

Deforestation

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Every year, tens of thousands of trees are cut for use in different ways all over the world. The forest covering rate of the world decreases year after year. "Recent reports by the World Resources Institute have shown that more than 80% of the planet's natural forests have already been destroyed" (Hui, 1997). Therefore, deforestation becomes a major global problem with serious consequences to the earth, such as changes to the climate and the atmosphere. In order to stop deforestation, we need to understand the major causes.

The growing population of the world brings about deforestation. First, people need more wood to build new houses and apartments. For instance, in Canada, due to a large number of immigrants, the population grew tremendously in 1990s. Consequently, a large amount of wood was demanded to build new houses and apartments. Second, because of a large population, some countries need to destroy the forest to develop agriculture. In China, the government encouraged the farmers to clear the forest in order to grow more food in 1950s. Trees can block the wind carrying dust. Now that the forest shield is gone, the air in some cities such as Beijing is very bad. In addition, cattle ranches are a major cause of deforestation in places such as Central and South America. Since the people who invest in cattle ranch can be highly subsidized by the government, more cattle ranches are built where replaced forests.

Deforestation is also caused by commercial forestry. For example, in most of the developing countries, such as Brazil, Thailand and Malaysia, people have to clear the forest and grow more cash crops, such as rubber, banana, coffee and oil palm, which will be sold to developed countries. Therefore, cash crops are the major income for those countries. For instance, in China, large numbers of disposable chopsticks from wood are produced. "A large tree can only be made into six thousand to eight thousand chopsticks. China's annual disposable chopstick export to Korea and Japan is fifteen billion pairs."(Use, nd) However, only small numbers of trees are planted every year. Thus, deforestation becomes more serious. Furthermore, in China the forest covering rate is very low compared with the developed countries. It just covers 16.5% of the country. But the forest covering rates of Germany, Japan, and Canada are more than 60%.

In general, the causes of deforestation are very complex. But one thing is sure: it is a serious global problem leading to climate change, greenhouse effect and other environmental problems. Hence, people should discontinue deforestation. They should educate themselves about the forest and the causes and effects of its destruction so that they can avoid contributing to deforestation.

References

Hui. (1997). Source unknown.

Use. (no date).