

**Freshman #15**

TOPIC:deforestation



# SOCOMUN XXVII

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Life on Land: Deforestation

Hey, delegates! My name is Matt Trueman and I happy to be the Chair for your committee this SOCOMUN 2018 Conference! I am currently a Junior and this is my third year in the MUN program. I have attended Berkeley’s BMUN 66 and will be attending the Royal Russell Academy this upcoming October in London, England. I am most often involved in militaristic and territorial committees, but I am excited to extend my MUN committee involvement into more environmental topics. I am involved in Track and Field here at Santa Margarita where I participate in long jump and am a member of the Operation Help a Hero club. I hope that your SOCOMUN experience will be a great introductory conference for your MUN future and help peak your interest in the complex and ever-changing political waters of the United Nations. Our committee structure will consist of unmoderated, moderated, and formal caucusing in which you will be able to voice and propose your solutions for our topic at hand. During unmoderated caucus you are distributed to assemble resolution groups to begin a draft for formal debate. Once we reach formal caucus towards the end of committee, these resolutions will be presented and consequently voted on. If you have any questions about the committee structure, the topic itself, or the policy of your nation, please feel free to email me at [socomunfresh15@gmail.com](mailto:socomunfresh15@gmail.com). I wish you guys the best luck and am excited for this upcoming SOCOMUN 2018, see y’all in committee!

Hello Delegates! My name is Lauren Raney, and I will be your legal for SOCOMUN. I am a sophomore at Santa Margarita Catholic High School, and it is my second year in the program. MUN has provided me with so many opportunities and I have truly learned so much and I hope all of you do to. I’m very excited to help chair this conference and I am looking forward to seeing all of you on September 23rd.

Hello, my name is Jillian Surdilla, and I am sophomore here at Santa Margarita. This will be my second year of participating in the Model United Nations program. My favorite aspect of MUN is being able to thoroughly research relevant issues that affect the world today and creating unique solutions to combat them. Alongside MUN, I am a part of track and field and several ASB committees. I also love literature, world history, and cats! As your secretary, I hope that you enjoy this conference, for this experience will help deepen your knowledge of the MUN program and its many different topics. Good luck, delegates!

**Background:**

Since 1990, the proportional coverage of our earth by forests has dropped from 31.6 million hectares to 30.6 million hectares. This reduction of forests proportional to our earth’s total land area is the equivalent of the area of South America, nearly 129 million hectares. Every year, this number exponentially increases as a result deforestation. 13 million hectares is lost every year due to the clearing of forest to make room for additional property. Around the world, 1.6 billion people depend and rely on the crucial economic, sustaining, and live-preserving qualities associated with forests, both temperate and tropical. Spanning much of the equatorial region, South America, Africa, and South-East Asia are immensely impacted by this appalling treatment of nature and the 80% of terrestrial species that call this ecosystem their home. Nations within these blocs are subject to the degrading of their native forests and the excessive logging during colonial expansion, mainly after the Berlin Conference of 1885. The act of deforestation is used to develop and obtain property and the resources that the land offers. Loggers and commune owners plague regions most affected by deforestation and in turn assume control over the land to expedite their businesses and profits. The rough treatment of this fragile ecosystem sustains many countries’ economies and exports as their GDP is quite often determined by their acquisition of property or materials through repossession of forest land. The global market depends on the products obtained from forests, most often rainforests. Exports such as oils, resins, wood, spices, fiber, meat, and fruit among others sustain this market that look towards forests as a key source of income and an international exchange of goods. The process by which these profits are acquired are some of the most controversial methods in terms of acquiring natural resources. A common method used to clear large patches of land is the debatable “slash and burn” technique in which trees are chopped down and subsequently burnt to leave a layer of fertile ash used for later farming. Another common form of deforestation is the practice of logging which in turn provides space for settlements or cattle pastures. The practice of constructing pastures presents its own difficulties and repercussions to the delicate environment. The constant grazing cattle and compacting of the ground, as done by the cattle’s hooves, are quick to cause erosion in such regions. The physical deterioration of the forests reduces the number of future trees and exposes the rough sediment beneath the very thin layers of lush soil above. This exposure drastically limits the forest’s ability to repopulate in such areas as plant-life is unable to develop in such mineral-poor earth. The technique of “slash and burn” also commonly results in this erosion as farmers tend to overplant the land covered by ash in hopes of producing a major harvest. Most often, this trend of over-farming results in the overextension of the roots causing the quick degrading of nutrients in the soil. When farmers attempt to plant another harvest the next season, the nutrient-deficient dirt has been further exhausted and therefore a dry patch of treeless land stretches across the previously lush and sustainable forest. In addition, the entrance of investors, loggers, and communal owners intrudes on the indigenous people living on the abundant forest land. These natives, many purposely remaining out of contact of the modern world, are actively being removed from their ancestral claims as profiteers and workers take their forest homes, demolish them, and turn them for a profit. The resulting throngs of displaced people pose a great issue for countries attempting to urbanize into native lands.

The action of deforestation has been a factor of human evolution ever since the beginning of man’s urban expansion. With the world expanding and modernizing, this intrusion into forests and the removal of their resources has become a greater issue to deal with as technology continues to develop. The creation of new methods and means to quickly harvest more resources than decades before are taking their toll on forests resulting in greater areas of deforestation. The modern system by which a region of land comes to be deforested has been outlined in a simple three-step turn of events as follows: the creation of roads allows for farther intrusion into previously unvisited territory, these roads lead to the arrival of loggers and communal owners which clear the land for a profit, and this now-open land becomes the location for new settlements and therefore subject to eventual urban expansion resulting in more deforestation.

To successfully combat the encroaching threat of continual deforestation, the United Nations Development Program, UNDP, has created Sustainable Development Goal, SDG, Number 15 of which you will be debating as delegates this approaching committee session. In 2008, eight years after the SDGs were implemented, the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries, UN-REDD, was implemented to further the goals of SDG 15. REDD+ Programmes supports nations looking to reimburse their deforested land through sustainable forest management and provides a voice for the indigenous people threatened by the encroaching threats of deforestation. Participating in over 60 countries, UN-REDD allows for specialized local support as well as technical management to more accurately monitor the condition of the forests. 7 years later in 2015, the year that the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 were released, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization announced a new UN policy on deforestation. Urging for an increase in sustainable forest development, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva further advised the proper recognition of both the national and private sectors that deal with forest-sourced economies.

**Possible Solutions:**

The developing issue of deforestation is rampant in many areas of the world and thus when developing solutions, one must be able to adapt to both local and state regions as well as national and private sectors. The process of deforestation can be traced from many different origins, both privatized and nationalized. The process of ridding deforestation and implementing sustainable forest charters must be modified and specialized for different types of countries’ ownership of the land.

As 1.6 billion people rely on the sustenance of the forest and the profits it brings, environmental efforts to remove the process of deforestation must be contingent on the economy of the country where these actions are to be enacted in. Many countries, such as those in Africa, South America, and South-East Asia, are dependent on the forest for their exports and the consequential rise in a positive trade balance (larger profit from exportation than cost from importation). Without the forest, their economies can be crippled and their position in the international market disrupted. In order to find a balance between the conservation of forests and the well-being of a nation, a compromise must be reached to find a factual balance to benefit both entities.

While the UN maintains and begins programs to combat the topic of deforestation, the main force of the environmental efforts is delivered through Non-Government Organizations, or NGOs. These groups work outside of government policy and legislature in order to distribute their energies more directly to the afflicted issue. Partnerships such as Green Peace, have urged governments to acclimate to more environmentally-friendly policies and are determined to readapt the modern political climate to become more aware of the dangers that are associated with deforestation. To further explicate the process of stopping deforestation, a combination of governmental and private efforts must be in collaboration.

**Questions to consider:**

The following are some questions that should be contemplated in order to further your comprehension and abilities within this committee. By no means is it necessary to explicitly answer any the following questions during committee. They are simply here to offer an additional prospect on the topic of deforestation.

1. With loggers, commune owners, and investors bearing down on our world’s forests, how can the indigenous people be represented and protected from the growing threats attributed to deforestation?
2. When attempting to push privatized and nationalized businesses into collaboration with each other, how can you ensure the nation’s predetermined style of market isn’t affected (Ex: privatized businesses are typically found under a free-market whereas nationalized businesses are typically found under a command-economy)
3. How can you incentivize nations to stop deforestation?
4. In what other ways can the UN work to bring a more cohesive system to achieve SDG 15 (reminder that the UN is already financially funded through the GA 5th Committee with its actions funded by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and others)
5. How does your country respond and relate to the growing trend of deforestation? What has your nation done to prevent it?
6. With the recent US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Deal, how does your nation react to this separation? Does your bloc support or contradict the US’s choice in administering such a division?
7. Two years ago, in 2016, Norway’s parliament decided to ban all deforestation within Norway to preserve the nature found in the country. Has your nation followed closely to this new policy? If so what steps have you taken?
8. How could collaboration between the UN, NGOs, and nations be synchronized to combat deforestation quicker?
9. Should a single bloc or nation be the target of SDG 15’s immediate priority resulting in a quicker reaction within a small area but taking longer to implement worldwide? Or, should the implementation span all regions affected by the crisis of deforestation but be slower while including all nations?

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| **Goal 15 Targets. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss** |
| 15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements |
| 15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally |
| 15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world |
| 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development |
| 15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species |
| 15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed |
| 15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products |
| 15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species |
| 15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts |
| 15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems |
| 15.b Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation |
| 15.c Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities |

Works Cited

“5 Big Causes of Deforestation and How You Can Stop It.” *One Green Planet*, 10 May 2017, www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/5-big-causes-of-deforestation-and-how-you-can-stop-it/.

Delivering a more individual centric position on deforestation, this article touches upon the ways an individual and community can make a difference to limit deforestation in their region. By providing a list of possible actions, the information present on this website may provide solution concepts and ideas. While they are minimalistic, this may provide an efficient start for more elaborate solutions to take root upon.

Banerjee, Neela. “U.S. Joins Other Nations in Deforestation Accord at UN Summit.”

*Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 23 Sept. 2014, www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-deforest-climate-change-20140923-story.html.

Providing an awareness of the US’s striving international policy, this page shows the US’s dedication to the cause of climate change and deforestation. Written in 2014 during the Obama administration, this information starkly contrasts the current policy under the Trump administration. This opposition of policy must be understood as the US dropped from being one of the world forefront leaders in stopping climate change to the current policy of withdrawal from certain treaties and talks. For readers to understand the political turmoil associated with deforestation, they must be able to recognize the changing policies of major countries supporting deforestation.

“Deforestation Slows, 'but We Need to Do Better' on Sustainable Forest Use – UN Agriculture Chief | UN News.” *United Nations*, United Nations, https://news.un.org/en/story/2015/09/508202-deforestation-slows-we-need-do-better-sustainable-forest-use-un-agriculture

Citing the FAO study commissioned by FAO Director-General José Graziano, this review of the 2015 study offers a comprehensive yet detailed description of the UNFAO’s innerworkings. Calling for an increase in environmental efforts, Graziano stresses the importance of further collaboration to defeat the topic of deforestation. This newsletter offers an insight into the UNFAO and their future ambition and may inspire the reader to formulate solutions using this site as a foundation.

“How We Work.” *UN-REDD Programme*, United Nations, www.un-redd.org/how-we-work.

Derived from the UNFAO’s databanks, this site offers an insight on efforts done through the UN-REDD Programme. Providing an overview on the offered REDD+ Programmes, this allows for a greater comprehension of the UN’s initiatives. A reader’s analysis of this document will permit an increased awareness of UN actions and may offer guidance towards appropriate solutions.

Nace, Trevor. “Norway Just Banned Deforestation.” *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 30 Jan. 2017, www.forbes.com/sites/trevornace/2016/07/18/norway-first-country-ban-deforestation/#7af883b7d72f.

Cited from Forbes, this piece of material dives into the reasons and legislative confirmation of Norway’s decision to all-together ban deforestation in their country. Providing an in-depth examination of the legislative process, this will allow for a foundation for solutions to be built upon. A proper review of this material may offer similar solutions to combat the issue of deforestation in other countries.

“Sustainable Development Goal 15.” *UN.* Sustainable Development Committee of the UN, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg15.

Further complicated on SDG 15, the UNDP raises many unbiased facts and data that reveal the true effects of deforestation. Educating the reader on the human involvement as well as our impact upon nature is well outlined in this site. Furthermore, the mentioned NGOs and environmental efforts may be able to point the reader to possible solutions.

"Sustainable Development Goals." *UN*. United Nations, n.d. Web. 7 April 2018, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/.

Sourced from the UNDP’s site, this source explains the goals and statistics the UN would like to reach by 2030. Bringing awareness to the factors held in SDG 15, the source explains the true reasons and figures behind the problem of deforestation. This provides an even basis for future research to be done upon.

“Solutions to Deforestation.”

*Greenpeace USA*, www.greenpeace.org/usa/forests/solutions-to-deforestation/.

Complicating on their NGO beliefs and attempts for collaboration, this page from Green Peace provides a keen aspect of NGO involvement. Promoting many changes to increase cohesiveness against deforestation, Green Peace delves into the many options for stopping deforestation including market development, representation, and sustainability. The utilization and comprehension of NGOs as a vital source of aid is key for maintaining solutions for a topic in which many countries’ governments disregard.

“Tropical Deforestation: Feature Articles.” *NASA*, NASA, www.earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Features/Deforestation.

Offering a global overview of the topic of deforestation, this collection of maps, rates, and data provides a multinational perspective on deforestation. NASA’s collection of such information outlines the world’s issues with deforestation and offers a proper explanation of the true harms of deforestation. This collection of data may grant the reader a better understanding in terms of the depth of deforestation and the problems it presents allowing for solution development.

Wu, Andrew. “From Tree-Planting Drones to Shade-Grown Tea: Businesses Are Making Money by Reforesting the Planet.” *World Resources Institute*, WRI, 18 Jan. 2018, www.wri.org/our-work/topics/forests.

Stressing the conflicting human involvement with our tropical forests and the repercussions that follow, this account from the World Resources Institute further complicates the issue of human contact. Applying detail to how we affect our forests and what steps we must take to reverse our intentions allow for a more thorough comprehension of cause and effect. Readers may be able to use this account to further explicate their solutions and utilize sources such as this one as a proper foundation to begin developing proper solutions.