

Plush for the Planet Lesson:

# Deforestation



Deforestation refers to the decrease in forest areas across the world that are lost for other uses such as agricultural crop lands, urbanization, or mining activities. Greatly accelerated by human activities since 1960, deforestation has been negatively affecting natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and the climate.

# Environmental Impact:

It is estimated about 3.9 million square miles (10 million square km) of forest have been lost since the beginning of the 20th century. In the past 25 years, forests shrank by 502,000 square miles (1.3 million square km) — an area bigger than the size of South Africa.

## What You Can Do:

**Go paperless** when possible and purchase recycled paper products when needed. Minimizing your overall use of paper products is a great start but also using sustainably recycled alternative is also a positive resource.

**Reduce the use of products with palm oil**. Palm oil is a popular edible sweetener in products such as candies, junk foods, and other heavily processed foods. Reducing the consumption of these foods is great for both the environment and your overall health.



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**20% of the of the worlds oxygen is produced in the Amazon forest**



**Up to 300 football fields of forest are cleared every hour to make room for palm plantations**



**The United States has less than 5% of the world's population yet consumes more than 30% of the world's paper**