World Finals Problem

Forestry

Science & Technology

How might we protect our vital forests while sustaining forestry for building, medicine, and jobs in the future?

Visit our topic center to learn more about our Forestry topic, view suggested readings and access additional resources.

Background

Forestry is the practice of managing and utilizing forests and their resources, including wood, wildlife, and recreation spaces. Forests cover 30% of the world's landmass and are home to 80% of the world's diversity of plants, animals, and microbes. Forests play an important role in minimizing the impacts of climate change and naturally clean water and air.

Context

Increasingly, natural forests are being destroyed, including the diversity of plants, animals, and indigenous people they shelter. Since the dawn of civilization, over 46% of the world's native forests have disappeared. Commercial forestry has caused forest destruction by leveling areas of old-growth forest. Many industry practices damage the environment by releasing toxins that threaten homes, businesses, and people. However, an emphasis on sustainable practices has improved the preservation and harvesting of woodlands, with efforts to balance the planting of new trees with the harvesting of old ones. Uncontrolled forest fires are becoming larger and more frequent, contributing to the loss of total forest environments.

Questions to Explore

- What can be done to prevent loss of our vital forests?
- How can we enhance the development of new forests for future generations?
- What are the most effective ways to decrease deforestation while sustaining forestry for building, medicine, and employment opportunities?

Central Themes

1. Maintaining biodiversity in managed forests
2. The role of forestry in disasters
3. The cycle of forest protection, restoration, and harvesting
4. Economic demand of forestry products

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