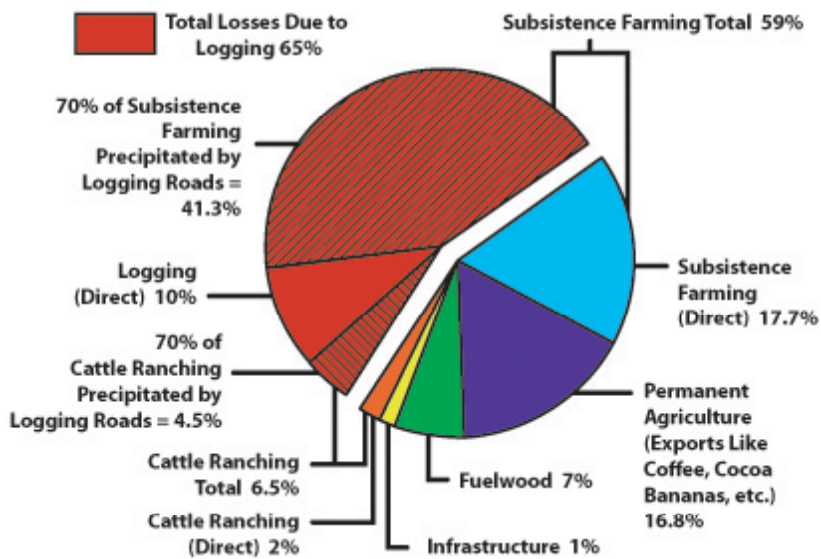


MAIN CAUSES OF RAINFOREST DESTRUCTION BASED ON MULTIPLE INFORMATION SOURCES*



New studies have shown that figures for damage due to logging in the Amazon should be doubled, since half of the damage was not showing up on satellite images.

*Based on information from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, World Wildlife Fund, World Resources Institute and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute.

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According to the UNFOA, 70% of tropical deforestation caused by shifting cultivation (subsistence agriculture) is precipitated by logging roads. However, UNFAO data is based on reporting from governments of tropical countries. Much of the logging in the tropics (by some estimates, the majority) is illegal and falls outside the bounds of enforcement or even reporting of federal agencies. As well, FAO considers deforestation to be the complete clearing of trees. FAO therefore vastly underestimates the impacts of logging on tropical forests, according to the International Timber Trade Organization and WWF (see below).

Following are selected quotes from the report entitled *Bad Harvest* by Nigel Dudley, Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud and Francis Sullivan. The report followed fifteen years of study of the effects of the timber trade on the loss of the world's forests. It was published by World Wide Fund for Nature and Earthscan.

"Damage to forests as a result of timber operations is worse than it has ever been before on a global level."

"Far from being a negligible cause, logging for the timber trade is the primary cause of forest degradation and loss in many of the remaining natural forests. Where the trade is dwindling, it is not so much because of changes in policy, but because the forest has been logged out as in, for example, the Philippines, Thailand and the Côte d'Ivoire."

"To estimate the overall effects of the timber industry, it is important to distinguish both primary and secondary impacts of logging and forest management.

over ➡

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"Firstly, and most importantly, industrial development is often the beginning of forest disruption. Loggers drive roads into previously impenetrable forests and at best selectively log trees, thus opening up forests for further exploitation by squatters, miners and would-be settlers. The timber trade brings towns, families, infrastructure and hangers-on, a proportion of whom stay behind to try their hand at unplanned development once the good timber has been logged out. The presence of logging roads has helped open up previous inaccessible rainforest areas in, for example, East Kalimantan in Indonesia, Thailand, the Brazilian Amazon [and] Ghana."

"Secondly, statistics for the effects of the impact of the timber trade are, in many cases, probably underestimates. Many national estimations are inaccurate, both because they ignore many illegal incursions (which sometimes exceed official logging, as in the Philippines [and Brazil]) and because many official figures are years out of date. Initial selection logging does not show up well in satellite images; identification of later destruction through farming or secondary logging will miss the connection with the timber trade. Loggers also penetrate into some of the least disturbed forests in the world, threatening ecosystems that would otherwise probably remain fairly intact. For example, logging is the primary cause of forest loss in such important forest areas as Kalimantan, the Central African Republic, Zaire [and] parts of the Amazon."

"The rich countries play a key role in setting the scene for forest decline through rapidly increasing consumption which in turn fuels a market for raw materials."

The following quotes are from the report *High Stakes*, published in 1998 by World Rainforest Movement and Forests Monitor on multinational logging companies.

"The monitoring and enforcement capacity of most national governments is inadequate, with companies operating unchecked or under poor or non-existent forestry management plans in many cases. This has facilitated the negative excesses of the logging industry, including irreversible damage to forests, and illegal logging and trade. Information about companies' social and environmental impacts is gradually becoming known in large part due to the efforts of civil society at the local, national and international levels."

"The negative social impacts caused by logging, particularly the high numbers of people affected, assessments of the damage caused by logging, particularly the high numbers of people affected, the wide-reaching nature of the problems created in people's lives and the potential costs in economic terms of replacing the lost benefits provided by forests. Logging results in declining food sources, such as wild game, fish, fruit, nuts and other edible forest plants. Damage to rivers and streams pollutes the most vital resource for survival — clean water — and undermines traditional agricultural methods. Local people's health often suffers as a consequence, with malnutrition and the spread of vital diseases becoming more prevalent in logged areas. Healthy, local cash economies based on non-timber forest products are eroded, even though they benefit local people both economically and socially far more than large-scale logging. Changes in social stability are profound, with women and children often suffering the most. As a result of these changes, conflict within communities is exacerbated. Opposition to logging at the local level has often resulted in violence, and sometimes death."

"The former director of the UNFAO wrote in 1987:

'Over the last two decades, massive tracts of virgin tropical forests have come under exploitation, in all three under-developed regions. That exploitation, with a few honourable exceptions, has been reckless, wasteful, even devastating. Nearly all the operations... have had no profound or durable impact on the social and economic life of the countries where they have taken place... Local needs are not being met; the employment opportunities are trifling. A significant part of the exports, as logs or as primary processed timber, is exported 'within the firm', and transfer values are fixed to facilitate the accumulation of profits outside the country... The contribution of forestry to improving the lot of the common people has been negligible so far.'"