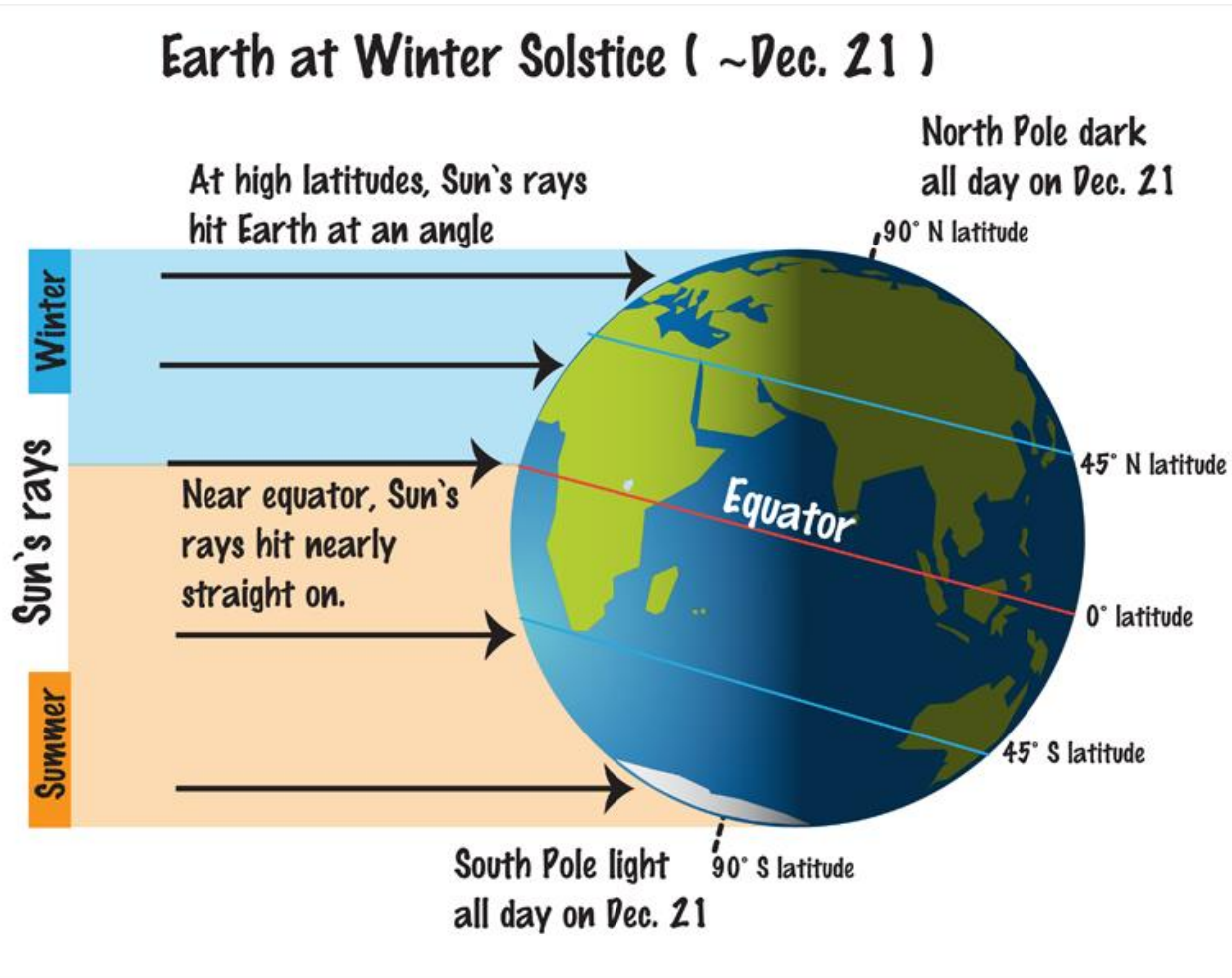
Most of Latin America is in the low latitudes. The two predominant climate zones in Latin America are:

Tropical Wet

Tropical Wet and Dry



# Climate



- ▶ The equator runs through Ecuador and Brazil. The area near the equator is known as the low latitudes and is warm all year.
- ▶ The seasons in South America are reversed from our seasons because they are in the Southern Hemisphere.
- ▶ When it is winter in Georgia it is summer in Argentina.

# Climate

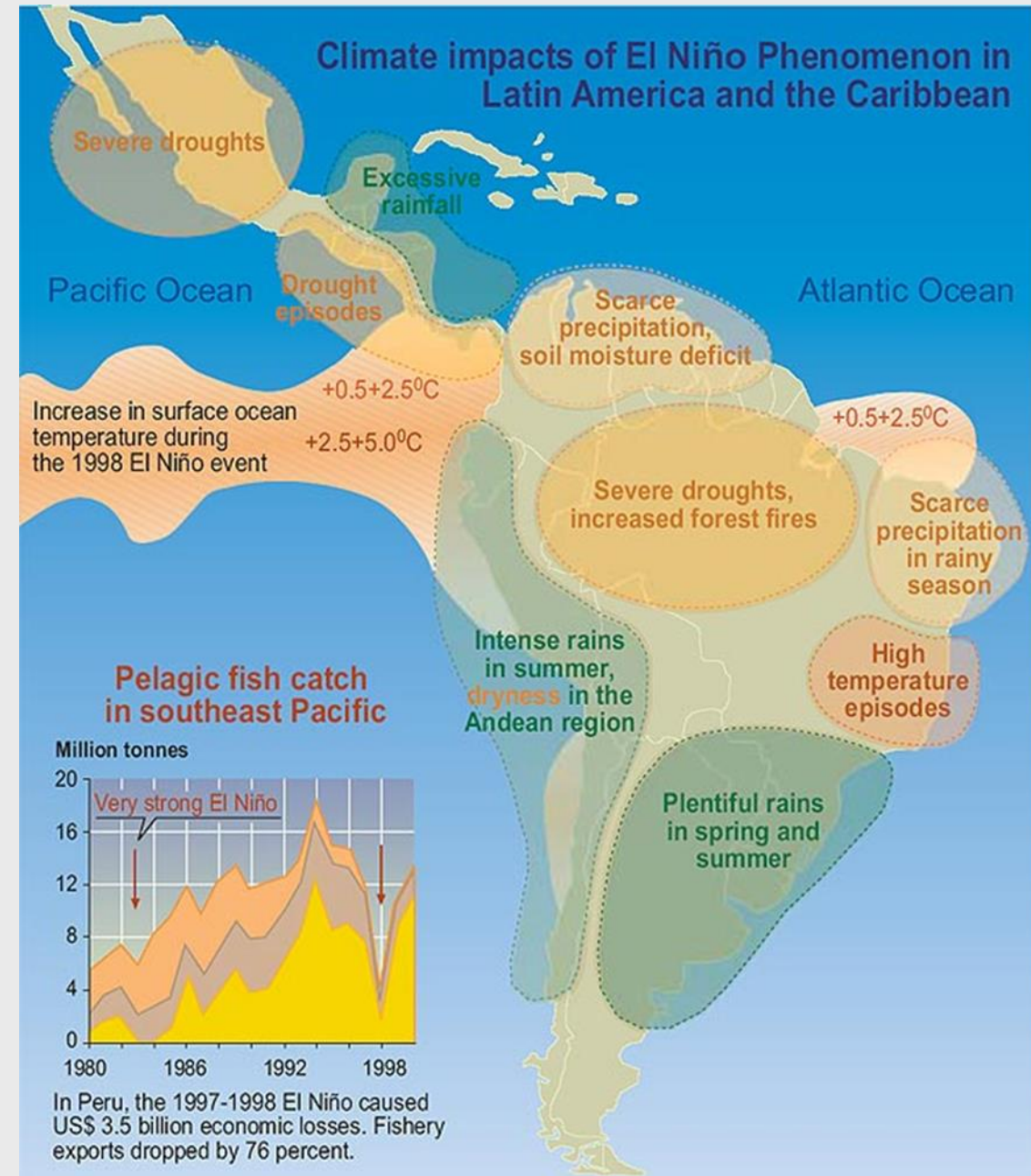
- ▶ The Tropical Zone is located between  $23^{\circ}27'$  north and  $23^{\circ}27'$  south.
- ▶ This is the area between the Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn.



▶ A natural weather condition that causes heavy rain and flooding during the Christmas time of year.

▶ El Niño is a variation in the ocean & atmospheric temperatures in the Pacific. When the ocean temperature increases it causes ocean currents to reverse direction and can impact the weather in Latin America in many different ways

# El Niño





# Rainforests

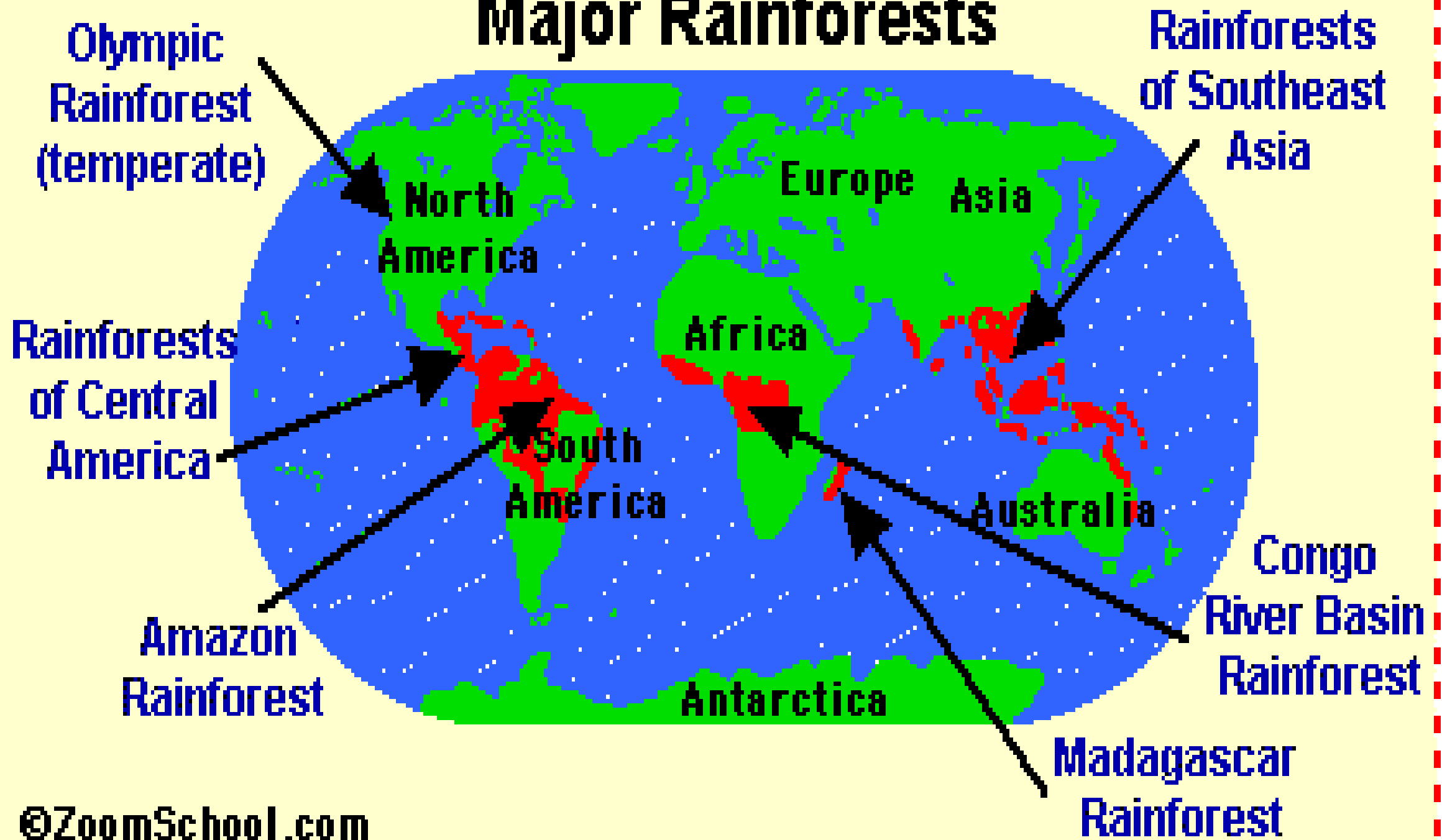
# Where are Rainforest?



- ▶ Rainforests are located between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
- ▶ This area is called the "tropics".
- ▶ The tropics is the 3,000 mile wide band around the equator.



# Major Rainforests

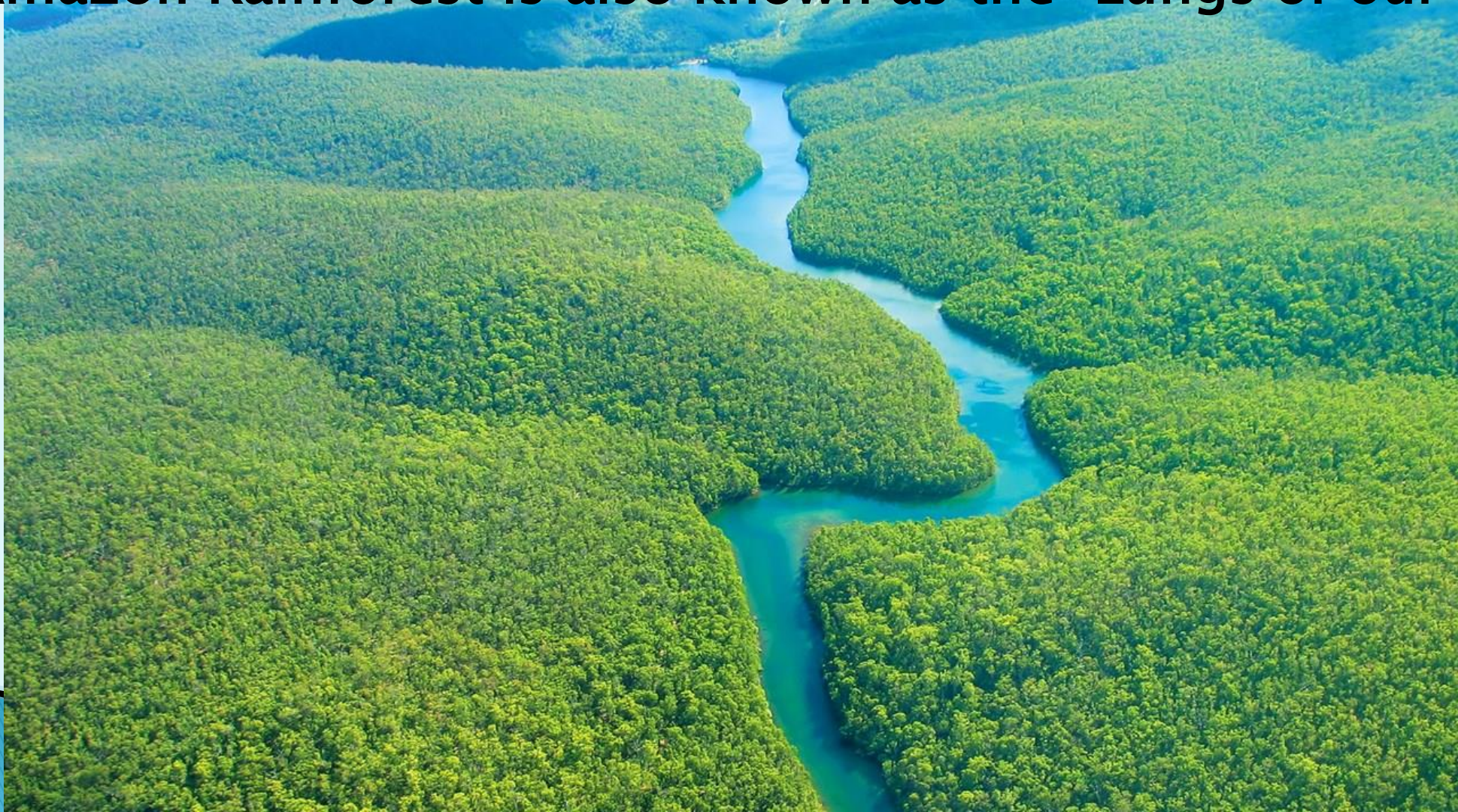


# Amazon Rainforest

- ▶ The Amazon is the worlds largest tropical rainforest covering 2.3 million miles.
- ▶ 65% of the Amazon is a jungle.
- ▶ 35% of the Amazon is made up of grassland.



- ▶ The Amazon Rainforest gets nine feet of rain every year (rains almost everyday).
- ▶ **20% of the earth's oxygen is produced by the Amazon Rainforest.**
- ▶ The Amazon Rainforest is also known as the "Lungs of our Planet."



- ▶ **The Amazon is home to 14,712 different species of animals.**
- ▶ **Over 60,000 different plants are native to the Amazon.**
- ▶ **4,000 types of trees are grown in the rainforest.**



The rain forest provide food, water, natural rubber, medicinal plants, and other products.

## Problems

- Soil exhaustion  
(soil has lost the nutrients)
- Deforestation





# Layers of the Rainforest

- ▶ **Emergents:** Top layer. It houses most of the birds and insects.
- ▶ **Canopy:** Home to many different types of birds, insects, reptiles, mammals, and more.
- ▶ **Under story:** A cool environment under the leaves which is where you can find many animals.
- ▶ **Forest floor:** Many animals live here. It is ground level.

## Tropical Rainforest Strata

