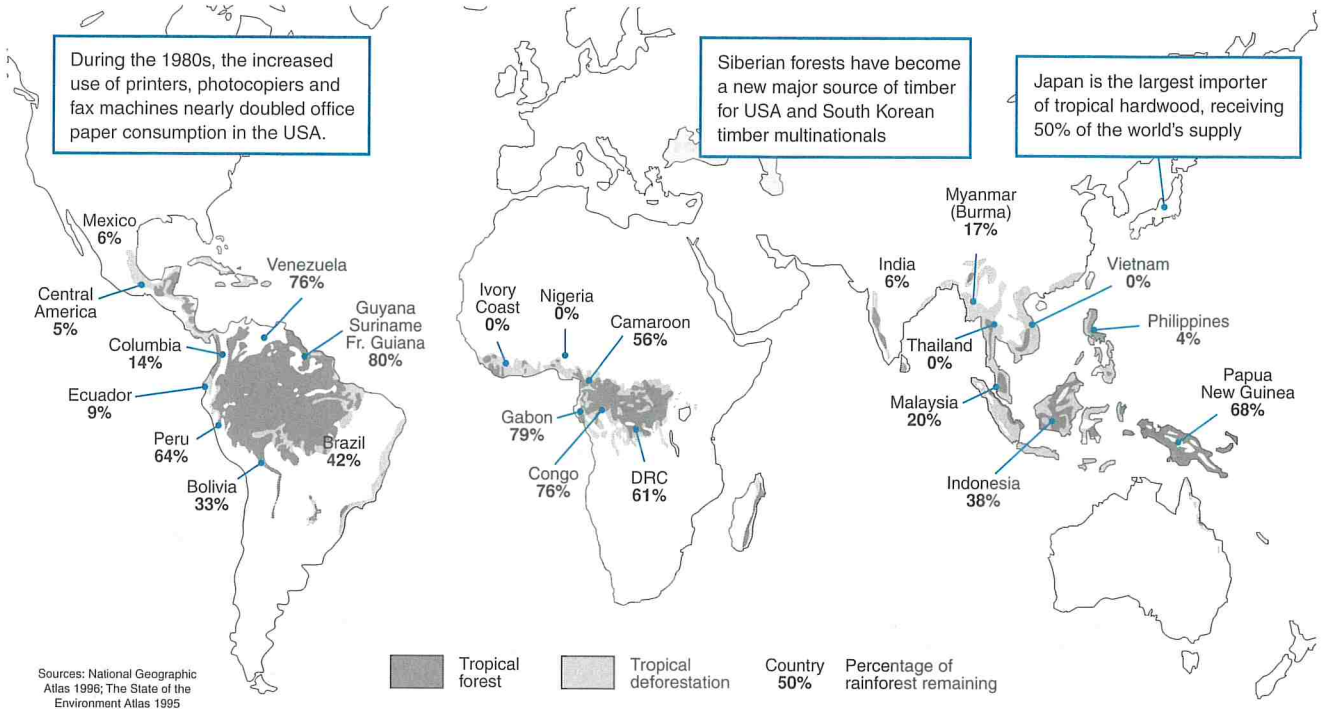


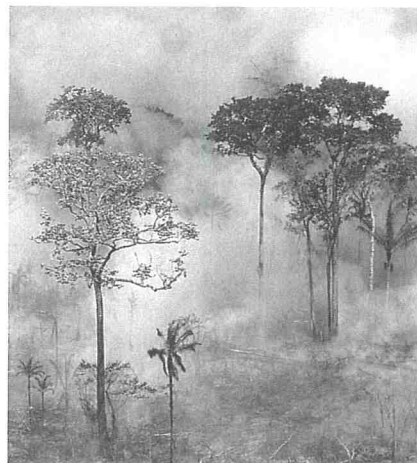
# Tropical Deforestation

Tropical rainforests prevail in places where the climate is very moist throughout the year (200 to 450 cm of rainfall per year). Almost half of the world's rainforests are in just three countries: **Indonesia** in Southeast Asia, **Brazil** in South America, and **Zaire** in Africa. Much of the world's biodiversity resides in rainforests. Destruction of the forests will contribute towards global warming

through a large reduction in photosynthesis. In the Amazon, 75% of deforestation has occurred within 50 km of Brazil's roads. Many potential drugs could still be discovered in rainforest plants, and loss of species through deforestation may mean they will never be found. Rainforests can provide economically sustainable crops (rubber, coffee, nuts, fruits, and oils) for local people.



The felling of rainforest trees is taking place at an alarming rate as world demand for tropical hardwoods increases and land is cleared for the establishment of agriculture. The resulting farms and plantations often have shortlived productivity.



Huge forest fires have devastated large amounts of tropical rainforest in Indonesia and Brazil in 1997/98. The fires in Indonesia were started by people attempting to clear the forest areas for farming in a year of particularly low rainfall.



The building of new road networks into regions with tropical rainforests causes considerable environmental damage. In areas with very high rainfall there is an increased risk of erosion and loss of topsoil.

1. Describe three reasons why tropical rainforests should be conserved:

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Identify the three main human activities that cause tropical deforestation and describe their detrimental effects:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_